ICIMOD Gender Audit – Final Report

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Table of Acronyms

CBO	Community based Organisation
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
HI-LIFE	Landscape Initiative for Far Eastern Himalayas
HKH	Hindu Kush Himalayas
HKPL	Hindu Kush Karakoram Pamir Landscape
HR	Human Resources
HUC	Himalaya University Consortium
KLCDI	Kangchenjunga Landscape Conservation and Development Initiative
KMC	Knowledge Management and Communication
KSL	Kailash Sacred Landscape
LoA	Letter of Agreement
MTAP	Medium-term Action Plan
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NRM	Natural Resource Management
OD	Organisational Development
PC	Programme Coordinator
PO	Partner Organisation
QQR	Quinquennial Review
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
RP	Regional Programme
RPM	Regional Programme Manager
RMC	Regional Member Countries
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SRF	Strategic Results Framework
SSA	Short-term Associate
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of reference

1. Framework and Methodology

ICIMOD carried out a first Gender Audit in 2012 and subsequently developed a Gender and Equity Policy in 2013. A second Gender Audit was carried out in 2016, covering the institutional level, as well as the programmatic and initiative levels. The current gender audit, expands the scope still further, looking at gender mainstreaming in the work of ICIMOD at three levels - the institutional level, programmatic level, and partner's levels. As set out the ToR (Annex 1), the objectives are to enable ICIMOD, to:

- Review ICIMOD's institutional capacity to implement its gender mainstreaming strategy internally, including organizational culture.

- Review the extent to which ICIMOD is implementing and has incorporated its frameworks and policies to promote gender equity and justice into its programmes

- Review the inclusion of gender issues in the objectives and activities of the programmes and projects

- Review how programmes and projects have managed and performed with partners in integrating gender

- Review how far the recommendations of the Gender Audit 2016 have been followed and document progress since then

- Identify gaps in gender integration that will need to be addressed

- Develop recommendations for future direction.

The methods that have been used for data collection have been:

- A document review, covering policy documents and key publications (Annex 2)

- 25 semi-structured interviews and 12 group discussions with ICIMOD staff (Annex 3)

- Interviews with 12 selected partner organisations (Annex 4), and

- A staff perception survey with 110 returns[1].

The Gender Audit was carried out during the Covid-19 Crisis and was conducted remotely. In order to mitigate any potential limitations, the Audit has been carried out working closely with ICIMOD staff throughout, including presenting the findings and recommendations to the Senior Management Committee for feedback. The report is presented as follows:

- **Institutional Level** - ICIMOD's institutional capacity to implement its gender mainstreaming strategy internally, including organizational culture – Section 2;

- **Programmatic Level** - The extent to which ICIMOD is implementing and has incorporated its frameworks and policies to promote gender equity and justice into its programmes and to which gender and inclusion issues are incorporated in the objectives and activities of the programmes and projects – Section 3;

- **Partner Level** - How programmes and projects have managed and performed with partners in integrating gender – Section 4.

- **Conclusions and Recommendations** – The progress that has been made overall and suggestions for the way forward – Sections 5 and 6.

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[1] The staff survey was open to all staff and while some questions were directed to specific staff all questions were open to all respondents.

2. Gender at the Policy and Institutional Levels

Introduction

The five year strategy and results framework (2017) of ICIMOD has seven strategic results, of which one is: Significant advances made in approaches and knowledge that promote gender equality and inclusive development. That a strategic result is dedicated to gender equality and inclusive development highlights the priority of this agenda for ICIMOD. This was repeatedly shared by all during consultations, as many staff believe that this has directed them to address gender equality in their own specific activities.

ICIMOD, implementing the recommendations of the Gender Audit of 2016, established a system of developing Gender Action Plans (GAPs) for the regional programmes (see section 3 for discussion) and also developed an institutional level GAP. The main goal was to increase gender responsiveness, through three specific objectives: ensure gender integration in programmes and initiatives, operationalize the gender policy, and create accountability mechanisms, which would also help in ensuring resources and in tracking progress.[2]

The institutional level GAP is organized in two categories: policies and practices, with actions, indicators and a timeline. The key aim for policies was to strengthen gender responsiveness of institutional policies and strategies, Human Resource policy, the recruitment process, the financial policy and partnerships. A number of these tasks have been completed, so that, for example, the sexual harassment policy is in use. The Human Resource policy of 2020 has gender responsive provisions.

ICIMOD Policies

A Gender and Equity Policy was published in 2020 and sets out clear links to all of the other key policies and strategies of ICIMOD. The Policy sets out detailed definitions of the main concepts, the main challenges of regional cultural diversity, inequality and discrimination faced in the region and the objectives for both men and women and for the specific empowerment of women in response to significant inequalities. A summary of the review of the main policy documents of ICIMOD is set out in the table below.

ICIMOD Policy	Main Findings
Partnership Strategy 2013	Gender equality and social inclusion (GESI), stated in general terms, is part of all partnership agreements and is included in the criteria for identification, pre-selection, and part of the activities for implementation partners.
Updated Monitoring Evaluation and Learning Framework 2019	There is a separate section on mainstreaming GESI, which outlines a seven step framework, although the focus is on gender equality and inclusion is not mentioned.
Risk Management Strategy 2019	Gender is identified as an institutional internal risk, alongside environment and human rights, as well as in programme risks. The focus is on gender equality and inclusion is not explicitly mentioned.

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[2] ICIMOD. 2020. Gender and Equity Policy.

ICIMOD Policy	Main Findings
Environmental and Social Safeguards Policy 2020	The Gender and Equity Policy is referenced and it is stated that, ICIMOD will develop Environmental and Social Safeguard Guidelines. While there is no detail at this stage, there is scope for Social Safeguards to encompass GESI.
Policy on Prevention and Redressal of Sexual Harassment at the Workplace 2020	This policy is explicitly and appropriately focused on sexual harassment and/or violence in the workplace.
COVID-19 impact and policy responses in the Hindu Kush Himalaya 2020	The Policy Paper has separate sections on Social and Gender dimensions, providing a good example of an approach to GESI. The section on Social dimensions focuses on vulnerabilities and identifies a range of specific groups, while the section on Gender dimensions highlights the intersectional linkages with structural biases against women that perpetuate gender inequality.

Overall, the review shows that there are clear references to the Gender Policy and that gender equality is generally dealt with appropriately in all of the strategies and policies. However, while inclusive development and social inclusion are mentioned in policies, there is a lack of a systematic integration of social inclusion. Although the Gender and Equity Policy of 2020 states that "ICIMOD considers gender and equity centrally in its work", the approach focuses on a "gender transformative approach" for gender equality. Similarly, the gender and equity policy is operationalized through the "Gender Action Plans (GAPs)", not "GESI" Action Plans. There is a need, therefore, to ensure that ICIMOD's programmes and initiatives consider both gender equality, social inclusion and the ways in which these intersect with each other.

ICIMOD Institutional Practices

Under practices, the institutional GAP aimed to establish: a mechanism for the career growth of women professionals with structured mentorship; gender equity in internal management of ICIMOD; gender balanced representation in events; motivating partners for better gender integration within their organization; gender sensitive and inclusive communication; reduction of events during the holidays; and, the development of a gender responsive performance appraisal system. Efforts have been made to implement these with requests to partners for an increase in women's representation in events and inclusion of a gender related objective in the Management by Objective (MbO) form.

The consultations with the Gender team and other staff indicated that most were satisfied with the progress in the gender integration at the institutional level. Gender related trainings to staff (80% shared they had received gender training) had improved their capacity, attitude and behavior with acceptance of the need to address gender equality in ICIMOD's work. This was especially important as 72% of the staff have not studied gender. But now 37% staff to a moderate extent and 33% to a great extent, believed they had the necessary knowledge and skills to integrate gender issues in their work – see figure below. The use of disaggregated data and evidence has created higher acceptance within teams. The work environment was considered very supportive by all, across RPs and initiatives. ICIMOD was considered very responsive to personal issues of staff, including of gender specialists. *"People listen to our ideas, I feel confident and can openly share my views." (FGD,2021).*

To what extent do you have the necessary knowledge and skills to integrate gender issues into your work?

Source: Staff Perception Survey, ICIMOD, 2020

The institutional GAP has not identified any social inclusion activity or indicator. Even though HKH has a diverse group of mountain ethnic communities, there is no goal or activity to identify ethnic community specific barriers and to respond to them. There is some work that has been undertaken under RP3 to develop a gender and intersectionality framework[3], which could provide the basis for further work.

Gender team and Gender specialists

ICIMOD has a gender team, headed by the Gender lead and including four gender specialists, two analysts and two associates currently. The Gender specialists provide inputs to various Initiatives under each of the six Regional Programmes. The Gender Specialists supported the Regional Programme teams to develop the detailed Gender Action Plans in 2017 including the institutional action plan for the whole of the organization. The Gender Resource Team is responsible for providing technical inputs on gender equality to management, programmes and initiatives and promoting internal gender-positive and sensitive organizational change.

The support of the gender specialists in ICIMOD was appreciated by all RP and initiative staff. The technical inputs by the gender team ensured that gender elements were included in the programmes and many of the initiatives. The training and capacity building that they supported the staff and partners with, ensured that there were improved skills available in the programmes and the partners.

A need for a higher number of gender specialists was identified in the interviews and group discussions. The presence of a gender specialist as a component lead in RP 1 was thought to be very useful, and needed for other RPs too. Even with all staff being responsible to address gender issues, a gender specialist would, according to the respondents, ensure the quality of the interventions and their implementation. An area of improvement identified during the consultations were the skills and competencies of the gender team to address social inclusion along with gender equality.

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[3] In 2019 the gender team working on the HIAWARE initiative in RP 3 developed a gender and intersectionality framework, which has been used in the delivery in some trainings on gender – in SWARMA and Koshi trainings for partners.

Human Resource Policies

There are a number of very positive provisions in the Human Resources Policy of 2020 of ICIMOD. It states that ICIMOD as an equal opportunity employer seeks to ensure balance in the workplace in terms of gender and ethnicity/nationality and may actively seek to employ women and people from disadvantaged groups and unrepresented member countries.

A recruitment panel composed of 4-5 persons of diverse nationalities and appropriate gender mix process is responsible to carry out the recruitment process. Details relating to gender, ethnicity and any known disability of applicants are reviewed during the screening and short-listing process.

Women are entitled to additional holidays for specific women related festivals (e.g. Teej). Paid maternity leave of 16 weeks is provided. Three months paid adoption leave is also available for the time of adoption. Women staff members who suffer from miscarriage during pregnancy are provided a minimum of 15 days of paid leave from within maternity leave to rest and recuperate. Fathers are provided 15 days paternity leave. Lactating mothers are provided an hour per day for breast feeding while at work for 18 months. 36% survey respondents believed that ICIMOD has flexible work arrangements which are beneficial to women staff. 35% stated that they were happy with the maternity leave policy to a great extent while 15% stated to a limited extent only – see figure below. 25% were happy with the paternity leave provisions.
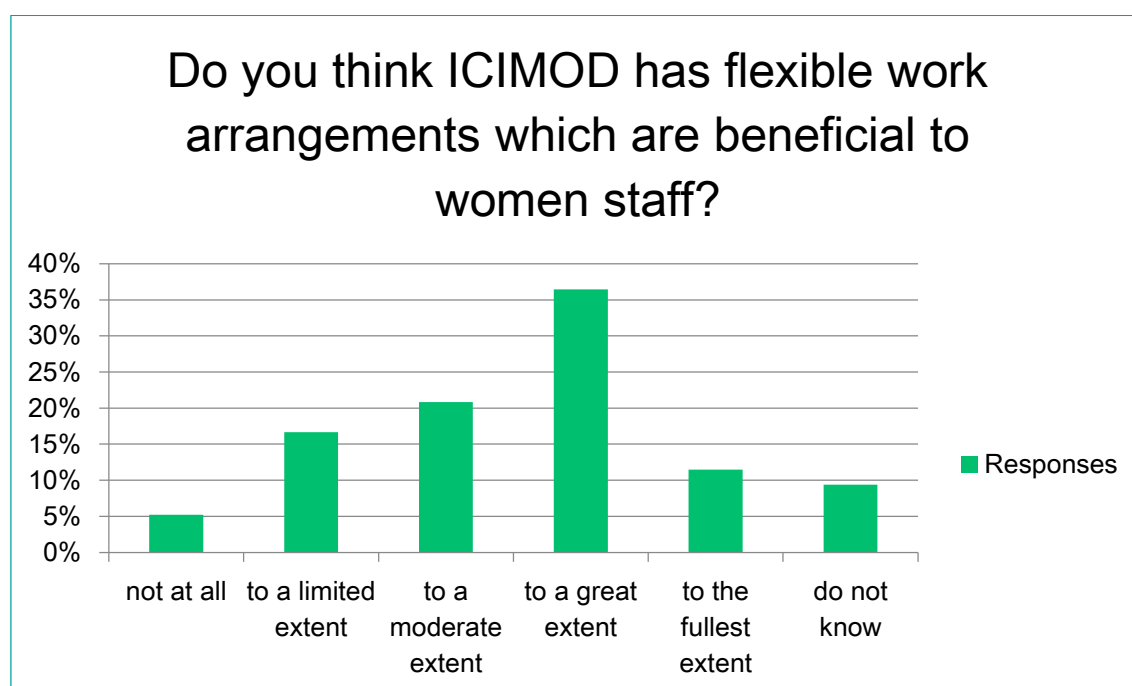
Source: Staff Perception Survey, ICIMOD, 2020

ICIMOD does not tolerate sexual harassment in any form. In the Anti-Sexual Harassment Procedure it outlines procedures for implementation of the Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy at the Centre. 90% of the survey respondents strongly agreed that ICIMOD encourages gender sensitive behavior.

The core values and code of conduct for ICIMOD include "recognizing and respecting gender, diversity of cultures and inclusion, zero tolerance towards sexual harassment and to demonstrate mutual respect and courtesy to all, regardless of language, ethnicity, culture, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation or health status."

The learning and development policy directs that the HR/OD section would provision for training in their budget for institutional training on generic core including gender related sensitization.

ICIMOD has adopted a process of completing a Management by Objective (MbO) template with a category on 'Institutional Objectives for Strategic Orientation' asking for contribution made in and outside the organization towards 'Gender Equality, Interdisciplinary and teamwork, Impact/Result based orientation' which staff and supervisors complete. This is reviewed during staff performance review and has supported staff to identify specific gender related goals. But as shared during consultations, these goals are not shared with the gender core team and hence are not optimally used for identifying and responding to different gender related goals.

53% and 22% survey respondents believed that ICIMOD to a great and moderate extent respectively, has a gender sensitive human resource policy. 29% to a great extent and 29% to a moderate extent believed ICIMOD has made provisions for capacity development for staff – see figure below.
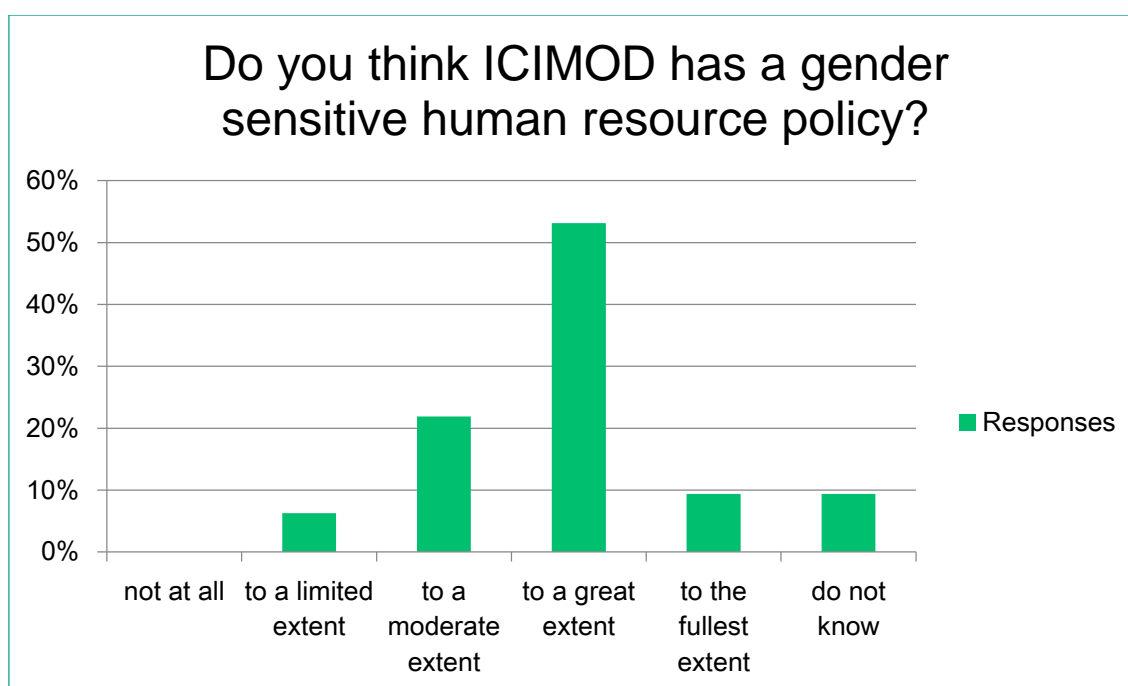
Source: Staff Perception Survey, ICIMOD, 2020

To the question that men have a much easier time in establishing personal and professional networks within ICIMOD than women, 20% women agreed and 10% strongly agreed while about 15% men disagreed with this statement.

The HR policy does not include any gender related criteria in the reasons for dismissal of any person due to unsatisfactory performance. The performance evaluation criteria includes assessment against TORs and Job Descriptions but does not specify any criteria related to gender equality issues. A review of the ToRs (see below) indicates that gender responsibilities are not systematically integrated in the roles of different position which would result in staff performance being evaluated without a gender lens.

Terms of Reference

A review of a sample of nineteen ToRs[4] of ICIMOD staff indicates that a section on a "Gender and Equity policy" is included in many, although not all. Generally it is stated that "qualified and eligible women candidates and those from disadvantaged backgrounds are highly encouraged to apply" and further states about the day-care centre support the office provides.

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[4] The ToRs of DG, DDG, DAF, 2 RPMs, 1 PC, 2 TLs, 3 Unit Heads, 2 Programme Officers, 2 Programme Associates, 2 Analysts, and a Specialist shared by ICIMOD, were reviewed for gender equality and social inclusion mainstreaming.

This is good as it will enable candidates with young children to decide about the job. Even though 38% survey respondents stated that gender awareness/gender sensitivity is included in all job descriptions, the tasks of the different professionals include gender equality responsibilities in some cases only. The highlights of the review are presented in the table below.

Position	GESI Coverage
Director General	The profile of the Director General's role does not include any aspects of gender equality, women's empowerment or social inclusion. The DG provides strategic direction and leadership and has overall responsibility for the organization but there is a critical gap with the absence of any description of the leadership in recognizing and responding to issues of the mountain ethnic communities, the differing gender dynamics within the communities and the requirements to ensure their issues are well addressed in all aspects of ICIMOD's work.
Deputy Director General	The Deputy Director General has a responsibility to "ensure that gender is addressed throughout ICIMOD's work and work closely with Gender Lead of the Centre." The qualification require a "proven track record in promoting and supporting gender equity."
Regional Programme Manager (RPM)	The ToRs of the RPM of Transboundary Landscapes and of Atmosphere have included a point regarding a proven track record of "promoting and supporting gender equity" under "qualifications." They have not explicitly included any gender equity related tasks under the key responsibilities of leadership and programme management, planning and coordination, budgeting and financial management, coordination and communication with stakeholders, engaging relevant human resources, monitoring the delivery of results, and ensuring the proper dissemination and outreach of impacts. Each responsibility requires to mainstream gender equality/equity issues but that has not been specifically embedded in the ToR.
Programme Coordinator	The ToRs of the Programme Coordinator, Cryosphere Initiative and Atmosphere have a point under one of the 8 key responsibilities, collaboration and partnership management to "ensure that the role and participation of women are effectively integrated within the programme." The other key responsibilities of programme management, planning budgeting, monitoring, capacity development, communication, research have not included any gender related duties.
Theme Leaders	The ToRs of Theme Leaders of Thematic Area of Ecosystem Services and Water and Air, state that the Theme Leader is part of the Programme Management Committee and Planning Review Committee, committees which oversee key elements like gender. The six main responsibility areas again do not reflect any gender equity/equality related duties.
Head of Knowledge Management and Communication; Biodiversity Specialist	The ToR of the Head of Knowledge Management and Communication/Senior KM Specialist Unit has included under "skills and competencies", "demonstrating sensitivity for cultural and gender differences" but there are no key responsibilities related to gender. The ToR of the Biodiversity Specialist has included a number of gender related tasks in the ToR, e.g to consider gender as a cross-cutting theme in developing the knowledge and biodiversity database

Position	GESI Coverage
	and outreach and programme profiling materials; to work as a team player within ICIMOD to promote institutional goals, especially related to gender. The minimum qualifications also includes "good knowledge in the areas of gender and social inclusion."
Other Roles	There are no gender related duties included in the responsibilities of Director of Administration and Finance (DAF), Senior Officer and Unit Head HR/OD, Senior Programme Finance Officer, Programme Officers, Geospatial Programmer Application Developer Analyst, Ecosystem Analyst, Knowledge Management and Communication Officers, Programme Associate (Adaptation and Resilience), Media Associate.

A lack of gender equality and social inclusion related responsibilities in the ToRs constrains operationalization of the transformative agenda identified in the Gender and Equity Policy of ICIMOD and to achieve the strategic results of MTAP-IV. The staff during the consultations shared the different efforts made to address gender issues, with the RPMs, PCs, Theme Leaders taking interest and proactively identifying opportunities to address issues of women and the marginalized. With clearer indications of gender equality and social inclusion related duties, all staff would be able to achieve more. Staff performance evaluation cannot also reflect gender and inclusion related efforts unless the ToR includes such responsibilities.

Gender Balance in Staffing

In the 2018 Annual Report the staff section reported that there were a total of 295 staff, of which 174 (59%) were men, while 121 (41%) were women. In the 2019 Annual Report it was reported that the figures were: 298 staff in total, 174 (59%) men, and 123 (41%) women. This shows that the increased levels reported in the 2016 Gender Audit have been maintained. Efforts have been made to increase the numbers of women in the management and decision making levels of the organization. However, progress has been relatively slow, although there are now three women members of the Senior Management Committee (out of a total of eight) and the newly appointed DDG is also a women (due to start in May 2021).

According to disaggregated data provided by ICIMOD HR unit, out of total of 281 staff, 41% were women. The Directorate since 2017 has had 16 men and no women. Over a period of 2017-2019, of the 7 Senior Management Committee positions, 2 were women (i.e. 28%) but in 2020 this increased to 3 women of the 8 positions (37.5%). The proportion of women at Regional Programme Manager, Unit Head, Programme Coordinator, Team Leader, and Gender Lead level increased from 41% in 2017 to 56% in 2020. At the professional staff level there was a slight decrease, from 30% in 2017-2018, to 29% in 2019-2020. The proportion of women in the GS/TS staff category was at 57% in 2020. Amongst the SSAs, men were consistently higher than women and were at 56% out of 70 SSAs in 2020. Of the interns in 2020, 83% were women, a considerable increase from 2018-2019 when the proportion was around 43%. There has been a conscious effort to improve gender diversity within the staff. Even the administration and travel/hospitality units promote women drivers, gardeners, and canteen caterers. But there is an absence of staff with disabilities or staff from the LGBTI+ community. Additionally, despite working with the mountain ethnic communities, their representation amongst staff is not tracked.

Women survey respondents (30%) believed that ICIMOD did not have a gender balanced staff in the overall structure while almost 35% men believed that it did have. 66% of the survey respondents believed that there has been an increasing trend in representation of women in management positions since 2016 Gender Audit. But 68% believed that there was a need for proactive strategies to recruit or promote women into ICIMOD's workforce. 80% stated that there is a need for proactive strategies to recruit or promote women into ICIMOD's workforce

at senior management level. 47% of the survey respondents believed that ICIMOD has a gender balanced staff in the overall structure though 41% did not think so – see figure below.
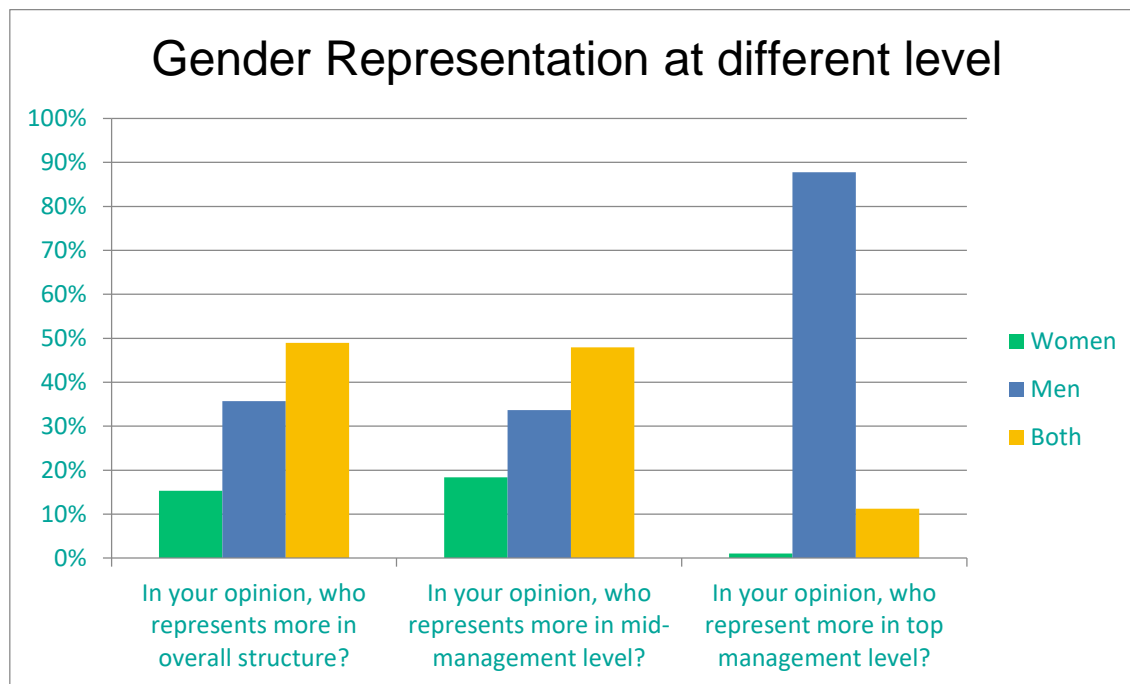
Source: Staff Perception Survey, ICIMOD, 2020

3. Gender in Programmes and Initiatives

For the purposes of the Gender Audit the Regional Programmes were analysed according to the operational framework for GESI mainstreaming. The review covered how gender equality and social inclusion aspects were addressed in the programmes (including its initiatives) policies, institutional arrangements, budgeting and M&E systems. The analysis was based on document review and meetings with Regional Programme Manager, Programme Coordinator and project staff of RP initiatives and selected partners. The detailed review was summarized against the pillars of the gender transformative agenda of the Gender and Equity Policy – see Annex 6.

Strategic Results, Outcomes and Indicators

The Strategy and Results Framework for ICIMOD (SRF 2017) sets out for the organization:

- Vision - Men, women, and children of the Hindu Kush Himalayas enjoy improved wellbeing in a healthy mountain environment.

- Mission - To enable sustainable and resilient mountain development for improved and equitable livelihoods through knowledge and regional cooperation.

The links with the SDGs are further spelled out:

All eight of ICIMOD's member countries (RMCs) are committed to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Most of the 17 SDGs align with ICIMOD's priorities, and mountains are specifically mentioned in two: 'Clean Water' and 'Life on Land'. ICIMOD's impact areas – poverty reduction, reduced physical and social vulnerability, and improved ecosystem services – are enshrined in these SDGs, and the balance drawn among economic, social, and environmental dimensions of development across the SDG agenda fits well with ICIMOD's strategy and approach.

The Strategy and Results Framework builds on the 2012 Framework, with seven Strategic Results and with the significant addition of a result focused on GESI (highlighted in bold):

1. Widespread adoption of innovations and practices developed by ICIMOD and partners to adapt to change, leading to positive impacts for women, men, and children

2. Significant advances in the generation and use of relevant data, knowledge, and analysis.

3. **Significant advances made in approaches and knowledge that promote gender equality and inclusive development.**

4. Significantly developed human and institutional capacity.

5. Policies considerably influenced by the work of ICIMOD and its partners.

6. Enhanced regional cooperation related to sustainable mountain development.

7. Global recognition of the importance of mountains to ensure improved and resilient livelihoods and ecosystems.

The Strategy and Results Framework was further operationalised in the fourth Medium-term Action Plan (MTAP-IV) for 2018-2022, which in particular sets out the outcomes for the six Regional Programmes (RPs). With reference to GESI, it is stated that: ICIMOD has made the significant step to include gender and inclusive development as a strategic result that we promise to deliver. Further, it is committed that ICIMOD will: Enhance its analytic capacity on gender during the next framework; Integrate gender across programmes, and make sure that gender issues are included in policy engagement.

In MTAP-IV, the links between the SRF and the RPs are spelled out, that: strategic results are linked to strategic impacts supported by outcomes from the Regional Programmes; Regional programme outcome indicators are mapped in relation to each strategic result; and, Key measurement indicators (KMIs) will be introduced to capture the regional programmes contributions to the strategic results.

MTAP-IV sets out ICIMOD's approach to using theory of change and impact pathways, that: a theory-based approach to impact can help to draw out the main pathways in order to make the Theory of Change (ToC) explicit in terms of different actors and users of outputs and outcomes leading to development impacts. The Theories of Change for each of the Regional Programmes cover gender equality and social inclusion, although to varying degrees, with the exception of RP6. The ToCs for RP2, RP3 and RP4, identify women and men or gender responsive practices in the outcomes for the programme, while RP1 identifies social equity amongst the strategies to achieve the programme and RP5 focuses on gender sensitivity in the pathways of change. There is scope, therefore, both to ensure a more systematic and consistent approach across the programmes and for the programmes to learn from each other. Additionally, there is a lack of programmatic interventions to transform structural issues of discrimination. For example, one initiative partner stated: We have added interventions to address gender based violence issues and increase awareness of men as otherwise women were unable to participate in the flood warning system effectively.

Similarly, there is considerable variation in the ways in which the RPs approach GESI in the outcomes and indicators – see table below with all GESI sensitive indicators emphasized in *italics*.

RP and Outcome	Indicators
RP1: Adaptation and Resilience Building Enhanced resilience of HKH women and men to socioeconomic and environmental changes, including climate change.	*Number of women and men who benefit from innovative interventions by reducing poverty, risk and vulnerabilities leading to resilience* *Number of local institutions adopting gender sensitive, risk reduction and resilience building practices in areas of community DRR, tourism access to clean energy, natural resource management, value chain development, and adaptation to climate change* *Number of regional, national, and sub-national institutions making use of the gender sensitive Resilient Mountain Solution Approach promoted by the programme that reduce poverty, risks and vulnerabilities and promote resilience.* Number of mountain-specific national or sub-national development policies making use of recommended practices and knowledge. Effective regional knowledge and experience sharing mechanisms supporting regional member countries to promote mountain-specific resilience practices. Number of global fora at which ICIMOD's mountain-specific resilience agenda are promoted by regional member country representatives and institutions.
RP2: Transboundary Landscapes Improved transboundary cooperation among member countries demonstrated through regional policies and	Number of sub-national, national, regional and global institutions and networks using programme inputs for developing good quality and inclusive projects, programmes, research/monitoring protocols, frameworks, and guidelines in mountain landscapes (including a mix of forests, rangelands, farming systems, soils, springsheds, watersheds, wetlands, peatlands) for sustenance of ecosystem services and poverty reduction.

RP and Outcome	Indicators
strategic partnerships leading to sustenance of mountain ecosystem services and equitable livelihood benefits at regional landscape levels.	Number of high quality long-term research and monitoring results used for development of approaches to transboundary management, planning and implementation that are suitable to the complex biophysical, social-cultural and historical relationships within the HKH Number of policies and decision making processes influenced at sub-national, national, sub-regional and regional levels leading to sustainable landscape management and effective regional cooperation. Number of references showing ICIMOD's highly quality contributions to global agenda settings (SDGs, UNFCCC—Global Landscape Forum, IPBES, IPCC and CBD) and commitments (NDC) for promoting sustainable mountain development. *Number of women and men benefited in equitable manner by integrated conservation and development approaches in identified transboundary landscapes leading to sustenance of ecosystem services and poverty reduction.*
RP3: River Basins and Cryosphere RMC policies, strategies, and development programmes highly critical to water resources management and disaster risk reduction in HKH region influenced through robust evidence from scientific research, gender responsive practices and capacity building in the areas of river basins and cryosphere.	*Number of policies and strategies using ICIMOD outputs related to integrative and inclusive water resource development and management, and equitable benefit sharing that leads to reduced physical vulnerabilities and reduced poverty.* *Number of organizations effectively using and adopting innovative, gender sensitive, and context-specific water resource management practices at different scales using a water-energy-food nexus approach.* Number of organizations from RMCs engaged in regional cooperation on cryosphere, climate services, and DRR contributing to reduced physical and social vulnerabilities. Number of selected RMCs with substantial amounts of cryosphere in their territory having long-term and scientifically-robust monitoring programmes on these resources.
RP4: Atmosphere RMCs use science-based knowledge on air quality, atmospheric processes and climate to shape policies and actions leading to air pollution mitigation for improved environmental and human health.	Number of effective local, national and regional policies, processes, and strategies using inputs and analyses from the programme in the areas of air quality, and environmental and human health to foster air pollution mitigation. Number of instances showing global policy processes (UNFCCC, CCAC, IPCC) influenced by the programme. Evidence of effective regional collaborations on atmosphere, clean energy, or climate in the HKH. *Number of women and men, and number of institutions in the RMCs, empowered effectively through capacity building to address air pollution.* *Number of initiatives launched by governments, communities, and the private sector to take sustainable, gender-sensitive, and socially inclusive measures to improve air quality leading to reduced poverty and social vulnerabilities*

RP and Outcome	Indicators
RP5: Mountain Environment Regional Information System (MENRIS) Significantly contributed to effective evidence-based decision making processes by governments, communities and individuals using scientific data, earth observation information, and geospatial technologies in the areas of agriculture, the environment, natural resources, and climate change.	*Number of institutions and programmes effectively using high-quality information services and climate services for gender-sensitive and inclusive decision making on natural and social systems at different levels (community, national, sub-national, and regional) leading to reduced poverty, vulnerabilities and improved ecosystem services.* *Number of women and men using ICIMOD's databases within and beyond the region through innovative platforms.* *Increased number of originations and people (women and men) using earth observation and geospatial solutions as a result of capacity development.* Effective mechanisms in place at national and regional levels that promote open access to scientific and geospatial data. Number of instances ICIMOD is recognized in global geospatial networks, forums, and exchanges.
RP6: Mountain Knowledge and Action Networks Enhanced capacity and collaboration among universities, research alliances, policy makers, and youth for sustainable development in the HKH and adjoining regions.	Increased number of universities employing high quality relevant curricula related to mountains and environmental economics influenced by the programme. *Number of instances that collaborative research and gender inclusive training programs are organized by network members with their own resources.* Increased number and quality of peer-reviewed publications by network members. *Number of HUC fellows both women and men demonstrating effective sustainable mountain development work following the completion of an HUC scholarship and leadership program with priority to women.* An effective regional platform that uses science-policy dialogues for regional cooperation leading to poverty reduction, improved ecosystem services and reduced vulnerabilities. Number of national and sub-national policies influenced by the programme that contributes to poverty reduction and reducing social vulnerabilities Number of instances where youth acquire new skills and leadership for promoting sustainable mountain development

In terms of outcomes, those for RP1, RP2 and RP3 all specifically reference gender equality or inclusion, while that for RP4 mentions 'improved environmental and human health' but does not make reference to equality or inclusion, which is a missed opportunity. The outcomes for RP5 and RP6 are focused more on key mechanisms for delivering data and influence and, thus, it is more appropriate that the focus on GESI be in the indicators.

In terms of indicators:

- RP1, RP2, RP4, RP5 and RP6 all use sex-disaggregated indicators;

- RP1, RP3, RP4 and RP5 all make reference to the gender sensitivity of the approaches used, while RP6 references gender inclusive training;
- RP1, RP3, RP4, RP5 all reference inclusive approaches leading to more equitable outcomes or reduced vulnerabilities.

Given the focus in the Vision, Mission and Strategic Results on GESI across ICIMOD's work, it is expected that: indicators should be sex-disaggregated as a matter of course; and, gender sensitive and socially inclusive approaches should always be referenced together.

Themes

ICIMOD has identified four themes, Ecosystem, Geospatial Solutions, Livelihood and Water and Air, **which provide core competencies, advance knowledge on key topics, and provide information to programmes.** Discussion with the theme leads indicated that the themes were making an effort to integrate gender aspects in their thematic work to influence programmes as they were guided by the gender and equity policy and the GAPs.

The Water and Air Theme while technically focused, assesses how the biophysical side impacts social aspects, including gender. Gender is integrated in research and capacity building. A framework to collect disaggregated data to inform evidence-based policy decision, and action planning has been developed. The theme has developed a protocol to revive spring/watershed management, and other aspects related to pollution and atmosphere aspects from a gender perspective. "In the project when we used to do transect walk , mostly local men were met and consulted in a conventional way. This has changed now, we include women and youth in every consultation" A training module in spring shed management integrates gender in each step. The springshed management approach aims to empower women in the decision-making process, enhance their capacity for technology transfer, and strengthen the local government-community connect to create a transformative change. The livelihood theme too addresses equity in all its research. Its efforts are to increase women's access to productive resources, enhance their capacity for livelihood diversification and identify risks and challenges for mountain entrepreneurship, including the effect of high male migration. The ecosystem theme experts develop context specific frameworks for programmes, recognizing gender differentiated roles in accessing and managing ecosystem resources.

Knowledge Management and Communication

Knowledge Management and Communication is the cross-cutting support that facilitates information flow and communication between the RMCs and beyond. 900 general knowledge products and 119 technical papers were published in 2020 but there is no mechanism to track gender integration in all. The products sent in by the gender team include gender but for the others, it depends on the team and incorporation included in the materials sent to the KMC unit.

For knowledge products, the unit is a receiver, it works with the materials it is sent by the programmes and other units. The Knowledge Management and Communication team are authors, and editors. Efforts are made to include photos and language requires to be gender sensitive. But data collection with gender in mind is not done consciously by all.

The Publication and Outreach Committee, which guides the knowledge management work in ICIMOD, has no representation of the gender team in the Committee so the issue does not get the attention it requires. The committee has not demanded that gender tracking should be done or provided relevant tools, and processes for it.

Gender Action Plans

Gender Action Plans were developed for each of the Regional Programmes in 2017 with the Gender Team supporting the programme teams to carry out the analysis and develop the plans. All of the GAPs were developed using the same effective approach: an analysis of the dimensions of the overall programme outcome and the gender issues for each of these dimensions; using this analysis to identify gender specific goals or objectives, with actions to take forward and indicators to track; and, then setting out the actions in more specific detail, with responsibilities and timelines as well as resources needed. In the interviews and group discussions the majority of RP staff stated that they appreciated the support provided and that the exercise had been a useful means to explore and develop what needs to be done in the programmes in concrete terms.

In the interviews and group discussions, two issues came up repeatedly: the need for further support and guidance to ensure that concepts and approaches are operationalized and applied more effectively; and, uncertainty over where the budgets to implement objectives and actions in the GAPs should come from. Reviews and updates of the GAPs were underway as the Gender Audit was taking place, although a number of programme staff commented on the fact that this process was run in parallel to the existing planning and budgeting processes. These views are backed up in the responses to the survey, where two of the main obstacles to incorporating gender into the programmes were identified as: lack of staff skills (37%) and lack of financial resources (39%) – see figure below.
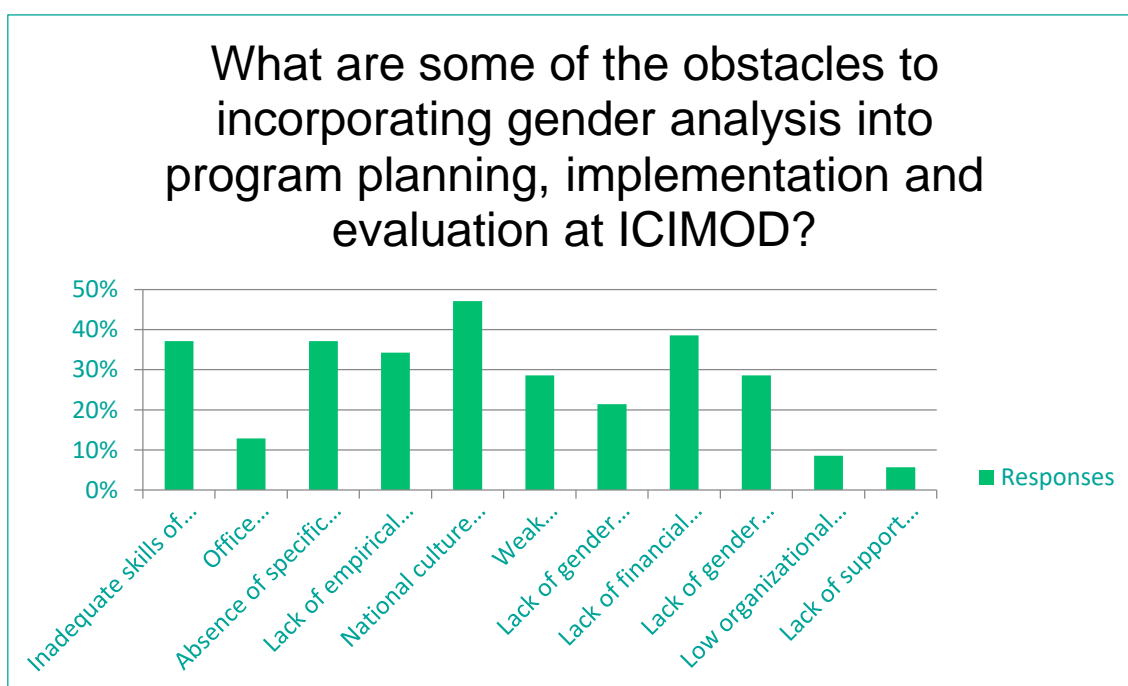
Source: Staff Perception Survey, ICIMOD, 2020

While all of the GAPs for the six RPs are set out in some detail, comparisons between them, shows that there is considerable variation in how concretely these plans are set out. In a number of cases, while the objectives are clearly set out, the actions often make reference to the development of tools, guidelines or provisions without specifying what these are or outline processes or means without setting out their overall aims. In contrast, the GAPs for RP4 and RP6 are particularly detailed and specific in terms of both objectives and actions, focusing on the initiative level. For example:

- RP4 - the objectives lay out the expected achievements, while the actions set out a linked series of activities to achieve this end;

- RP6 – there are objectives that are specific to initiatives under the programme, while again the actions are focused on the achievement of these objectives.

In the reporting of progress against the GAPs in 2020, a similar range, in terms of level of detail and progress made, was noted in the analysis carried out for the Gender Audit. In a number of the RPs, there were significant differences in the level of detail given, with examples where some initiatives have provided detailed progress reports while other initiatives have made general statements that gender issues are integrated in all activities. Again, RP4 is particularly notable in reporting detailed and specific progress against concrete actions for all of the initiatives under the programme. With the process of reviewing the current GAPs underway, there is an opportunity for learning between the programmes in order to develop more specific (and measurable) objectives, with concrete actions to deliver these.

Workplans and Budgets

Following on from the SRF 2017 and the MTAP-IV, in May 2018 the Board of Governors and the ICIMOD Support Group approved the Plan and Budget for 2019. The Plan and Budget provides details of activities and outputs planned for each initiative under ICIMOD's six RPs. For the purposes of the Gender Audit, an analysis of the Plan and Budget was carried out, looking at: the extent to which gender equality and social inclusion are referenced in RP outputs; and, in turn, the extent to which budgets for gender specific actions can be tracked. As with the analysis of outcomes and indicators and of GAPs, this has shown considerable variations in the ways in which Regional Programmes have approached these issues.

There are numerous specific Actions in the budget that do reference gender equality and social inclusion, although it has not been possible to then identify specific budget allocations, although there are some examples where outputs do appear to have a gender focus.

- RP1 – Output 2 (Innovative resilient solutions developed, tested and demonstrated focusing on poverty reduction) has a budget of USD 651,950, 46% of the total budget; Output 3 (Women and marginalized groups have easy access to technologies and opportunities in resilience building) has a budget of USD 76,200, about 5% of the total budget.

- RP6 - The HUC Initiative has a specific output on GESI, Output 1 (Support provided to the development/ adoption of mountain- and HKH-specific, GESI course syllabi/ curricula by HUC members) which has a budget of USD 36,162, 5% of the total HUC budget.

- RP2, RP3, RP4, RP5 – None of the outputs under these programmes have any gender or inclusion related design elements explicitly stated, although gender issues were addressed in a number of the Actions. Again, there is variations in the approach under individual RPs, so that, for example, RP2 has three Actions under KSL and one Action under HKPL, while the other three initiatives have no Actions.

The identification of Outputs and Actions that are GESI specific is of particular importance, as it provides a potential linkage to budget allocations necessary for implementation. This is worth noting at this stage of the implementation of the Gender Policy as, in interviews and group discussions with staff, one of the main obstacles referred to was the lack of budgets to be able to implement gender specific objectives from GAPs.

In the group discussions with staff from each of the six programme teams they were asked to identify successes and achievements in implementing the GAPs, as well as looking at obstacles and ongoing challenges. As part of the analysis process, comparisons were made with the Plan and Budget analysis, which showed that there are many more examples of gender activities underway than are currently shown in the Workplan and Budget for 2019. For example, for RP2 it was possible to identify Actions under KLCDI, Hi-LIFE and REDD+, as well as two further Actions under HKPL, where there are both gender and inclusion

activities underway. While the Workplan and Budget for 2020 was not available for this Gender Audit, this nevertheless suggests that there are more Actions under the RPs and Initiatives where GESI could be more explicitly identified.

In the survey staff were asked about the ways in which the programmes contribute to gender equity and identified the major areas as being: access to resources (84%), access to training (89%), participation in decision-making (68%), and material well-being (65%) – see figure below.
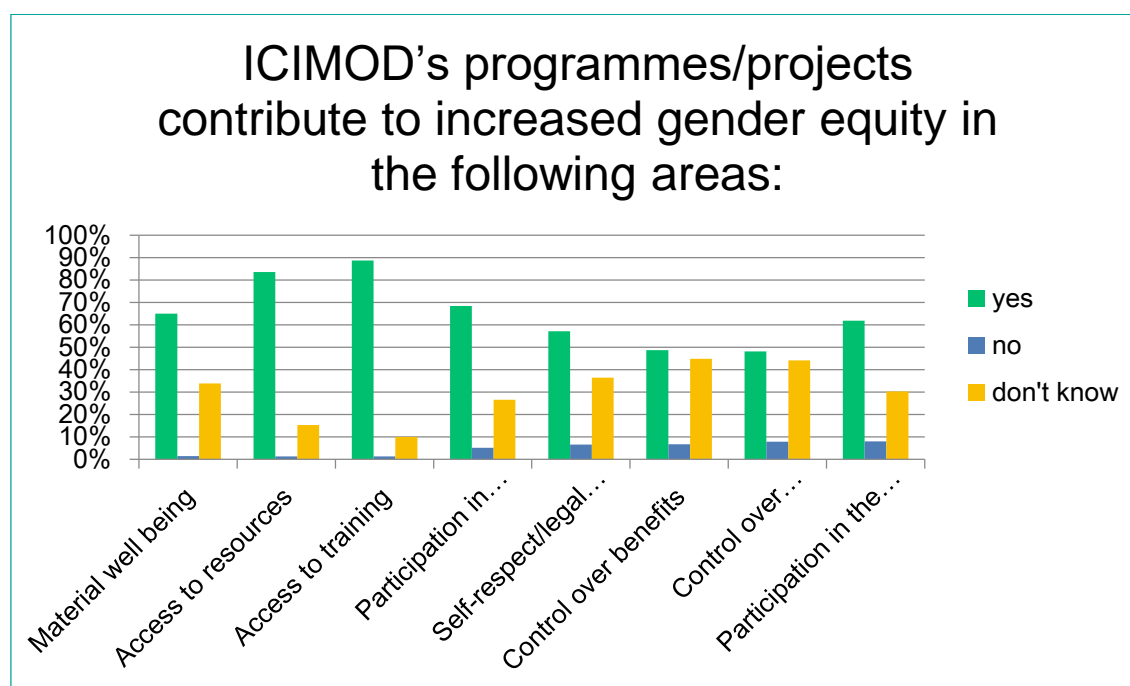
Source: Staff Perception Survey, ICIMOD, 2020

There is, then, a strong case for integrating the GAP review and planning process into the regular planning and budgeting processes, rather than continuing with them as separate exercises. In the initial stages of implementing the Gender and Equity Policy the development of the GAPs has played an important role in both emphasizing the importance of the policy and the strategic objective and in building understanding of gender and inclusion issues in the programmes. In interviews and group discussions many staff made reference to the usefulness of the GAP planning exercises and to the support from the Gender Team. At the same time, a number of staff commented on the need to strengthen the focus now on operationalizing and applying concepts in more concrete terms. Integrating the GAP planning with the regular planning and budgeting processes has the potential to support this strengthened focus, building on and learning from what has been achieved so far. It also has the benefit of providing an opportunity to ensure both that GESI is more consistently referred to in Actions and Outputs and that these are backed up with budget allocations to enable implementation.

Monitoring, Evaluating and Reporting

Detailed MEL Plans have been developed for each of the Regional Programmes covering the indicators identified in the MTAP-IV – discussed above. Importantly the MEL Plans include definitions of the main terms used in the indicators, which has provided an opportunity for comparison in the ways in which the terms 'gender sensitive' and 'equitable, inclusive, poverty reduction, reduced vulnerability' have been approached. This has helped to identify good examples from the RPs of both definitions, as set out in the box below. The examples of definitions of 'gender sensitive' are complementary, with: RP1, Indicator 3 defining in terms of expected outcomes; while RP3, Indicator 2 provides a list of potential outcomes that could be

measured. The examples of definitions of 'equitable, inclusive, poverty reduction, reduced vulnerability' are again complementary, with: RP2, Indicator 5 and RP3, Indicator 1 providing a definition in terms of both expected outputs and expected outcomes; while, RP4, Indicator 5 provides specific expected outcomes. Again, the identification of good examples provides the scope for learning across the programmes and for a more consistent approach to how programmes are monitored and assessed.

Gender Sensitive Definitions

RP1, Indicator 3 - These approaches are considered gender sensitive if they explicitly strengthen the resilience of women and men - that is result in positive changes in the MDPI of men and women & in positive changes in the resilience of female and male owner enterprises.

RP3, Indicator 2 - The practice should be something new (innovative) and it should have impact on women in terms of reduced workload, time saving, reducing vulnerabilities and enhancing women's capabilities to solve their own problems.

Equitable, Inclusive, Poverty Reduction, Reduced Vulnerability Definitions

RP2, Indicator 5 - The benefits here are expected to be equitable which means inclusion of women and men from indigenous groups and socially marginalized communities are benefitting through fair and transparent benefit sharing mechanisms according to their needs.

RP3, Indicator 1 - The integrative and inclusive means that the poor and marginalized segment of the society should also benefit and the benefits should be shared according to the needs of the community.

RP4, Indicator 5 - We particularly wish to flag those initiatives that (1) do not have a net negative effect on the environment or that are expected to be economically viable; or (2) that are expected to lead to decreases in women's and children's air pollution exposure; or (3) that promote improved livelihoods for underprivileged people. also wish to flag those initiatives that have a strong focus on fair distribution of income (etc.); that create safety nets for workers and their families, and that treat workers displaced by technology fairly.

One important mechanism that was introduced to support the GAPs was the requirement that, as part of the regular annual review process, all Regional Programme teams are required to report on their progress in implementing gender specific actions. Specifically, it is required that the programme staff (and importantly not the gender specialist) should be the ones reporting. It was notable in the interviews and group discussions that programme staff were confident about discussing the gender aspects of the programmes and could provide numerous and specific examples of successes. This mechanism is clearly something that has contributed to an increased focus on the importance of gender in the programmes.

Since the introduction of the Gender Policy, the two most recent Annual Reports, for 2018 and 2019, have included a specific chapter on Gender and Social Inclusion. This has provided a public place to both highlight the work that ICIMOD has been doing and the specific achievements within the programmes. Both Annual Reports highlight a range of examples of gender work from across the programmes, working at different levels, from the community level to providing greater opportunities for women fields such as GIT. Also notable during the period of the audit, was the publication of the first Hindu Kush Himalaya Assessment in 2019, which included a specific chapter addressing the questions: How do gender-equitable and inclusive approaches support sustainable mountain development, and how can these be realized? The Assessment provides the basis for a detailed baseline on the current situation in the region, while the HKH Call to Action provides a set of specific Actions for taking forward.

4. Gender and ICIMOD Partners

ICIMOD works with and through a wide range of local, national, regional and international partner organizations. A Strategic Cooperation Unit has been established to systemize partnership services. The partnership approach is grounded in five key principles: diversity, equity, transparency, synergy, and mutual benefit[5]. ICIMOD's Partnership Strategy (2013) provides criteria for partner identification and selection and outlines the process for partnership relation building. The partnership is expected to contribute to the attainment of ICIMOD's goals through works in regional programmes, thematic areas, and knowledge management and communication with emphasis on the Centre's crosscutting themes of gender, governance, inclusive development, economic analysis and poverty.[6]

In line with the ICIMOD's overall goal and specific needs of Thematic Areas, RPs and KMC, the portfolio of partner organizations (POs) encompasses a broad spectrum of research organizations, academia, community-based organizations (CBOs) and NGOs, the private sector, and local/national government departments. The four types of partnerships, ICIMOD engages in, are presented in the box below.

The four major types of partnerships that ICIMOD engages in are:

(1) **Strategic and policy partners** to support development and formulation of mountain-specific development strategies, policies and legislation. They include focal ministries and national, regional and global organizations. The partnerships are usually formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

(2) **Implementation and operational partners** to support RPs implementation either individually or through the consortium of partners. The partnership is usually formalized through a Letter of Agreement (LoA) with financial obligations.

(3) **Network and knowledge partners** and network for advocacy, outreach, knowledge sharing and exchange and dissemination. They include universities/academic institutions; regional and global network organizations; science partners and thematic networks;

(4) **Development partners** are bilateral and multilateral international development funding partners in the framework of both financial and technical cooperation.

Gender and Partner Selection

Partners are identified on the basis of shared agendas, goals, and mutual interests. In the case of implementation partnerships, selection is based on due diligence and formal tender processes as well. Interactions with partners, before signing the agreement, also include discussions on gender integration. The initiatives' objectives, related to gender and inclusion, are considered during the planning phase.

The Partnership Strategy has laid out numbers of criterion on three key domains as guidelines to help   partner selections process. Although only one criteria (under institutional domain) is directly linked with gender integration, interaction with ICIMOD team (RPs, TAs and KMC) indicated that several other criterion (such as shared objectives, impacts, ability to influence agenda, expertise, efficiency and human resource) are also linked with gender integration indirectly.

Partner selection criteria and linked with gender integration

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[5] Strategy and Results Framework 2017, ICIMOD
[6] Partnership Strategy 2013 ICIMOD

Key domains	General	Direct linked with gender integration	Indirect linked with gender integration
Strategic criteria	• Ownership demonstrated by willingness to contribute to the partnership/project from own resources • Outreach		• Shared or complementary objectives • Proven impact orientation and impacts • Ability to influence the political agenda at national, regional, or global levels
Institutional criteria	• Reputation and credibility • Legal status • Sustainable funding • Relationship with relevant public or private sector institutions	Track record of a gender-sensitive and socially inclusive orientation	• Transparent governance and decision-making processes • Track record of quality work in the respective fields
Capacity for cooperation	• Managerial, administrative, and financial management capacity –		• Relevant areas of expertise • Effectiveness and efficiency in reaching objectives • Availability of human resources in relevant fields of cooperation

The Perception Survey with ICIMOD staff indicates that only 50% of the staff members believed "commitment to gender incorporation" as a criterion in selection of partner organization while 10% of them did not think so[7]. About 39 % were unaware about such criterion – see figure below. This shows staff members have yet to be fully oriented on the Partnership Strategy.
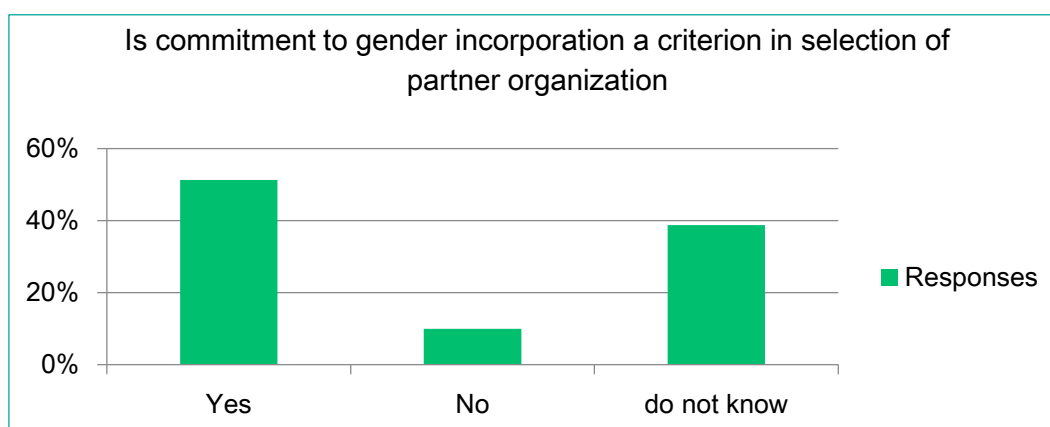
Source: Staff Perception Survey, ICIMOD, 2020

Gender and Partnership Agreement

A review of thirteen sample partnership agreements[8] indicated that the partnership principles (synergy, equity, transparency and mutual benefits), in general, were included in majority of

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[7] The staff survey was open to all staff and while some questions were directed to specific staff all questions were open to all respondents.

[8] Partnership agreements reviewed of these POs: 1) Myanmar Institute of Integrated Development 2) Gross National Happiness commission/ Department of Agriculture / Debarment of cottage and small industries 3) RECAST (2018) 4) RECAST (2020) 5) Department of Environment/ Lumbini Development Trust 6) National environment commission 7) Minergy Pvt Ltd 8) Forest research and training center, Ministry of forest 9) Kabul

the agreements – see Annex 5 for detail. However, in some agreements with government institutions, such principles were not included.[9] Thus, there arises the issue of consistency on the contents of the partnership agreement on the issue pertaining to gender equality and social inclusion.

In a number of interviews, it was highlighted that government partners, in particular, are difficult to work with on gender equality. It was also stressed that this is an area where further work is required and where there is a need to develop approaches that take into account different cultural and social contexts.

While working with Implementing and Knowledge partners, the approach has been more systematic in terms of incorporation of gender and social inclusion provisions in the partnership agreements. More specifically, the following GESI related provisions were found in the partnership agreements reviewed:

- The inclusion of gender equality and social inclusion as a specific requirement with clear direction that gender equality be adopted as a programmatic approach; and

- Specific outcome/outputs are also included in the results matrix which promotes the targeting of women and disadvantaged groups.

ICIMOD is currently working with and through 172 partners. The partnerships are formalized through Letter of Agreement, Institutional Contract and MoU/ LoA. Yet among this large range of partners, there are nominal numbers of gender champions or women led organizations. The distribution of partners by programmes is available in the table below.

RPs	RP 1	RP 2	RP 3	RP 4	RP 5	RP 6	Total
Number of POs	13	30	39	20	23	47	172

Source: Partnership reports of RPs

Apparently, there are number of partnerships with specific GESI related purposes. This was evident in the purpose of the Partnership Reports of RPs. Some relevant examples found in these reports were as follows:

- Integrating gender in Natural Resources Management (NRM) Planning of Local Governments Nepal (RP 2);

- To assess formal and informal trade in ICIMOD's trans boundary landscapes with special focus on the nature of engagement of women in trade at local, national and cross- border levels (RP 2);

- Trans boundary water governance and the role of the institution to enhance the capacities of marginalized communities in Mahakali River Basin (RP 3);

- To develop a strategy paper and a proposal concept for CCAC "Skilling the workforce[10] for brick sector transformation in South Asia" (RP 4);

University,10) FECOFUN,11) WFP 12) Sherubtse Collage13) Shere-Re Kashmir University of Agriculture, science and Technology

[8] Examples: Department of Environment/ Lumbini Development Trust, National environment commission, Forest research and training center, Ministry of forest

[9] Examples: Department of Environment/ Lumbini Development Trust, National environment commission, Forest research and training center, Ministry of forest

[10] The workforce in brick kilns, generally, comes from the most disadvantaged and marginalized communities.

- Air pollution and its socio-economic impacts[11] in Lahore, Pakistan(RP 4);

- Joint organization of Empowering Women in GIT 2018 (RP 5);

- Research on Cities by Women: Uncovering the relationship between Gender, Land-use and Livelihoods for Embedding Climate Change Resilience in Himalayan cities(RP 6); and

- Research on Interfacing Indigenous Knowledge, Modern Science and Policymaking: Water and Climate Change in Hindu Kush Himalayas (RP 6).

Contribution to Gender Capacity Development of POs

Given that one of the four pillars of ICIMOD's gender transformative approach is: *'evidence-based advocacy for gender equitable policies, institutions and partnerships',* ICIMOD is committed to strengthening networks and partnerships for gender equality by raising awareness and strengthening the capacities of POs to address gender issues. It was apparent that there have been notable efforts to develop capacity of POs through gender trainings organized by ICIMOD and backstopping by the Gender team during the project development and implementation phase.[12]

There were diverse views related to training and tools on gender planning and analysis provided by the programmes to POs. A similar proportion of staff members perceived that support had been provided to both a limited extent and a moderate extent (19% in both cases), and while a higher proportion thought that support had been provided to a great extent (22%), some 28% expressed that they did not know – see figure below.

Staff perception on providing training and tools on gender planning, analysis and evaluation to partner organization
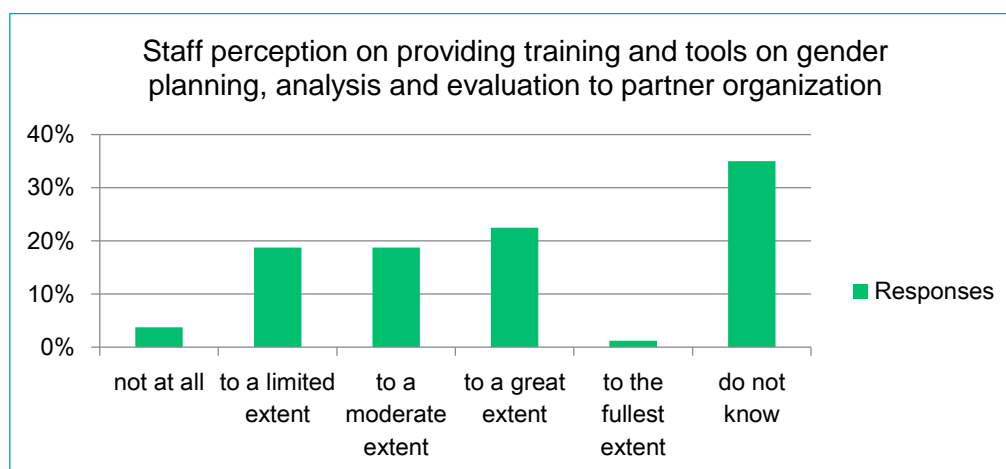
Source: Staff Perception Survey, ICIMOD, 2020

Consistency in terms of commitment to gender incorporation varies across the partners. Yet, the programme team has made conscious efforts to incorporate gender concerns in the works implemented by the partners. This was validated by the partners interacted with through the Gender Audit. They appreciated the rigor exercised by ICIMOD for gender integration in their work. Some examples of such efforts are presented in the box below.

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[11] Socio-economic impacts, here, also, specifically, look into the impact on the socially disadvantaged communities and excluded groups.

[12] This was inferred from various interactions with members of ICOMOD's programme team and with partner organizations.

- Kabul University, Afghanistan, had provided two trainings (Earth Observation and Geospatial Technologies for Water Resources Management) in 2017and (Land Cover Mapping Using Earth Observation) in 2019 with the support of ICIMOD. There were around 30 percent women participants in both the trainings. "These types of trainings, which upgrade the abilities of women, are rare opportunities for women in Afghanistan." Representatives of Kabul University shared that right from the outset; ICIMOD was keen on encouraging women's participation and providing equal opportunity during the sessions.

- Another partner, the Federation of Community Forestry Users Nepal (FECOFUN) also appreciated ICIMOD's commitment on gender incorporation in the partnership work. FECOFUN was approached by SERVIR for a partnership to collect data and information regarding climate sensitivity and degradation of forest ecosystems to inform forest management in Nepal. At the outset, SERVIR conducted a capacity building workshop with FECOFUN staff, to be on the same page in the understanding on gender dynamics within the community forests user groups and to include gender and social inclusion related questions. "We were among the pioneer organizations to have 50 percent women at all levels of the federation. Yet we learned a lot from ICIMOD in terms of integrating gender in each and every aspect of the survey." – shared by representative of FECOFUN.

- The TERI School of Advance Studies (India) provides a course on 'Gender Equity in Water management' in collaboration with the programme. They appreciated ICIMOD's effort to encourage women's participation in capacity and knowledge building. Many of the faculty members and students have participated in the ICIMOD's trainings programmes which give priority to women participants. "To us, ICIMOD is a gender responsive organization which has tried its best to promote opportunities for women. A notable example in this direction can clearly be seen in the form of women candidates who were selected for PhD fellowship provided by ICIMOD".

- Kathmandu University offers a Masters course in Glaciology developed with ICIMOD support. Scholarships were provided to girl students for the course and they are also supported for field expeditions.

- Yugantar, the ICIMOD partner for the Koshi Basin Initiative, has systems to inform vulnerable groups about flood risks through the community-based flood early warning system (CBFEWS). "ICIMOD always emphasizes participation of women". They have been positioned as champions and information sources.

Incorporating a gender responsive approach, specifically with government counterparts has been a challenge because gender usually did not fall in their priority areas. Further, as ICIMOD's programme covers a diverse region, both in terms of culture and religion, gender integration is a sensitive issue to some of the partners/networks. Gender equality can, sometimes, be compromised while working with government and academic institutions where the vast majority of key stakeholders are men.

ICIMOD's Policy Framework establishes gender equality as a cross-cutting theme that should shape approaches to programming, which also explicitly links partners' capacity in delivering expected results for gender equality as a cross-cutting theme. Although, ICIMOD is progressing on integrating gender at the programme level in partnership with non-governmental organizations or the private sector, it needs to improve in its partnership works with the government and/or the academia. The overall capacity of government is the key to address gender equality issues. Thus, ICIMOD needs to take advantage of sectoral reform or technology support processes as entry points for strengthening partner' approaches on gender equality.

Further, ICIMOD also needs to be to act as a catalyst to facilitate more effective action for gender integration across partner organizations. A number of initiatives have included measures to increase capacity and actions in addressing gender equality issues relevant to the mandate of the partners. However, investments in increasing capacity POs on gender integration have been subject to resource availability rather than need of the partners. Efforts

and results in gender capacity development support to partners/ networks have been limited. ICIMOD may need a project specifically aimed at strengthening partner's capacity for gender integration.

5. Conclusions

The ToR for this Gender Audit specifically asks for a review of how far the recommendations of the Gender Audit 2016 have been followed and to document progress since then – see summary in Annex 7. Briefly, it can be said that, against the 2016 Gender Audit Recommendations:

- There has been significant progress against all of the Recommendations (except sharing good practice), and clear progress particularly within the institution, as is discussed in Section 2. In particular, the strengthening of the Gender Team has been the key factor in raising the levels of awareness and acceptance of gender equality in the organization and has in turn contributed to the strengthening of both policy and the institution, as well as in the work with partners.

- There were a number of programmatic and partner recommendations (3 and 1 respectively out of a total of 10), which highlight the importance of the current Gender Audit to focus on these two areas. The GAPs, and the support given in their development by the Gender Team, have been instrumental in ensuring that RPs have included gender and (to a lesser extent) inclusion in ToCs and in programme outcomes and indicators, although there is still some way to go in translating these M&E metrics into the allocation of resources to ensure implementation.

- The timing of the current Gender Audit should enable the findings to feed into the next QQR (due to start in March 2021), which in turn will inform the next MTAP. It is also important to record that there has been a significant level of engagement with the audit from all ICIMOD staff. Feedback throughout the process stressed that it has been a useful opportunity to reflect on where progress has been and to revise and update plans, as part of the regular planning process.

Overall, it is concluded that a great deal has been achieved by ICIMOD as an institution, so that gender awareness in the organization is now well embedded and accepted, both in terms of gender in policies and the progress that has been made institutionally. Gender equality is reflected clearly in all of the main policy documents of the organization and this has contributed to gender being taken seriously in all aspects of what ICIMOD does. There has been progress towards a greater balance in staff, with slow but significant progress being made in ensuring that there are more women at the most senior levels. At the same time, it is recognized that there is still much to be done and a lot of attention is focused on the appointment of a women to the role of DDG. Across the organization, staff are committed to addressing these gender and inclusion issues substantively in their work, something which is down to the careful work of awareness and capacity building by the Gender Team.

While the Gender Team continues to provide support and specialist inputs to the development of policies, capacities and programmes, the limitations on time and capacity mean that they are finding it increasingly difficult to meet the ever growing demands with the resources to hand. It is, however, recognized that there is still more to be done and there is a desire to build on the progress that has been made. Efforts need to continue both within the institution and in the work with partners to ensure that more women in the region have the skills and have access to the opportunities to contribute to ICIMOD's Vision and Mission, through data collection and research, knowledge development and policy influencing. At the same time it is important that ICIMOD continues with efforts to ensure that the institution is both a welcoming and safe place for women and men to work, for example through ensuring that Sexual Harassment Policy is fully implemented.

Whilst significant progress has been made there is scope for further improvements, particularly in ensuring a more consistent approach to having gender equality and social inclusion reflected in the outcome statements for the Regional Programmes as well as in the indicators. The focus on the gender and social realities of the ethnic groups in the region has been inadequate, so that the specific dynamics of each culture has not yet informed programme and initiative design.

The inclusion of gender equality and social inclusion as one of seven Strategic Objectives in Strategy and Results Framework 2017 has been an important factor in increasing the visibility and importance of gender in the programmes and themes. The MTAP IV has been an equally important factor in ensuring gender equality and (to a lesser extent) social inclusion are then reflected at the outcome level, primarily in indicators, for all of the Regional Programmes. This is of particular importance to ensure that there is both scope to strengthen existing indigenous practices and to address the barriers that ethnic communities face.

As gender is more often reflected at the Action level, there are not currently clear links to budget allocations. This conclusion fits with an issue regularly raised by staff that there are often no financial resources to implement the gender commitments that have been made. For the Regional Programmes[13] the Gender Action Plans have been an important means to explore how gender equality and (to a lesser extent) social inclusion can be concretely taken forward in initiatives. As a result, gender (and some aspects of social inclusion) now feature to a greater extent in workplans.

While progress has been made, there is scope to ensure greater consistency across the RPs, ensuring that gender and social inclusion are fully reflected at the outcome level, with indicators that enable the systematic tracking of progress. Again, gender (and some aspects of social inclusion) now feature to a greater extent in Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) plans and, as well as being a much more prominent feature in regular Reporting. This in turn suggests the need for more systematic guidance on how to address social inclusion and intersectionality aspects in the different RPs, an issue that was voiced during consultations.

It is recognised in ICIMOD that there is a need for a more systematic approach to identifying the obstacles to reflecting gender, as well as social inclusion, and to use this analysis as a way to develop approaches to addressing these obstacles, potentially through gender audits of partners of long-term partners. The focus on gender is reflected in ICIMOD's relationship with its partners. This is particularly in its relationships with implementation and knowledge partners, where the organization is now both known regionally for its focus on gender equality and is appreciated for the support and the innovative approaches that it has provided. It was frequently stated that it has been much more difficult to ensure that gender issues are reflected in the relationships with strategic partners, where it is often seen as a more sensitive area.

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[13] See Annex 6 for a summary of the main strengths and weaknesses of the RPs

6. Recommendations

Based on these conclusions, three overarching recommendations are made, with a related set of specific recommendations:

Policy Level

The Gender and Equity Policy has a strong focus on gender equality and also addresses social inclusion, thus providing the basis for more concrete direction for programmes to ensure the intersections of gender, social identity, disability, age, location and income dimensions are more directly addressed. This is the first priority for senior management in ICIMOD and as part of the next QQR, which will start in March 2021.

- The development of concrete guidance on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion should specifically consider the systemic structural barriers, discriminatory practices, and conservative gender and social norms which currently constrain inclusion and development of women and excluded groups.

- ICIMOD's main relevant policies (Partnership Strategy, MEL Framework and Risk Management Strategy) should be reviewed in order to cover both gender equality and social inclusion and ensure intersectional inequalities are addressed, through for example follow up with partners where gender and social inclusion are not strong.

- Policy directives to more clearly position mountain ethnic communities as key actors will need to be developed. A better understanding of the gender dynamics of the ethnic communities should inform policy decisions and programme directives.

Programme Level

The work on GAPs should be made part of the regular planning, budgeting and reporting processes. The progress that has been made across the programmes should be consolidated to ensure that ongoing efforts are more systematic and consistent. This will help ensure that programmes make budget resources available to implement and in turn ensure that expenditure and progress on outcomes and outputs that are focused on gender equality and social inclusion can be tracked. This should be a priority for senior management in ICIMOD and there is an opportunity for this change to be part of the next planning cycle.

- Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Action Plans need to more effectively included in the annual workplans of each RP and Initiative, with gender and social inclusion more clearly represented at the output levels, as well as in actions. This is aimed at ensuring both the more effective mainstreaming of GESI and the allocation of appropriate resources for implementation.

- A target proportion (at least as a minimum amount) of the programme budgets for Gender Equality and Social Inclusion should be set for each RPs, based on the inclusion of gender and social inclusion issues in outcomes, outputs and actions in order to ensure that there are sufficient resources for implementation.

- In the next MTAP the outcomes and indicators for the RPs should be revised, based on the experience of the current MTAP-IV, to ensure that GESI issues are mainstreamed. Related MEL tools need to be developed to ensure the collection of disaggregated information, that evidence is well captured and that evidence is used for decision making.

- There is a need to ensure that programmatic interventions in each RP and the initiatives address both livelihood and voice empowerment of women, the excluded and the vulnerable and have measures to reduce discriminatory formal and informal

policies and practices. The opportunity to address social aspects in very technical and scientific fields are necessary to identify and address innovatively.

Institutional Level

Continue with and consolidate the efforts that have been made within ICIMOD, in key areas such as: ensuring greater balance at senior management and programme management and other decision-making levels; ensuring that responsibilities for gender equality and social inclusion are reflected in performance management; and, ensuring that the importance of these responsibilities are clearly communicated across the organisation. This will be part of the ongoing responsibilities of the HR team, working with the Gender Team.

- The capacity of all staff needs to continue to strengthen to ensure a full understanding of gender equality and social inclusion concepts, as well as issues of intersectionality - where different forms of discrimination intersect. Programme Coordinators for Initiatives and technical staff supporting Initiatives should be provided with the training and tools (for example, guidelines, tip-sheets, analytical instruments) to support them to mainstream GESI in their usual functions.

- The additional responsibility for GESI should be reflected more systematically in the terms of reference of Programme Coordinators and technical staff, as well as in their performance management criteria. With gender equality and social inclusion more fully reflected in the outcomes and indicators, the RPM will become the responsible person on GESI for each RP, while the PCs will become the responsible person for each Initiative. They will ensure that a specific focus is maintained on gender and inclusion issues and, as such, it is important that this is clearly communicated to all staff in the organization.

- The terms of reference of other staff should reflect GESI responsibilities within their core functions. HR recruitment practices should be reviewed to support higher gender and ethnic diversity amongst staff and provide sufficient opportunities for young professionals, especially women to join ICIMOD on terms beneficial for them. Efforts to include persons with disability and LGBTI+ community in the staffing need to be made.

- The Sexual Harassment Policy provisions and the mechanisms for reporting and follow up should be disseminated across the organization, including to research and field expedition teams. It will be important to strengthen the confidence of all staff, both women and men, to use the policy provisions and complain in case of any incidence. The confidentiality and fairness of any enquiry, including investigation of any false allegations should be ensured.

Partner Level

Continue with and consolidate the efforts that have been made with partners, through building shared commitments and capacity on gender and social inclusion with key long-term partners, both strategic and implementation and knowledge partners. This is the responsibility of Strategic Cooperation and should be considered as part of the QQR.

- Engagement with strategic partners, policy decisions makers, their sensitization and process-oriented engagement should be planned by the RPs. This can be informed by the example of a phased out project HIMALICA (which was under the Resilient Mountain Systems initiative) of a long term engagement with government representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, Bhutan. Regular interactions and engagement with the policy makers in the steering committee resulted in the members becoming gender allies and champions. This kind of approach needs to be adopted extensively since the policy-makers influence all planning processes and decisions.

- Women led implementing partner organizations should be promoted where possible and specific efforts should be made to partner with organisations with responsibility and experience of working on gender equality and social inclusion regionally, in order to build better linkages and networks for effective action.

- The positive efforts with partners on GESI mainstreaming need to continue and where possible, deepened. The activities of the initiative partners have to also ensure that both empowerment and changing of discriminatory practices are integrated in the projects. Institutional capacity of partners need to be strengthened through systems strengthening and through enhanced staff skills and competencies on addressing barriers of the excluded and the vulnerable.

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

ICIMOD

Terms of Reference
Gender Audit for ICIMOD

Background

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) is a regional intergovernmental learning and knowledge sharing centre established in 1983 by and serving the eight regional member countries of the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan – based in Kathmandu, Nepal. ICIMOD aims to assist mountain people to understand and adapt to the changes caused by globalisation and climate change on the stability of fragile mountain ecosystems and the livelihoods of mountain people. With this aim ICIMOD's vision is *"men, women and children of the Hindu Kush Himalayas enjoy improved wellbeing in a healthy mountain environment"* and its mission is *"to enable sustainable and resilient mountain development for improved and equitable livelihoods through knowledge and regional cooperation".* ICIMOD delivers impact through its six regional programmes (RPs) - Adaptation and Resilience Building, Transboundary Landscapes, River Basins and Cryosphere, Atmosphere, Mountain Environment Regional Information System (MENRIS), and Mountain Knowledge and Action Network (MKAN). These regional programmes are supported by the four thematic areas of Livelihoods, Ecosystem Services, Water and Air, and Geospatial Solutions and underpinned by Knowledge Management and Communication. Policy, governance, equity and gender are critical cross-cutting work areas integrated across all the Centre's work.

ICIMOD as an organization has developed internal frameworks and policies meant to ensure that its programmes are gender-responsive. The Centre's most recent Strategic Framework which guides work from 2017-2022 specifically states a strategic goal as: "*Widespread adoption of innovations developed by ICIMOD and partners to adapt to change leading to positive impacts for women, men, and children"*. The first specific call for gender transformative change identifying gender integration and gender focused work within regional programmes; capacity strengthening and women's leadership; policy and partnership development; and gender transformative organizational change as the four pillars was in the Centre's Medium Term Action Plan (MTAP) III. The most recent, MTAP IV has gender equality and inclusive development as one of its seven strategic results. The Centre had developed a Gender and Equity Policy in 2013, which was revised and updated in 2019. This policy states: "ICIMOD envisions a future shaped by gender transformative change – change that goes beyond identifying and exploring the symptoms of gender inequality to seeking change of the socially constructed norms, attitudes, and the relations of power that underlie them". The policy's objectives specifically include gender integration and focus in all of the Centre's work; ensuring equitable and meaningful participation of both men and women; respect and upholding of equal rights and equitable access to and control over resources and benefits for women; and men empowerment of women and making ICIMOD a gender equitable and sensitive organization.

To further the fulfilment of ICIMOD's mandate on gender, the Centre has been conducting gender audits since 2012 at intervals of four years. The gender audits in 2012 and 2016 were completed and have assisted the Centre in understanding the extent to which we incorporate

a gender lens across key aspects of our work and in identifying options for strengthening our policies.

Gender audit purpose and objectives

As with the previous two gender audits, this proposed audit is to enable us: to understand the extent to which we incorporate a gender lens internally and across key aspects of our work; to identify where the gaps are; to enable us to identify options for strengthening our capacities, approaches, strategies, programmes, policies and practice in the future: and to identify potential relevant policy positions related to gender. This proposed Gender Audit should be a strong value- addition exercise to further crystallize the issues into implementable gender action plans for the upcoming MTAP V.

The specific objectives are:
- To review ICIMOD's institutional capacity to implement its gender mainstreaming strategy internally, including organizational culture.
- To review the extent to which ICIMOD is implementing and has incorporated its frameworks and policies to promote gender equity and justice into its programmes
- To review the inclusion of gender issues in the objectives and activities of the programmes and projects
- To review how programmes and projects have managed and performed with partners in integrating gender
- To review how far the recommendations of the Gender Audit 2016 have been followed and document progress since then
- To identify gaps in gender integration that will need to be addressed ☐ To develop recommendations for future direction.

Scope of work

The Gender Audit will review and gauge ICIMOD's progress on gender issues internally and across our work externally with partners. It will cover the gender mainstreaming work of ICIMOD at three levels - the institutional level, programmatic level, and partner's levels.

Institutional level
At the institutional level, the audit will review the institutional will, management support, technical capacity, accountability, and organizational culture to enable us to understand the extent to which the Centre incorporates a gender lens across key aspects of our work, including partnership management, and will document progress since 2016. The audit should enable the Centre to identify options for strengthening our policies and practice in the future, to inform development of gender mainstreaming strategy for the action plan cycle 2022-2027 and to guide the work of the Gender Team.

Programmatic level
At the programmatic level, the audit will review the overarching commitment of the regional programme in terms of its gender action plan (GAP); resource allocation; monitoring, evaluation and reporting; and programme level strategic engagement.

At these two levels, the audit will focus on the following issues: (1) leadership; (2) staff capacity; (3) gender mainstreaming in programme and policy; (4) budget; (5) monitoring and evaluation; (6) knowledge management; (7) partnership; and (8) organizational culture and workplace issues including sexual harassment.

Partner's level
At the partner's level, the audit will review gender mainstreaming capacity in: partner consultation processes (including due diligence and partners agreement), budgets and work

plans; human resources; programme implementation, knowledge management; and monitoring and evaluation. The audit will also review the partner's organizations policies and procedures related to gender and social inclusion. Twelve partner organisations will be selected for the review based on certain criterion. The broader criterion are representation of (a) Regional Member Countries, (b) all the Regional programmes and (c) types of organisation – government agencies, NGOs.

Further details of selection criteria will be with the Gender Team and Strategic Programme Monitoring and Evaluating Unit

The partners' review of the selected partner organisations will be done remotely using a combination of online survey questionnaires and online interviews

The partners will be selected in close consultation with the Gender Lead and gender team.

Focus of the gender audit

Specifically, the gender audit will focus on the following issues:

Institutional level:
- Gender mainstreaming in institutional policies and frameworks within the institution.
- Governance and leadership: capacity strengthening and women's leadership.
- Human resource unit support on gender issues.
- Existing gender expertise and strategy for building gender competence.
- Human resource policies and organizational change, including workplace issues, equal opportunity, and sexual harassment.
- Gender/women friendly practices and infrastructure.
- Perceptions of staff on how gender concerns are addressed in the Centre's internal functioning.

Programmatic level:
- ICIMOD's approach to mainstreaming gender throughout its external operations, including planning frameworks, project documents, knowledge products and advisory services in programmes and in cooperation with other organizations/institutions in member countries.
- Extent to which ICIMOD's mainstreaming strategy is reflected in each programme's objectives and budgets.
- Extent to which each programme's budget is spent on addressing gender issues.
- Extent to which the programme's operations and processes related to monitoring and evaluation are gender-sensitive, including the collection of gender-disaggregated and/or gender equality results across operations in the programmes.
- Systems and practices of tracking and reporting of gender-related progress and results ☐ Gender-related knowledge products.
- Ratio of women and men staff at various levels within each programme.
- Extent to which gender specialists are involved in programmatic work (time allocated and utilized).
- Extent to which the programme seeks to establish partnerships and alliances with gendersensitive organizations and institutions in member countries.
- Extent to which gender as a cross-cutting issue is integrated as part of stakeholder mapping and analysis when partners are selected.
- Analysis from a gender perspective on partner selection processes.
- Documentation on how programmes work with organizations that are **not** gender-sensitive.

Partner level:
- Internal organizational framework and policies related to gender.
- Existing gender-related human resources and capacity.
- Ability to effectively implement the programmes with gender lens.
- Capacity enhancement directly supported by the ICIMOD programme.
- Extent to which budget is allocated to integrate gender and conduct gender work.

Methodology

The overall content of the audit will be guided by the last audit report. If required, modification on the content and structure should be agreed with ICIMOD senior management before starting the process. Standard methodologies will be used in the audit process which require discussion and agreement with senior management before starting the process.

The gender audit will adopt the following methodologies:
- Desk review of all the relevant documents provided by ICIMOD.
- The consultant will submit a short approach paper to carry out the audit with detailed methodological approach and analysis plan.
- Conduct key informant interview with key staff.
- Conduct group discussion with various groups of ICIMOD staff.
- Conduct interviews with selected partner organisations representing various countries, types and engagement with ICIMOD programmes.

Deliverables

The primary deliverable will be a comprehensive Gender Audit report with recommendations. A secondary deliverable will presentation of the findings and recommendations by the Consultant to ICIMOD staff in a workshop to discuss the way forward that would help in developing action plan.

Required competencies

The consultant should have the following skills, knowledge and experience:
- Excellent knowledge of gender issues
- Proven experience of conducting gender audits for INGOs
- Excellent English written and verbal skills

Coordination and reporting

The Senior Gender Specialist - Gender Lead will coordinate, facilitate and manage the Gender Audit exercise and guide the work of the Consultant. The Gender Team will assist the Consultant by providing all required documents.

The consultant will report to the ICIMOD Senior Gender Specialist - Gender Lead.

Duration

The work of the consultant will be for a 60 working days, but may be spread over a 3 month period from 1 November to 31 January.

Task	Timing
Detailed work plan (in consultation with Gender Lead)	2 days (over a period of 1 week)
Assessments within ICIMOD	15 days
Assessment of partners	15 days
Task	**Timing**
Collation and draft summary of report, including options for strengthening policies and practice	14 days
Presentation of key findings and recommendations	2 days
Draft report for feedback	7 days
Final report	5 days (after getting all the feedback)

Annex 2: Documents Reviewed

1. AECOM and EURAC. 2016. *Fifth Quinquennial Review (QQR) ICIMOD.*

2. CEAPRED and ICIMOD. 2019. *Letter of Agreement Between ICIMOD and CEAPRED.* Kathmandu,

3. E. Cecelski. 2016. *ICIMOD Gender Audit 2016: Progress since 2012 and Way Forward.* Energia International Network on Gender & Sustainable Energy, Netherlands.

4. ICIMOD. 2012. *ICIMOD Gender Audit Survey Questions 2012.* Kathmandu, Nepal.

5. ICIMOD. 2013. *Partnership Strategy.* Kathmandu, Nepal.

6. ICIMOD. 2014. *Knowledge Management & Communication Strategy.* Kathmandu, Nepal.

7. ICIMOD. 2014. *Publications Policy.* Kathmandu, Nepal.

8. ICIMOD. 2015. *Environmental Management Policy.* Kathmandu, Nepal.

9. ICIMOD. 2016. *ICIMOD Gender Audit Survey 2016.* Kathmandu, Nepal.

10. ICIMOD. 2016. *ICIMOD Response to QQR Recommendations–Draft 4.11.16 (Submitted for Board Review).* Kathmandu, Nepal.

11. ICIMOD. 2017. *Annual Report 2016.* Kathmandu, Nepal.

12. ICIMOD. 2017. *ICIMOD Strategy and Results Framework 2017.* Kathmandu, Nepal.

13. ICIMOD. 2017. *Medium Term Action Plan 2018–2022.* Kathmandu, Nepal.

14. CSIRO. 2017. *Making Gender Count: Leveraging M&E to Mainstream Gender*

15. ICIMOD. 2018. *Annual Report 2017.* Kathmandu, Nepal.

16. ICIMOD. 2018. *Detailed Annual Progress Report 2017 (Draft Submitted for Board Approval).* Kathmandu, Nepal.

17. ICIMOD. 2018. *Highlight Annual Progress Report (Draft Submitted for Board Approval).* Kathmandu, Nepal.

18. ICIMOD. 2018. *Partner Advisory: Mutual Partnership Feedback.* Kathmandu, Nepal.

19. ICIMOD. 2018. *Strategy and Results Framework 2017.* Kathmandu, Nepal.

20. ICIMOD. 2019. *Annual Progress Report 2018: Key Achievements (Draft).* Kathmandu, Nepal.

21. ICIMOD. 2019. *Annual Report 2018.* Kathmandu, Nepal.

22. ICIMOD. 2019. *Event Data (Spreadsheet).* Kathmandu, Nepal.

23. ICIMOD. 2019. *ICIMOD Annual Progress Report 2018 (Submitted to ICIMOD Board of Governors for Approval).* Kathmandu, Nepal.

24. ICIMOD. 2019. *Updated Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework.* Kathmandu, Nepal.

25. ICIMOD. 2019. *Updated Risk Management Strategy for Medium Term Action Plan IV.* Kathmandu,

26. ICIMOD. 2020. *Annual Progress Report 2019: Key Highlights (Draft Submitted for Board Approval).* Kathmandu, Nepal.

27. ICIMOD. 2020. *Annual Report 2019.* Kathmandu, Nepal.

28. ICIMOD. 2020. *Environmental and Social Safeguards Policy.* Kathmandu, Nepal.

29. ICIMOD. 2020. *Gender and Equity Policy.* Kathmandu, Nepal.

30. ICIMOD. 2020. *Gender Training List from Initiatives: Servir and Koshi (Spreadsheet).* Kathmandu,

31. ICIMOD. 2020. *ICIMOD Gender Audit 2020: Staff Perception Survey.* Kathmandu, Nepal.

32. ICIMOD. 2020. *Policy on Prevention and Redressal of Sexual Harassment at the Workplace.* Kathmandu, Nepal.

33. Sustainable Development Investment Portfolio. 2020. *Gender Learning Project: Case Studies*

34. ICIMOD. *Gender Action Plans (GAPs).* Kathmandu, Nepal.

35. COVID-19 *impact and policy responses in the Hindu Kush Himalaya* 2020

Annex 3: Interviews and Group Discussions

Interviews

Dr. Pema Gyamtsho, Director General

David Molden, former Director General

Shekhar Ghimire, Director Admin and Finance

Basanta Shrestha, Director Strategic Cooperation Unit

Farid Ahmad, SPM&E Head

Liesbeth Segaar, HR and OD Head

Laurie Vaisailly, Knowledge Management and Communication Head

Rajendra Prakash Mali, Finance Unit head

Bijay Kumar Shrestha, Program Finance

Chanda Gurung Goodrich, Senior Gender Specialist

Dr. Golam Rasul, Chief Economist

Brij Mohan Singh Rathore, Chief Policy Advisor

Dhrupad Choudhury, Chief Scaling Operations, Adaptation and Resilience

Sanjeev Bhuchar, Randall Remetz, Theme Lead Water and Air

Purnamita Dasgupta, Tashi Dorji, Ecosystem Theme Leads

Arabinda Mishra, Livelihood Theme Lead

Mir Matin, Geospatial Solutions Theme Lead

Mohan Shrestha, Admin and Logistics Unit Head

Prerna Thapa, Travel and Hospitality and Events Unit Head

Nanki Kaur, RP1, RPM

Nakul Chettri, RP2, RPM

Arun Shrestha, RP3, RPM

Bidhya Banmali Pradhan, RP4, interim RPM

Ghulam Rasul, RP5 RPM

Philippus Wester RP6 RPM

Group Discussions

Gender Specialists Team – Suman Bisht, Kamla Gurung, Geeta Baskota, Aditya Bastola, Kosar Bano, Min Gurung, Menka Hamal, Shuba Khanal

RP1, RMS Programme team members – Nandkishor Agarwal (Programme Coordinator), Sanjeev Bhuchar, Tashi Dorji, Erica Udas, Pratigya Silwal, Anu Joshi Shrestha, Sabina Uprety

RMS Partner: CEAPRED, Nepal: Keshab Joshi, Sunil Dhungel, Kiran Bhusal

RMS Partner: Ministry of Agriculture and Forest of Bhutan: Tshering Zam, NCOA-Yusipang; Tshering Wangchuk, NCOA-Yusipang; Tashi Lhamo, NCOA-Yusipang; Kailash Pradhan, NCOA-Yusipang; Tshewang Lhamo, DCSI; *RMS Partner: Mynammar Institute of Integrated Development:* Luca Nichetti, MIID team

RP1, REECH Programme team members – Mewang Gyeltshen (Programme Coordinator), Anu Lama, Bhupesh Adhikary, Surendra Raj Joshi

RP2, Programme Coordinators – Tashi Dorji, Bhaskar Singh Karky, Janita Gurung, Ghulam Ali, Yi Shaoliang

RP3, Cryosphere Programme team members – Miriam Jackson (Programme Coordinator), Amina Maharjan, Aneel Piryani, Karma Tsering, Neetu Ghale *Cyrosphere Initiative Partner:* Prof Rijju Kayastha, Kathmandu University

RP3, Koshi Basin Programme team members – Kanchan Shrestha (Programme Cordinator), Govinda Shrestha, Madhav Dhakal, Sanjeev Bhuchar, Shailendra Shakya, Vijay Khadga, Nishikant Gupta*; Koshi Basin Initiative partner, Yugantar:* Sanjeev Pandey, Palak, Vijay

RP 4 Programme Team, Joint meeting with Atmosphere Watch Initiative and Air Pollution Initiative - Bidya Banmali Pradhan Siva Praveen Puppala, Iqbal Mead , Bhupesh Adhikary , Reshma Dixit , Mona Sharma , Amina Maharjan

RP 5, SERVIR-HKH Initiative Programme Team members - Birendra Bajracharchaya , Rajesh Shrestha , Sudip pradhan, Viswa Sudhir Chitle, Kiran Shakya, Santosh Raj pathak , Shova Pokhrel, Karma Tsering , Kabir Uddin, Utsav Maden, Mir Martin, Angeli Shrestha , Sravan shrestha , Bhupesh Adhikari, Ganesh Bhattarai, Rajesh Bahadur Thapa, Poonam Tripathi

RP 5, Regional Database System Initiative Programme Team members - Sudip Pradhan, Bikram Shakya, Dipak kumar shah, Kiran shakya , Tanuja Shrestha, Sameer Bajracharya

RP 5, Climate Services Initiative Programme Team members - Mandira Shrestha , Karma Tsering , Lipy Adhikari , Utsav Maden , Santosh Nepal , Anu Kumari Lama , Faisal Mueen Qamer ,Geeta Ghhatarai Bastakoti, Binu Maharjan

RP 6, Joint meeting with HUC and HIMAP initiative Programme team members - Chi Huyen Truong (Shachi), Philippus Wester, Rajesh B Thapa, Rekha Kriti Thapa, Uddyan Mishra, Kritika Sharma, Achala Sharma, Abid Hussain, Santosh Pradhan

RP 6, SANDEE Initiative Programme team members - Mani Nepal Neesha Pradhan, Bawana Syangden, Sanhita Sahasrabudhe

Annex 4: Partners Selected for the Gender Audit Review

Partner Organization	Initiative	Country	Status	Typology of Partner	Agreement Period	Nature of Institution
Regional Programme 1 Adaptation and Resilience Building						
CEAPRED		Nepal				NGO/Civil Society
Ministry of Agriculture and Forest of Bhutan		Bhutan				Government
Myanmar Institute For International Development	Himalica	Myanmar	Ongoing		December 1, 2013 - December 31, 2021	NGO/Civil Society
Regional Programme 2 Transboundary Landscapes						
WWF Pakistan	HKPL	Pakistan		Implementation partner		NGO/Civil Society
RECAST, Thribhuvan University	Kailash	Nepal		Implementation partner		Academia
Regional Programme 3 River Basins and Cryosphere						
Kathmandu University	Cryosphere					Academia
Yugrantar	Koshi River Basin	India	Ongoing	Implementation partner	January 1, 2017 - December 31, 2020	NGO/Civil Society
Regional Programme 4 Atmosphere						
MinErgy Pvt. Ltd	Atmosphere	Nepal	Completed	Implementation partner	January 1, 2016 - December 31, 2019	Private
Regional Programme 5 Mountain Environment Regional Information Systems						
Kabul University	SERVIR-HKH	Afghanistan	Ongoing	Implementation partner	March 1, 2017 - September 30, 2020	Academia
Federation of Community Forestry Users Nepal (FECOFUN)	SERVIR	Nepal				NGO/Civil Society
Regional Programme 6 Mountain Knowledge and Action Networks						
TERI SAS	HUC	India	Completed	Strategic partner		Academia

Annex 5: Review of selected partnership agreements

RPs	Partner Organization	Type of agreement	Gender integration on partnership agreement
RP 1	Myanmar Institute of Integrated Development (2019 to 2021)	Letter of agreement	Partnership Principles included as: synergy, equity, transparency and mutual benefit The ToR include a section on Good Governance and Specific outcome/outputs are also included in the results matrix is targeting women and socially disadvantaged groups
RP 1	Gross National Happiness commission, Department of Agriculture, Demaprment of cottage and small industries, Bhutan (2019 to 2021)	Letter of agreement	Partnership Principles included as: synergy, equity, transparency and mutual benefit The ToR include a section on Good Governance and Specific outcome/outputs are also included in the results matrix is targeting women and socially disadvantaged groups
RP 2	RECAST ,Nepal July 2018 to November 2018	Letter of agreement	Partnership Principles included as: synergy, equity, transparency and mutual benefit The ToR include a section on Good Governance and Specific outcome/outputs are also included in the results matrix is targeting women and socially disadvantaged groups
RP 2	RECAST ,Nepal May 2020 to December 2020	Letter of agreement	Partnership Principles included as: synergy, equity, transparency and mutual benefit The ToR include a section on Good Governance and Specific outcome/outputs are also included in the results matrix is targeting women and socially disadvantaged groups
RP 4	Department of Environment, GoN/ Lumbini Development trust (2018	Collaboration Agreement	None
RP 4	National environment commission, government of Bhutan (2020)	Letter of Intent	none
RP 4	Minergy Pvt Ltd (Addendum) (2020)	Letter of agreement	Partnership Principles included as: synergy, equity, transparency and mutual benefit The ToR include a section on Good Governance and Specific outcome/outputs are also included in the results matrix is targeting women and socially disadvantaged groups

RPs	Partner Organization	Type of agreement	Gender integration on partnership agreement
RP 5	Forest research and training center, Ministry of forest, GoN 2018-2020	Letter of Intent	None
RP 5	Kabul University, Afghanistan (2017-2020)	Letter of Agreement	Partnership Principles included as: synergy, equity, transparency and mutual benefit
RP 5	FECOFUN, Nepal (In the process of finalization)	Letter of Intent	One of the role of the FECOFUN is stated as: to give technical feedback and inputs on GESI in vulnerability assessment
RP 5	WFP , Nepal 2017 ro 2020	MOU	Partnership Principles included as: synergy, equity, transparency and mutual benefit
RP 6	Sherubtse Collage, Bhutan(2019-2021)	Letter of Agreement	Partnership Principles included as: synergy, equity, transparency and mutual benefit. The ToR include a section on Good Governance and Specific outcome/outputs are also included in the results matrix is targeting women and socially disadvantaged groups
RP 6	Shere-Re Kashmir University of Agriculture, science and Technology, India (2020-2022)	Letter of Agreement	Partnership Principles included as: synergy, equity, transparency and mutual benefit. The ToR include a section on Good Governance and Specific outcome/outputs are also included in the results matrix is targeting women and socially disadvantaged groups

Annex 6: Strengths and areas of improvement of RPs against the 4 pillars of Gender Transformative Agenda

For the purposes of the Gender Audit the Regional Programmes were analysed according to the operational framework for GESI mainstreaming. The review covered how gender equality and social inclusion aspects were addressed in the programmes (including its initiatives) policies, institutional arrangements, budgeting and M&E systems. The analysis was based on document review and meetings with Regional Programme Manager, Programme Coordinator and project staff of RP initiatives and selected partners. The detailed review was summarized against the pillars of the gender transformative agenda of the Gender and Equity Policy – see Annex 6. The sources for this summary are the detailed reviews of the Regional Programmes, which are available on request from the ICIMOD Gender Team

Regional Programme 1 – Adaptation and Resilience Building

S. No	Pillars of Gender Transformative Agenda	Strengths of RP 1	Areas of Improvement of RP 1
1.	Gender integration and gender-focused programmatic work	Included in activities; representation and participation of women promoted; leadership development opportunities; sector specific solutions to address gender related issues	Planned activities to address discriminatory gender and social norms; Clearer budget allocations; clarity regarding work on intersectionality, with excluded/ marginalised groups
2.	Capacity strengthening on gender issues and women's leadership	Mandatory training, mentoring; opportunities to be in research team, be authors	Expansion of capacity strengthening to cover social inclusion aspects
3.	Evidence-based advocacy for gender-equitable policies, institutions and partnerships	Pilots, case studies gather disaggregated information	Deeper assessment of the gender and social dynamics of different mountain ethnic communities required
4.	Gender positive organizational change and institutional strengthening	Staff diversity promoted; child care facilities provided to staff and event participants; anti-sexual harassment policies in place; acceptance by staff/partners that gender issues need to be addressed; gender core team in place; gender focal person supporting initiatives	Performance evaluation indicator on gender to be used to inform staff performance; higher diversity of people from mountain ethnic communities, increase of women in decision making positions needed

Regional Programme 2 – Transboundary Landscapes

S. No	Pillars of Gender Transformative Agenda	Strengths of RP2	Areas of Improvement of RP2
1.	Gender integration and gender-focused programmatic work	Wide range of activities across most of the initiatives, with some inconsistencies in the approach to gender	Need for a more consistent approach and for gender to be integrated at output level to ensure budget allocation
2.	Capacity strengthening on gender issues and women's leadership	Capacity strengthening has led to greater gender awareness Increased representation of women staff, but slow progress in management levels	Continue to build capacity for gender analysis to enable greater ownership Further efforts needed to ensure greater representation of women at decision making levels
3.	Evidence-based advocacy for gender-equitable policies, institutions and partnerships	Some examples of efforts to ensure gender is taken into account in policy level work Support given to institutions and partners, with appetite for more	Build on efforts to date to ensure that gender is reflected in institutions and in policies
4.	Gender positive organizational change and institutional strengthening	GAPs have raised the awareness of importance of gender and organisational changes are starting to show results	Continue to build capacity for gender analysis to enable greater ownership Further efforts needed to ensure greater representation of women at decision making levels

Regional Programme 3 – Cryosphere

S.No	Pillars of Gender Transformative Agenda	Strengths of RP 3	Areas of Improvement of RP 3
1.	Gender integration and gender-focused programmatic work	Women-led expeditions funded; Gender related studies and research; gender portal; gender atlas; systems to inform vulnerable groups about flood risks; gender aspects integrated in proto cols, training manuals	Limited planned interventions to address gender based discriminatory structural issues/practices (e.g. in Koshi Basin partner added activities on GBV, child marriage etc); Basic guidelines/protocol as a tool for integrating GE+SI institutions, academia); Tools for addressing intersectionality are needed
2.	Capacity strengthening on gender issues and women's leadership	40% participation in events, trainings promoted; girl students provided scholarship and opportunities to do field	Capacity strengthening of partners, all project staff on gender equality, women's

S.No	Pillars of Gender Transformative Agenda	Strengths of RP 3	Areas of Improvement of RP 3
		work; women in Koshi Basin incharge of the information system	empowerment, social inclusion; Additional facilities e.g. caretaker for child care to promote participation of women
3.	Evidence-based advocacy for gender-equitable policies, institutions and partnerships		
4.	Gender positive organizational change and institutional strengthening	Staff diversity promoted; child care facilities provided to staff and event participants; anti-sexual harassment policies in place; acceptance by staff/partners that gender issues need to be addressed; gender core team in place; gender focal person supporting initiatives	Performance evaluation indicator on gender to be used to inform staff performance; increase of women in decision making positions needed

Regional Programme 4 – Atmosphere

S. No	Pillars of Gender Transformative Agenda	Strengths of RP 4	Areas of Improvement of RP 4
5.	Gender integration and gender-focused programmatic work	Gender and social variables incorporated in datasets, Gender specific studies conducted, Impact assessment of winter fog and open agricultural burning on livelihood of vulnerable groups, such as; as road side works, farmers, drivers, men, women and children Brick sector work, education programmes for children of brick workers, facilitation for development of CoC of Federation of Nepal Brick Industry which include principles such as ; end to child labor; Safe workplace for women workers. Gender sensitization to brick owner	Clear gender statements in result framework in planned activities and budget allocation qualitative reporting on challenge and achievement on gender integration Tools for monitoring and reporting of social exclusion
6.	Capacity strengthening on gender issues and women's leadership	GAP formulation and reporting process inherently was a capacity development process for the team Gender sensitization trainings to programme team and POs Support form Gender team to each of the initiatives, PHD fellowship	Periodic review of GAP Assess effectiveness of capacity building training to ensure transformative change on women's leadership

S. No	Pillars of Gender Transformative Agenda	Strengths of RP 4	Areas of Improvement of RP 4
7.	Evidence-based advocacy for gender-equitable policies, institutions and partnerships	Gender specific research and publication, Gender review of national policies and legislations related to air pollution in Nepal Public service announcements, Regional collaboration	Wider dissemination of gender specific research findings and gender review of policy and legislations. Gender workshop and policy dialogues with key stakeholders including policy makers Strengthen gender aspect during due diligence process in partnership
8.	Gender positive organizational change and institutional strengthening	GAP implemented, Support from Gender team, increasing gender balance among staff, policy for prevention of sexual harassment, Gender contribution linked with performance evaluation of staff	Resource allocation of GAP implementation Continuous refresher and tailor made training (link with their specific ToRs) to staff strategy to increase women in leadership position Include GESI responsibility in the ToR of programme team including RPs increase gender related questions on Performance evaluation

Regional Programme 5 – Mountain Environment Regional Information System MENRIS

S.N	Pillars of Gender Transformative Agenda	Strengths of RP 5	Areas of Improvement of RP 5
1	Gender integration and gender-focused programmatic work	Gender disaggregated data, Gender analysis & assessment, gender-friendly information services, gender information in user database made available, targeted gender-inclusive dissemination channels developed.	Strategic focus on inclusion of marginalized groups the actual share of GESI related resource allocations and spending need to be clear in annual plan and budget
2	Capacity strengthening on gender issues and women's leadership	Training on empowering women in GIT, Priority to women participants in all training and workshops, partnership with women organizations(planned),	Increase efforts for capacity strengthening of partners, and network members
3	Evidence-based advocacy for gender-equitable policies, institutions and partnerships	Gender disaggregated information in data portal, GESI specific research and assessments , publications,	Gender workshop with key stakeholders including policy makers Ensure consistency in terms of commitment to gender

S.N	Pillars of Gender Transformative Agenda	Strengths of RP 5	Areas of Improvement of RP 5
		gender friendly dissemination channels	incorporation in due diligence process
4	Gender positive organizational change and institutional strengthening	Gender sensitization training to staff, robust support form Gender team, Gender Actions plan, policy for prevention of sexual harassment, , Gender contribution linked with performance evaluation of staff collaboration among the team members unanimous consensus among programme team that ICIMOD is a gender friendly organization in terms of work environment, gender friendly facilities and gender policy	Continuous refresher and tailor made training (link with their specific ToRs) to staff Gender balance workforce increase gender related questions on Performance evaluation Include GESI responsibility in the ToR of programme team including RPs

Regional Programme 6 – Mountain Knowledge and Action Network (MKAN)

S.N	Pillars of Gender Transformative Agenda	Strengths of RP 6	Areas of Improvement of RP 6
1	Gender integration and gender-focused programmatic work	GESI integrated into HKH mountain development curriculum Contribution to increase knowledge base on gender studies and training among members Manuscripts were developed focusing on gender related issues Gender issues highlighted in dialogues, GESI included in ToRs for research grants Women focused training conducted GESI related assessment and research development curriculums, GESI component as parts of curriculum and graduate survey since. GESI gaps are being mapped five RMCs (Afghanistan, Bhutan, India, Nepal, and Pakistan).	Strategic focus on inclusion of marginalized groups Sexual and gender minority groups need to be included in GESI Framework Result tracking of women focused training
2	Capacity strengthening on gender issues and women's leadership	Conscious efforts to include 50 percent women in trainings/workshops Priority to women while selecting research grantees, promoting women as panel members, keynote speakers and policy forum members,	Capacity strengthening of partners, and network members

S.N	Pillars of Gender Transformative Agenda	Strengths of RP 6	Areas of Improvement of RP 6
		Gender modules included in HUC academies and other technical trainings	
		Promoting women as Primary investigators (PI)	
3	Evidence-based advocacy for gender-equitable policies, institutions and partnerships	Gender related research and publications for evidence based advocacy	Gender workshop and policy dialogues with key stakeholders including policy makers
		Gender integration in Call for HKH actions	
		Dedicated chapter on GESI in HKH assessment report (2019)	
		Publication and dissemination of key policy message derived from the GESI assessment	
4	Gender positive organizational change and institutional strengthening	Gender sensitization training to staff, support form Gender team, Gender Actions plan, policy for prevention of sexual harassment,	Continuous refresher and tailor made training (link with their specific ToRs) to staff
		Gender contribution linked with performance evaluation of staff	Designated gender specialist in each initiative
			Address transparent and equal pay related dissatisfaction among staff
			Include GESI responsibility in the ToR of programme team including RPs
			increase gender related questions on Performance evaluation

Annex 7: Progress against Gender Audit 2016 Recommendations

Recommendations	Points for assessment	Progress	Evidence Sources
Operationalise the Gender Equity Policy through a Gender Action Plan (GAP).	What was done at the different elements of the policy: program, institutional, capacity strengthening, evidence based advocacy? How was the GAP developed? Achievements and challenges in implementation of GAP in these 4 years?	A GAP was developed in 2019 for ICIMOD as an institution and at the same time detailed GAPs for each of the Regional Programmes (and Initiatives), with the support of the Gender Team. The GAPs for the RPs are generally seen by programme staff as being useful and a process has begun of updating the GAPs, again with the support of the Gender Team.	RP GAPs and progress updates Interviews
Improve accountability with agreed and feasible M&E metrics, with a timeline for adding additional metrics.	What metrics were adopted? How well were they implemented? What changes are needed?	All of the RP MEL Plans include gender indicators, based on ToCs and MTAP Results Framework. There is a need now for these to be consolidated and made more consistent across the organisation. The format of the regular review meetings includes a section on gender progress, where RP staff are required to report.	RP MEL Plans
Strengthen the core Gender Institutional Function for strategic orientation, quality control and cross-cutting research and learning.	How was this strengthened? Does the SIF provide more than 60% of time to gender? Is it at management or director level?	The Gender Unit now consists of 7-8 gender specialists providing inputs to the RPs and themes. ICIMOD is committed to maintaining this level of expertise, but efforts to increase access at the initiative/implementation level depend on funding availability.	Interviews
Ensure that adequate gender expertise and budget resources are available and accountable in all Initiatives and programmes –	What is the level of gender expertise and budget in the organization? Is it proportional to ICIMOD total program budget?	Gender specialists provide considerable inputs to the RPs, through the matrix system in ICIMOD. Analysis of the workplans and budgets shows that, while outcomes and actions reference gender, there is no direct link to programme budget (except in some very limited cases). This is	Interviews Annual Budget and Workplan 2019

Recommendations	Points for assessment	Progress	Evidence Sources
commensurate with the growth of ICIMOD.	Has any gender-responsive budgeting exercise been done?	confirmed in interviews, where there were calls for budget resources to be able to implement GAP commitments.	
Evaluate, share, and systematize use of existing good practices on programming from current ICIMOD programmes and initiatives as well as from gender-responsive partners.	Have standard operating procedures, requirements, and targets been defined and set? How have good practices been shared?	While there is a wealth of examples of good practice across ICIMOD's programmes and evidence that outcomes and actions make reference to gender in the 2019 Workplan, there is no evidence that these examples have been evaluated, shared or systematised, as was suggested. There is evidence of a systematic approach to the inclusion of gender in relationships with implementing partners (such as inclusion of gender in LoAs and a requirement to report on gender). It would be beneficial to systematise the gender in the planning and budgeting processes, in a similar way to the requirement for programmes to report on gender in the annual review process.	Interviews Annual Budget and Workplan 2019
Strengthen ICIMOD staff capacity on gender integration and analysis through training, reflection and sharing of good practices of ICIMOD and other organisations.	Have capacity strengthening events continued? Have other forms of discrimination been discussed and included? How useful have they been in increasing skills to integrate gender in programs and institutions?	Gender training is mandatory for all staff and is a part of the induction for all new staff. This has raised the level of gender awareness amongst staff and, in some cases, experience of developing and implementing programmes with a focus on gender, has contributed to a level of gender expertise. Overall, however, staff in RPs depend on gender specialists to provide guidance on integrating gender into programmes and ask for more guidance on operationalising and applying gender concepts.	Interviews Staff perception survey
Continue the gender-sensitive approaches of human resources and knowledge management and communications, and strengthen these as appropriate	Have there been any changes in the human resource policies? Has flexible timing policy been implemented? Have there been more knowledge products with a gendered analysis integrated? More women authors?	ICIMOD has recently put in place a Policy on Prevention and Redressal of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace (2020), based on a consultative approach with staff and to be followed up with a formal roll out and establishment of the mechanisms for reporting and follow up. While the number of knowledge products and technical papers produced by ICIMOD is tracked, there is no mechanism to track gender integration in them.	Policy on Prevention and Redressal of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace (2020) Interviews

Recommendations	Points for assessment	Progress	Evidence Sources
Establish a "mentoring culture" that provides opportunities for learning and growth into professional and management roles by both women and men, to improve gender balance.	Are there more female role models in leadership positions? Have the young interns and SSAs been mentored and if yes how? Any targeted training and mentoring in order to prepare women for managerial, leadership and technical roles? What shifts have occurred to improve gender diversity in management?	There has been a leadership programme for middle management for all staff (men and women) and there has been dedicated coaching for three women to give them opportunities for working at a more senior level. In addition, coffee with the DG informal events were organised by the Gender Team to give women in the organisation the opportunity to discuss some of the issues that they face. There has been some success in promoting women to more senior roles in the organisation, so that there are now women programme coordinators and there are three women on the SMC. It is recognised that there is still a lot more that can be done.	Interviews Staff diversity data
Assess existing gender capacity of partner and prepare a plan to increase their capacity and commitment to gender integration.	What steps have been taken with partners on gender integration? What was good, what needs to be improved?	Gender is included in the LoAs (Letter of Agreement) for implementing partners. This is backed up with gender being included in the initial briefing and capacity building on gender awareness for partners. Progress on implementing gender is included in the reporting requirements for partners.	Document review Interviews
Carry out another gender audit in 2022 prior to preparation of the next ICIMOD Medium-Term Action Plan.	Has a preparatory reflection and reporting by staff, including data collection, been done to inform the audit?	The current Gender Audit is timed to feed into the next QQR (due to start in March 2021), which in turn will inform the next MTAP. There has been a significant level of engagement with the audit, with feedback that process has been a useful opportunity to reflect and revise. There is scope for more regular collection of data on progress in implementing the Gender Policy and for more internal reflection on where progress is being made and where further efforts are required.	Interviews