

TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Specialist

(Project Position)

Project: Integrated Climate Adaptation Solutions for the Hindu Kush Himalaya Region – HICAS

Unit: Strategic Results, Partnership and Business Development (SRPBD)

ToR

About ICIMOD

The Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) region stretches 3,500 km 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 front-line 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 organisation established in 1983 that is working to make this critical region greener, more inclusive and climate resilient. For more information, read our [Strategy 2030: Moving Mountains](#) and explore our [website](#).

Background

The Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Specialist is being hired under the Integrated Climate Adaptation Solutions for the Hindu Kush Himalaya Region (HICAS) project at ICIMOD, funded by Global Affairs Canada (GAC) – Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD). The project aims to improve climate-resilient, nature-positive livelihoods while strengthening the leadership and agency of rural women and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) in Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal.

The project will be implemented through the adoption of gender-responsive and locally tailored climate adaptation solutions—grounded in feminist and human rights-based methodologies—that place the rights, agency, and leadership of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) at the centre. These evidence-informed Integrated Adaptation Solution Packages (IASPs) will combine springshed management, renewable energy technologies for powered irrigation systems, and agrobiodiversity practices. They will be complemented by capacity building and knowledge sharing to drive institutional policy and action, and to attract sustainable investments in climate action and development, particularly in the water, energy, and agrobiodiversity sectors, with a strong focus on women’s and IPLCs’ leadership.

The HICAS project will be implemented in two upazilas (sub-districts) in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh—Bandarban and Khagrachari Districts; two gewogs (blocks) in Bhutan—Paro and Punakha; and two municipalities in Nepal—

Roshi and Dhankuta. Over its four-year duration, the project aims to benefit approximately 40,000 IPLCs and other vulnerable groups by reducing their exposure and sensitivity to climate change impacts, while fostering ecosystem health and climate mitigation outcomes.

While housed within ICIMOD's newly established Strategic Results, Partnerships, and Business Development (SRPBD) Unit, this position will be fully dedicated to the HICAS project. The SRPBD Unit serves as a central body to strengthen institutional approaches, methods, and standards for results planning, coordination, partnerships, and resource mobilisation. Locating this position within SRPBD ensures adherence to institutional MEL quality standards while supporting day-to-day implementation of HICAS.

Position overview

The MEL Specialist will be responsible for supporting the delivery of results in line with the commitments we have made in the HICAS Project Performance Measurement Framework, which is nested within ICIMOD's [Strategy 2030: Moving Mountains](#) and [Medium-Term Action Plan V \(2023-2026\): Embracing Change and Accelerating Impact institutional Results Framework](#). These institutional frameworks set out an ambitious agenda to strengthen monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL), enable adaptive management, and enhance delivery and accountability.'

The MEL Specialist plays a critical role in strengthening systems for results-based planning, monitoring, and reporting within the HICAS project, with a strong emphasis on adaptive learning, performance delivery, and the tracking of GESI-responsive and IPLC-relevant outcomes and impacts. Drawing on feminist methodologies, the MEL approach will ensure that gender and social power dynamics are captured through qualitative and intersectional analysis and are reflected in transformative changes for women and IPLCs. The role requires strong interactions with HICAS team members, the Country Project Focal Points, and partners in the HICAS countries.

This position requires relevant qualifications and experience in Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning, with demonstrated expertise in results-based management. The role also demands strong familiarity with human rights-based and feminist approaches to results, as well as experience working on gender equality and with Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities.

Key Responsibilities

1. Strategic Planning and Results-Based Management

- Work directly with the Senior Project Coordinator, project team, and partners to ensure that all HICAS planning, MEL activities, and reporting are fully aligned with the project's Performance Measurement Framework and MEL requirements, as well as compliant with Global Affairs Canada (GAC) procedures and contractual obligations, including for independent evaluations.
- Maintain and update the HICAS Performance Measurement Framework and Theory of Change, allowing for evidence-informed refinements based on the evolving context.
- Ensure that all stakeholders align annual work plans and deliverables with the Performance Measurement Framework and MEL Plan, applying feminist and human rights-based principles.
- Provide strategic leadership on GESI-responsive MEL: ensure gender equality and social inclusion, as well as human rights-based approaches, are embedded across methodologies, data systems, and analysis, in collaboration with project teams and partners, including tracking of power relations.
- Under the leadership of the Senior Project Coordinator, provide technical MEL inputs into annual planning, budgeting, and reporting to ensure outcome focus and adaptive management.

2. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL)

- Establish and maintain a comprehensive MEL Plan for the full project cycle, aligned with the HICAS Performance Measurement Framework and ICIMOD's and GAC's MEL approaches and standards, with strong integration of feminist and human rights-based approaches.
- Lead and oversee the implementation of the MEL Plan in close coordination with the Senior PC, project team, and partners.
- Work closely with the Country Project Focal Points to guide their engagement and delivery of MEL activities.
- Organise and participate in joint field missions to assess progress, support partners, and collect evidence and lessons learned.
- Prepare annual expenditure plans for M&E activities, monitor expenditure rates, and justify reallocations where required in line with ICIMOD and GAC guidelines.
- Facilitate reflection and learning reviews to support evidence-based adaptation of strategies and work plans, in close collaboration with the CPOs.

- Coordinate project evaluations in collaboration with ICIMOD's Independent Evaluation Unit, ensuring integration of feminist-informed reflection and adaptive learning.

3. Reporting and Accountability

- Ensure that all project reporting aligns with Global Affairs Canada (GAC) requirements, including agreed formats, timelines, and technical guidance.
- Coordinate and produce high-quality, timely reports aligned with donor requirements and ICIMOD standards.
- Compile and review qualitative and quantitative data with project teams and partners to ensure reporting accuracy and consistency.
- Work with the SRPBD- Planning, Monitoring, and Reporting team to validate data and update ICIMOD's Results Dashboard.
- Lead baseline data collection across all indicators, ensuring alignment with the results tracker and data management systems.
- Respond to external audits and evaluation-related requests, ensuring timely submission of documentation.
- Uphold data protection, privacy, and ethical standards in line with ICIMOD policies and legal regulations.
- Support preparation of key project performance reports (Annual and Final PPRs), working closely with the evaluation team and Senior Project Coordinator to highlight rights-based and GESI-responsive results and stories of change.

4. Capacity Building and Technical Support

- Provide technical guidance to the project team and partners on results-based planning, monitoring, and reporting.
- Build team and partner capacity in feminist, gender-based, and human rights-based MEL approaches that elevate the voices and accountability of women and IPLCs.
- Develop user-friendly tools, templates, and guidance materials to standardise MEL processes in line with donor and institutional requirements.

5. Knowledge Management and Dissemination

- Capture and share learning through documentation of best practices, success stories, and lessons for broader uptake and donor engagement.
- Contribute to knowledge products, case studies, and evidence-based communications, and participate in learning exchanges.

6. Collaboration and Resource Mobilisation

- Work collaboratively with implementing partners, target communities, and stakeholders following ICIMOD and HICAS GESI guidelines.
- Coordinate closely with SRPBD to ensure consistent application of ICIMOD MEL standards and integration across teams.
- Undertake additional MEL-related tasks as assigned, including adapting to evolving GAC requirements.
- Contribute to resource mobilisation efforts through MEL inputs into project proposals, partnership development, or related planning tasks.

Person specification/competencies

ESSENTIAL

- Master's degree in monitoring and evaluation, statistics, development studies, policy studies, social sciences, gender, economics, or a related field.
- At least five years of relevant experience in results-based approaches and the integration of monitoring, evaluation, and reporting in international, multicultural, or research settings.
- Deep understanding and strong experience in integrating GESI, human rights, and feminist approaches into monitoring, evaluation, and reporting.
- Proven experience in designing and implementing MEL systems tailored to diverse donor requirements.
- Experience providing specialist MEL and reporting support to an organisation and its partners for a bilaterally funded grant such as GAC, European Union, USAID, FCDO, etc.
- Background or experience in sustainable development, climate change, resilience, GESI-responsive programming, and other related sectors.
- Ability to train and mentor staff and ICIMOD's partners in planning and reporting processes.
- Knowledge of project management and planning tools (e.g., Microsoft Project, Google Sheets) and monitoring platforms, including ICT tools such as Kobo Toolbox, Power BI, etc.
- Strong facilitation, interpersonal, and advisory skills for working across teams and institutions, with the ability to work both independently and collaboratively in a fast-paced environment.
- Excellent English communication skills, both written and verbal.
- High degree of cultural sensitivity, maturity, and discretion.

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- Experience working in the Hindu Kush Himalayan (HKH) or broader South Asian region, with a strong understanding of GESI and experience applying feminist and intersectional approaches in MEL.

Reporting and supervising

The MEL Specialist will report to the Head of SRPBD as the first supervisor (line manager) and the Senior Project Coordinator – HICAS as the co-supervisor. The MEL Specialist will collaborate and work closely with all other HICAS team members (project core team, technical staff, programme officer, etc.) and all HICAS project partners. The MEL Specialist will also ensure that the Head of Resilient Economies and Landscapes is fully informed on HICAS results, approaches, and outcomes.

The role also involves collaboration with other ICIMOD Strategic Groups, leads of cross-cutting areas (GESI, Climate Change, and Biodiversity), and units of ICIMOD to ensure smooth project implementation and effective internal and external communication.

Location

You will be working in a cross-cultural, impact-oriented environment at ICIMOD's head office in Kathmandu, Nepal. Frequent travel in the HKH region will be required.

Kathmandu is a lively and exciting place to live. People are friendly, living costs are comparatively inexpensive, food is delicious (with a range of local and international cuisines), and there are good local and international schools and a low crime rate. Nepal offers amazing trekking trails, white water rafting, and safaris, combined with a rich culture and charming yet lively nightlife.

Duration

Two-year fixed-term project contract with a probation period of six months; possibility of extension subject to the availability of HICAS project funding, the need for the position, and the staff member's performance.

Remuneration

This is an international position at ICIMOD. The starting annual gross salary for this position is USD 34,062. Gross salary comprises basic salary, provident fund, and family/post adjustment allowance. Salaries and benefits at ICIMOD are competitive compared with other international organisations. We offer a comprehensive benefits

package which includes child/dependency allowances, insurances (medical, life and accidental), children's education grant for a maximum of 2 children below 18 years of age, severance pay, paid leave (30 holidays and 10 public holidays per year) and a day care facility.

For expatriates, there is a tax exemption in Nepal; they are responsible for their home country's tax payments. Expatriate staff are entitled to housing allowance, annual home leave ticket, shipment of personal effects, and an installation and repatriation allowance.

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 ourselves for the future.

Diversity, equity, inclusion, and safeguarding

ICIMOD's human resource 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.

Method of application

Applicants are requested to apply online before August 3, 2025 (11:59 pm Nepal Standard Time UTC+05:45) through the [ICIMOD Vacancy Application Portal](#).

Only shortlisted candidates will be notified.