

Concept Note
PROFESSIONAL TRAINING COURSE

Nature-based solutions (NbS) for disaster risk reduction in the Hindu Kush Himalaya region

Bangkok, Thailand

Online Phase: 31 July – 1 August 2025

Face to Face Phase: 25-29 August 2025

Background

The Hindu Kush Himalayan (HKH) region, spanning over eight countries and supporting nearly 240 million people directly through diverse ecosystem services, is a critical source of 10 major river basins providing freshwater to 2.1 billion people. Despite this abundance, its geographic diversity leads to certain areas experiencing too much or too little (TMTL) water risks, in the form of floods and droughts. The risks of TMTL water, exacerbated by climate change, environmental degradation, and socio-economic inequalities, disproportionately impact marginalised communities. The HKH region is especially vulnerable to climate-induced disasters like floods, glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs), drought, landslides, and avalanches, with an increasing tendency of a hazard triggering cascading events. In this context, Nature-based Solutions (NbS) offer a cost-effective, inclusive, and ecologically sustainable approach to disaster risk reduction (DRR), drawing on the power of natural ecosystems to mitigate hazards, improve water management, enhance biodiversity, support livelihoods, and enhance disaster resilience.

NbS for DRR also offers a holistic approach, addressing barriers for inclusion of all community groups in furthering GESI and fostering broader societal well-being beyond just tackling hydrometeorological disasters. Recognising these multiple benefits, this training is designed to build the capacity among practitioners and planners and to operationalise NbS within national and local DRR planning frameworks. Furthermore, it will emphasise engagement of decision-makers, community-based organisations and youth, who are critical to mainstreaming NbS into policy, community practices, and future disaster resilience strategies.

About the training

This training program is designed for delivery in two phases. Twenty-four participants will be selected for the first phase, which is a 4-hour theoretical course that will be conducted virtually from 31 July to 1 August 2025. Eight top candidates will be invited to participate in a five-day, in-person practical training session in Thailand from 25 to 29 August 2025.

The 5-day in-person training course will provide a comprehensive exploration of NbS as a sustainable and cost-effective approach to DRR, with a focus on leveraging natural ecosystems to mitigate climate-induced hazards. Drawing from global and regional frameworks, case studies, and practical tools, the course will cover the conceptual foundations, implementation strategies, and inclusive approaches for NbS, particularly in vulnerable regions like the Hindu Kush Himalayan (HKH). Participants will engage

with real-world applications through field visits and hands-on project development, fostering skills to integrate NbS into DRR policies and practices. They will gain practical knowledge and tools for planning, designing, financing, and monitoring NbS for DRR. The sessions will be participatory and solution-focused, blending global frameworks with regional best practices and case studies.

The training is organised by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, under Action Area A - Cryosphere and Water Risk and the Disaster Risk Reduction Intervention, in partnership with the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center. This training is supported by the United Kingdom International Development through the Himalayan Resilience Enabling Action Programme (HI-REAP).

Objectives:

- Gain a comprehensive understanding of ecosystem services and NbS, including key concepts, fundamental principles, and their critical role in building resilience to climate change and disaster risk
- Become familiar with international frameworks surrounding NbS and DRR, including, the Sendai Framework, Paris Agreement, Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions
- Learn practical tools and approaches for designing, financing, and scaling NbS for DRR, with an emphasis on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)-responsive strategies.
- Examine real-world examples of NbS for DRR applications to understand success factors, challenges, and co-benefits for ecosystems and communities and acquire skills to create donor-ready NbS project proposals to reduce the risk of disasters.

Expected outcomes:

By the end of the training, participants will be equipped to:

- Enhanced knowledge and skills on NbS for DRR in the HKH region with the capacity to design and implement NbS projects tailored to local contexts, addressing climate and disaster risks while promoting biodiversity and community resilience
- Ability to develop NbS project proposals using tools for financing, monitoring and scaling NbS, integrating GESI principles, and effectively advocating for the mainstreaming of NbS in national and local DRR policies through evidence-based strategies and stakeholder collaboration.

Engaging Decision-makers and non-government practitioners for Integrating Nature-based Solutions in DRR Activities

To ensure sustainability and scaling, the course includes group discussions and interactive sessions. These sessions will:

- Bring together government and non-government participants to co-create solutions.
- Identify mechanisms to integrate NbS in national DRR and climate strategies.
- Promote youth leadership and intergenerational partnerships in NbS for DRR planning.

Please address any queries regarding this event to:

Shova Bhandari	Shova.Bhandari@icimod.org
Saswata Sanyal	Saswata.Sanyal@icimod.org
Winn Lai Lai Yi	Winn.Yi@icimod.org
Vijay Khadgi	Vijay.Khadgi@icimod.org

Agenda

Date	Details
31 Jul – 1 Aug	4-hour theoretical virtual session Module-1: Conceptual Understanding of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Module-2: Tools and Approaches for Implementing Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in the Hindu Kush Himalayan (HKH) Region Module 3: GESI-Responsive Nature-based Solutions for Disaster Risk Reduction
24 -Aug	Arrival in Bangkok
	Hotel Check-in
Day-1	First-Half
25-Aug	Inauguration of the Training
	Participant Introduction
	Second-Half Module-2: Tools and Approaches for Implementing Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in the Hindu Kush Himalayan (HKH) Region (<i>Recap</i>)
Day-2	First-Half
26-Aug	Module 3: GESI-Responsive Nature-based Solutions for Disaster Risk Reduction
	Second-Half
	Module 4: Operationalizing Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Hindu Kush Himalaya Region
Day-3	First-Half
27-Aug	Module 4: Operationalizing Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Hindu Kush Himalaya Region (<i>Continues from Day 2</i>)
	Second-Half

Date	Details
	Module 5: Financing, Sustainability, Scaling Up, and contextualizing of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) Activities
Day-4	Full-Day
28-Aug	Module 6: Learning from the Field – Theory to Practice
Day-5	First-Half
29 Aug	Module-7: Co-developing NbS Concepts for DRR Projects through a Step-wise Approach
	Second-Half
	Group Presentations
	Closing ceremony
30-Aug	Departure from Bangkok