

ACWADAM forms a strategic partnership with UTSAAH, a UK based charity to enhance its groundwater management programmes in the Himalayas

Sep 2021: ACWADAM (Advanced Center for Water Resources Development and Management), an established not-for-profit organisation in India has signed an MoU with UTSAAH (Uniting to Sustain and Assist Himalayan communities), a UK based charity to further develop and enhance its groundwater management programmes in the Indian Himalayas. This strategic partnership will enable both organisations to work together for the benefit of communities in the Himalayas, initially in the Shimla region, to demonstrate “community-led initiatives on spring rejuvenation and groundwater management” in a scientific, holistic and a sustainable manner.

ACWADAM will deploy its scientific and technical know-how and expertise with proven experience in the field of groundwater management drawing from its long-standing experience of working across India’s diverse geographical, geological and hydrological settings. ACWADAM is engaged in such activities across India since 1998, and has worked on solving a variety of groundwater-related problems across India and its neighbouring region. ACWADAM's successful approach has embedded hydrogeology-based groundwater management within the larger context of rural livelihoods and natural resources management. Further, ACWADAM is also involved in the formulation of strategies based on hydrogeological understanding with reference to water security in urban India as well.

UTSAAH will support ACWADAM by providing complementary technical skills and capacity through its UK based academic and professional networks (e.g., mapping and spring inventorisation), and support capacity building amongst communities in the Himalayas through training programmes and workshops. The model will be based on partnerships involving other local programme implementation partners and even through a direct interface with local communities.

This partnership will also explore opportunities for funding from UK and other global foundations for research and capacity building and engage with UK based academic and professional volunteers interested in the field of groundwater management and training. The partnership will help further strengthen the infusion of action research in the conservation, management and governance of Himalayan aquifer systems.

Dr Arun Harish, Co-Founder and Chairperson of UTSAAH commented "We are delighted to form this strategic partnership with ACWADAM, who have been delivering research-based and community orientated programmes since 1998. Through our academic and professional networks in the UK, we hope to further augment and support ACWADAM's excellent work in addressing this global challenge".

Dr Himanshu Kulkarni, Director of ACWADAM added "ACWADAM’s work is based on the concept of demystifying science, enabling and strengthening local capacity and developing community-based protocols for managing groundwater. The partnership with UTSAAH will help improve the systematics on managing Himalayan aquifers through the lens of spring-water management through an improved integration of action research, capacity building and outreach through multiple partnerships in the region"