

TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)

Individual Consultant: To coordinate the development of technical guidelines and associated training modules for GESI-Responsive Integrated Climate Adaptive Solutions in HKH



ToR

About ICIMOD

The Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) region stretches 3,500km across Asia, spanning eight countries – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan. Encompassing high-altitude mountain ranges, mid-hills, and plains, the zone is vital for the food, water, and energy security of up to two billion people and is a habitat for countless irreplaceable species. It is also acutely fragile and vulnerable to the impacts of the triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss.

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), based in Kathmandu, Nepal, is an international knowledge organisation focused on the HKH region, working since 1983 to deliver greener, more inclusive, and climate-resilient development. Our work is guided by our [Strategy 2030](#), [Medium-Term Action Plan V \(2023–2026\)](#) and the associated Results Framework, and our various [policies](#). Learn more on our [website](#).

Project Overview

ICIMOD is hiring a consultant under the Integrated Climate Adaptation Solutions for the Hindu Kush Himalaya Region (HI-CAS), a multi-country project funded by Global Affairs Canada (GAC). The project aims to improve climate-resilient, nature-positive livelihoods while strengthening the leadership and agency of beneficiaries (rightsholders)¹ in Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal.

The project will be implemented by adopting gender equality and social inclusion (GESI)-responsive, locally tailored climate adaptation solutions grounded in feminist and human rights-based methodologies that place the rights, agency, and leadership of beneficiaries (rightsholders) at the centre. These evidence-informed integrated adaptation solution packages (IASPs) will combine springshed management, renewable energy technologies to power irrigation systems, and agrobiodiversity practices. Beneficiaries (rightsholders) in the programme area will be supported through capacity building and knowledge sharing to strengthen institutional policies and actions and increase access to sustainable investments in climate action and development, particularly in the water, energy, and agrobiodiversity sectors, with a strong focus on beneficiary (rightsholder) leadership.

HI-CAS is designed to enhance the climate resilience of vulnerable communities, particularly women, girls, Indigenous Peoples, and disadvantaged communities in the HKH region, through activities focused on springshed management, agrobiodiversity, and productive use of renewable energy. The project will be implemented in two gewogs (blocks) in Paro and Punakha dzongkhags of Bhutan; two upazilas (sub-districts) in

¹ The term beneficiaries (rightsholders) represents women, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), ethnic minorities, and other marginalised groups.

Bandarban and Khagrachari districts of the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh; and two municipalities, Roshi and Dhankuta, in Nepal. Over its four-year duration, the project aims to benefit approximately 40,000 IPLCs and other disadvantaged groups by reducing their exposure and sensitivity to climate change impacts while fostering ecosystem health and climate mitigation outcomes.

The project adopts a partnership-based implementation approach, working in close collaboration with municipal governments, HI-CAS implementing partners, and community institutions to co-design, pilot, refine, and scale integrated climate adaptation models. This approach prioritises local knowledge, inclusive participation, and equitable decision-making to ensure solutions are responsive to the needs, priorities, and constraints of beneficiaries (rightsholders) across the project area. Central to this approach is the IASP, which includes technical guidelines and training materials to support the delivery of coherent, integrated climate adaptation interventions. The IASP incorporates springshed management, agrobiodiversity, renewable energy, and inclusive governance and embeds a feminist implementation framework aligned with national and subnational adaptation policies. This package will serve as a guiding tool for implementing partners, municipal governments, and practitioners in planning, implementing, and monitoring GESI-responsive adaptation solutions. IASP will help to strengthen institutional coordination and strengthen capacity-building efforts, as well as learn and roll out integrated climate adaptation interventions under HI-CAS.

Objectives

The main objective of this consultancy is to develop and finalise practical, field-oriented, and GESI-responsive technical guidelines and associated training materials for the IASP to support delivery of climate adaptation interventions under the HI-CAS project.

Specific objectives:

- To facilitate the IASP co-creation process with the ICIMOD HI-CAS team and technical staff, governments, implementing partners, and community institutions and to ensure the IASP is context-specific, locally relevant, and aligned with national and subnational policies and standards.
- To manage the development and documentation of integrated technical guidelines and training materials that combine springshed management, agrobiodiversity, renewable energy, and inclusive governance, embedding a feminist implementation framework aligned with national and subnational policies, strategies, and standards.

Technical content for the guidelines and training materials will come from the ICIMOD technical team, including the existing six-step protocol for springshed management and a detailed feasibility study guideline for renewable energy and agroecological training resources. The consultant's role will be to synthesise and amalgamate existing material

into a coherent integrated package suitable for rollout of GESI-responsive IASP interventions.

Scope of work

The consultant will work in close coordination with the ICIMOD HI-CAS project team and will be responsible for leading and supporting the development of a GESI-responsive IASP. This will include analysis of secondary literature and existing ICIMOD technical resources, facilitating processes, and ensuring that GESI considerations are fully integrated into the design, development, and implementation of the GESI-responsive IASP.

Specific tasks

1. Evidence review and contextual analysis

- Review relevant ICIMOD reports, guidelines, modules, tools, and lessons learned, as well as comparable regional and global initiatives, to inform the development of the GESI-responsive IASP.
- Identify gaps, overlaps, and opportunities from existing resources to strengthen an integrated, GESI-responsive IASP.
- Apply an intersectional feminist and IPLC-centred lens to ensure that diverse needs, capacities, and power relations, particularly those affecting beneficiaries (rightsholders), are systematically incorporated into the GESI-responsive IASP technical guidelines and training materials.

2. Development of the GESI-responsive IASP.

- Coordinate the development of technical guidelines and associated training materials for a GESI-responsive IASP that is actionable, context-specific, and scalable.
- Work closely with HI-CAS technical teams to define the following:
 - Clear implementation pathways and sequencing of GESI-responsive IASP interventions
 - Quality assurance standards and criteria, and risk mitigation measures
 - Structured learning questions to support adaptive management
 - Clarify governance arrangements (roles, responsibilities, and coordination mechanisms) that facilitate local group and coordination committee formation and sustainability
- Review the draft package for alignment with national and subnational policies, climate commitments, and development frameworks.
- Integrate GESI and feminist principles across all sectors, components, tools, and implementation processes from inception, ensuring beneficiaries' (rightsholders') leadership, meaningful participation, and equitable benefit-sharing.

3. Capacity building and partner support

- Work with the HI-CAS technical team to orient partners on GESI-responsive IASP training modules, tools, and learning materials.

- Support mentoring and accompaniment of implementing partners during the pilot rollout of the GESI-responsive IASP guideline and training materials, with a focus on strengthening institutional capacity for GESI-responsive and inclusive adaptation programming and update the operational guidance based on learnings from the pilot training(s).

4. Consultation, validation, and learning

- Facilitate inclusive stakeholder consultations, workshops, and community engagement processes to validate guidelines, ensuring accessibility, cultural appropriateness, and practical applicability.
- Integrate monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) elements aligned with the HI-CAS Results Measurement Framework (RMF) to track GESI outcomes, effectiveness, scalability, and sustainability of interventions.

Ensure learning mechanisms support adaptive management and continuous improvement of GESI-responsive IASP.

Deliverables

The Consultant will accomplish the following deliverables:

S.N	Deliverables	Timeline
1.	Inception Report, including detailed methodology, workplan, stakeholder mapping, consultation plan, and outline of the GESI-responsive IASP Protocol	30 May 2026
2.	Draft GESI-responsive IASP (guidelines and training module) integrating springshed management, agrobiodiversity, renewable energy, inclusive governance mechanisms, GESI safeguards, institutional coordination framework, and alignment with national and subnational policies	30 June 2026
3.	Consultation and Validation Report, documenting stakeholder consultations, community engagement, validation workshops, key feedback received, and how inputs were incorporated into the protocol	30 July 2026
4.	Final GESI-responsive IASP (revised and finalised), incorporating validation feedback, and including implementation steps, quality assurance criteria, safeguards, MEL integration aligned with the HI-CAS RMF	24 August 2026
5.	GESI-responsive IASP capacity building package, including training modules, facilitator guidance, and mentoring support during initial rollout with implementing partners	14 September 2026
	Total	

Reporting and supervising

The Consultant will report to the Senior Project Coordinator, HI-CAS. The consultant will also work closely with the HI-CAS project team and project partners in Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal.

Duration and notice period

The duration of this contract shall be from 1 May 2026 to 14 September 2026, unless terminated earlier in accordance with the provisions of this agreement. This assignment is envisaged to take approx. 35 days across a 3 month period. Kindly align your detailed technical proposal and budget to this guidance.

Either party may terminate this contract by providing a written notice of 30 days to the other party. In such cases, payment shall be made on a pro-rata basis for the work satisfactorily completed up to the effective date of termination, subject to approval by ICIMOD.

Payment

Payment will be inclusive of all applicable taxes as per ICIMOD policy.

ICIMOD's core values

Our core values are integrity, neutrality, relevance, inclusiveness, openness, and ambition. These values are an expression of our culture and are central to the guiding beliefs and principles of our work and behaviour. Our core values will lie at the heart of ICIMOD operations and delivery. They will underpin everything we do and frame how we work with our partners. They reflect our founding intentions and the balances we seek to hold while equipping us for the future.

Diversity, equity, inclusion, and safeguarding

ICIMOD's consultant selection process is based on the qualifications and competence of the applicants. As an employer, ICIMOD is committed to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion and offers equal opportunities to applicants from all backgrounds and walks of life, including but not limited to gender, age, national origin, religion, race, caste, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, or social status. ICIMOD strongly encourages applications from all eligible applicants, especially women, from all parts of the HKH region.

ICIMOD is dedicated to establishing and upholding a safe and nurturing work environment, where all its employees can participate fully and meaningfully without fear

of violence, harassment, exploitation, or intimidation. Any type of abuse or harassment, including sexual misconduct (including child abuse), by our staff, representatives, or stakeholders is not condoned or tolerated.

Person specification/competencies

ESSENTIAL

- Master's degree (PhD preferred) in environmental management, climate change, development studies, social sciences, natural resource management, or a related field.
- A minimum of 10 years of progressively responsible experience working with government agencies, NGOs/INGOs, and community-based institutions at national and subnational levels, preferably within the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) region.
- Demonstrated experience across multiple sectors, including natural resource management, water and springshed management, agrobiodiversity, renewable energy, and climate-resilient development, with the ability to integrate these into coherent adaptation frameworks.
- Proven track record in developing implementation protocols, institutional and governance frameworks, operational guidelines, and training modules, including facilitation of capacity-building and partner mentoring processes.
- Strong conceptual understanding and applied experience in GESI, including feminist, human rights-based, and intersectional approaches. Demonstrated experience working with women, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), and other marginalised groups, ensuring meaningful participation, leadership, and equitable benefit sharing.

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- Demonstrated experience aligning programmes and tools with Global Affairs Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy or similar feminist and rights-based donor frameworks.
- Experience facilitating multi-stakeholder consultations and participatory processes involving local governments, communities, and technical partners.
- Excellent analytical, facilitation, and communication skills, with the ability to translate complex technical concepts into practical, field-oriented guidance.

Method of application

Applicants are requested to apply before 6 April 2026, 11:59 PM Nepal Standard Time (UTC+05:45) by sending in the following documents to hrod@icimod.org.

1. A technical proposal demonstrating sound knowledge, technical skills, and capability as required by the nature of the work and understanding of the requisite tasks outlined in the terms of reference.
2. Up-to-date CV
3. A financial proposal [in USD or NPR equivalent] with a detailed breakdown inclusive of applicable taxes

4. At least two positive references/recommendations from past employers/clients
5. A copy of the citizenship certificate/passport for identity verification.

Only shortlisted candidates will be notified.