



ADAPTATION FUND

AFB/PPRC.38/27
10 September 2026

Adaptation Fund Board
Project and Programme Review Committee
Thirty eighth Meeting
Bonn, Germany, 19-23 October 2026

Agenda Item 5 (f)

PROPOSAL FOR BHUTAN, INDIA, NEPAL

Background

1. The strategic priorities, policies and guidelines of the Adaptation Fund (the Fund), as well as its operational policies and guidelines include provisions for funding projects and programmes at the regional, i.e. transnational level. However, the Fund has thus far not funded such projects and programmes.

2. The Adaptation Fund Board (the Board), as well as its Project and Programme Review Committee (PPRC) and Ethics and Finance Committee (EFC) considered issues related to regional projects and programmes on a number of occasions between the Board's fourteenth and twenty-first meetings but the Board did not make decisions for the purpose of inviting proposals for such projects. Indeed, in its fourteenth meeting, the Board decided to:

- (c) Request the secretariat to send a letter to any accredited regional implementing entities informing them that they could present a country project/programme but not a regional project/programme until a decision had been taken by the Board, and that they would be provided with further information pursuant to that decision*

(Decision B.14/25 (c))

3. At its eighth meeting in March 2012, the PPRC came up with recommendations on certain definitions related to regional projects and programmes. However, as the subsequent seventeenth Board meeting took a different strategic approach to the overall question of regional projects and programmes, these PPRC recommendations were not included in a Board decision.

4. At its twenty-fourth meeting, the Board heard a presentation from the coordinator of the working group set up by decision B.17/20 and tasked with following up on the issue of regional projects and programmes. She circulated a recommendation prepared by the working group, for the consideration by the Board, and the Board decided:

- (a) To initiate steps to launch a pilot programme on regional projects and programmes, not to exceed US\$ 30 million;*
- (b) That the pilot programme on regional projects and programmes will be outside of the consideration of the 50 per cent cap on multilateral implementing entities (MIEs) and the country cap;*
- (c) That regional implementing entities (RIEs) and MIEs that partner with national implementing entities (NIEs) or other national institutions would be eligible for this pilot programme, and*

- (d) *To request the secretariat to prepare for the consideration of the Board, before the twenty-fifth meeting of the Board or intersessionally, under the guidance of the working group set up under decision B.17/20, a proposal for such a pilot programme based on consultations with contributors, MIEs, RIEs, the Adaptation Committee, the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN), the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG), and other relevant bodies, as appropriate, and in that proposal make a recommendation on possible options on approaches, procedures and priority areas for the implementation of the pilot programme.*

(Decision B.24/30)

5. The proposal requested under (d) of the decision above was prepared by the secretariat and submitted to the Board in its twenty-fifth meeting, and the Board decided to:

- (a) *Approve the pilot programme on regional projects and programmes, as contained in document AFB/B.25/6/Rev.2;*
- (b) *Set a cap of US\$ 30 million for the programme;*
- (c) *Request the secretariat to issue a call for regional project and programme proposals for consideration by the Board in its twenty-sixth meeting; and*
- (d) *Request the secretariat to continue discussions with the Climate Technology Center and Network (CTCN) towards operationalizing, during the implementation of the pilot programme on regional projects and programmes, the Synergy Option 2 on knowledge management proposed by CTCN and included in Annex III of the document AFB/B.25/6/Rev.2.*

(Decision B.25/28)

6. Based on the Board Decision B.25/28, the first call for regional project and programme proposals was issued and an invitation letter to eligible Parties to submit project and programme proposals to the Fund was sent out on 5 May 2015.

7. At its twenty-sixth meeting the Board decided *to request the secretariat to inform the Multilateral Implementing Entities and Regional Implementing Entities that the call for proposals under the Pilot Programme for Regional Projects and Programmes is still open and to encourage them to submit proposals to the Board at its 27th meeting, bearing in mind the cap established by Decision B.25/26.*

(Decision B.26/3)

8. At its twenty-seventh meeting the Board decided to:

- (a) *Continue consideration of regional project and programme proposals under the pilot programme, while reminding the implementing entities that the amount set aside for the pilot programme is US\$ 30 million;*
- (b) *Request the secretariat to prepare for consideration by the Project and Programme Review Committee at its nineteenth meeting, a proposal for prioritization among regional project/programme proposals, including for awarding project formulation grants, and for establishment of a pipeline; and*
- (c) *Consider the matter of the pilot programme for regional projects and programmes at its twenty-eighth meeting.*

(Decision B.27/5)

9. The proposal requested in (b) above was presented to the nineteenth meeting of the PPRC as document AFB/PPRC.19/5. The Board subsequently decided:

a) *With regard to the pilot programme approved by decision B.25/28:*

(i) *To prioritize the four projects and 10 project formulation grants as follows:*

1. *If the proposals recommended to be funded in a given meeting of the PPRC do not exceed the available slots under the pilot programme, all those proposals would be submitted to the Board for funding;*

2. *If the proposals recommended to be funded in a given meeting of the PPRC do exceed the available slots under the pilot programme, the proposals to be funded under the pilot programme would be prioritized so that the total number of projects and project formulation grants (PFGs) under the programme maximizes the total diversity of projects/PFGs. This would be done using a three-tier prioritization system: so that the proposals in relatively less funded sectors would be prioritized as the first level of prioritization. If there are more than one proposal in the same sector: the proposals in relatively less funded regions are prioritized as the second level of prioritization. If there are more than one proposal in the same region, the proposals submitted by relatively less represented implementing entity would be prioritized as the third level of prioritization;*

(ii) *To request the secretariat to report on the progress and experiences of the pilot programme to the PPRC at its twenty-third meeting; and*

b) *With regard to financing regional proposals beyond the pilot programme referred to above:*

(i) *To continue considering regional proposals for funding, within the two categories originally described in document AFB/B.25/6/Rev.2: ones requesting up to US\$ 14 million, and others requesting up to US\$ 5 million, subject to review of the regional programme;*

(ii) *To establish two pipelines for technically cleared regional proposals: one for proposals up to US\$ 14 million and the other for proposals up to US\$ 5 million, and place any technically cleared regional proposals, in those pipelines, in the order described in decision B.17/19 (their date of recommendation by the PPRC, their submission date, their lower “net” cost); and*

(iii) *To fund projects from the two pipelines, using funds available for the respective types of implementing entities, so that the maximum number of or maximum total funding for projects and project formulation grants to be approved each fiscal year will be outlined at the time of approving the annual work plan of the Board.*

(Decision B.28/1)

10. At its thirty-first meeting, having considered the comments and recommendation of the Project and Programme Review Committee, the Adaptation Fund Board (the Board) decided:

(a) *To merge the two pipelines for technically cleared regional proposals established in decision B.28/1(b)(ii), so that starting in fiscal year 2019 the provisional amount of funding for regional proposals would be allocated without distinction between the two categories originally described in document AFB/B.25/6/Rev.2, and that the funding of regional proposals would be established on a ‘first come, first served’ basis; and*

(b) *To include in its work programme for fiscal year 2019 provision of an amount of US\$ 60 million for the funding of regional project and programme proposals, as follows:*

(i) *Up to US\$ 59 million to be used for funding regional project and programme proposals in the two categories of regional projects and programmes: ones requesting up to US \$14 million, and others requesting up to US\$ 5 million; and*

(ii) *Up to US\$ 1 million for funding project formulation grant requests for preparing regional project and programme concepts or fully-developed project and programme documents.*

(Decision B.31/3)

11. The following project pre-concept document titled “Strengthening Adaptation and Flood and Landslide Early Warning for the HKH (SAFE NIB)” was submitted for Bhutan, India, Nepal by the International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), which is a Regional Implementing Entity of the Adaptation Fund.

12. This is the fifth submission of the regional project pre-concept proposal using the three-step submission process. It was first submitted as project concept ahead of the forty-seventh Board Meeting.

13. The current submission was received by the secretariat in time to be considered in the forty-seventh Board meeting. The secretariat carried out a technical review of the project proposal, with the diary number AF00000548, and completed a review sheet.

14. In accordance with a request to the secretariat made by the Board in its 10th meeting, the secretariat shared this review sheet with ICIMOD, and offered it the opportunity of providing responses before the review sheet was sent to the PPRC.

15. The secretariat is submitting to the PPRC the summary and, pursuant to decision B.17/15, the final technical review of the project, both prepared by the secretariat, along with the final submission of the proposal in the following section. In accordance with decision B.25.15, the proposal is submitted with changes between the initial submission and the revised version highlighted.



ADAPTATION FUND

ADAPTATION FUND BOARD SECRETARIAT
TECHNICAL REVIEW OF PROJECT PROPOSAL FOR
"STRENGTHENING ADAPTATION AND FLOOD AND LANDSLIDE EARLY WARNING FOR THE
HKH (SAFE NIB) "

Project Title	Strengthening Adaptation and Flood and Landslide Early Warning for the HKH (SAFE NIB)
Project ID	AF00000548
Category	Regular size project (over \$1 million)
Type	Regional project
Stage	Pre-concept
Country	Regional (Bhutan, India, Nepal)
Implementing Entity	ICIMOD
Financing Requested	USD 30,000,000.00
Reviewer	Estefania Jimenez Rodriguez

Co-reviewer(s)

IE Contact Person

Neha Rai, Prerana Dakhwa

Secretariat's Overall Comment

The project Strengthening Adaptation and Flood and Landslide Early Warning for the HKH (SAFE NIB) aims to enhance flood and landslide resilience in the Himalayas through innovative early warning systems, resilient infrastructure, inclusive governance, and regional collaboration, aligned with climate adaptation solutions.

The proposal includes a PFG request of USD 32,958.

The first technical review raises some issues, such as limited problem analysis, absence of a theory of change, missing output-level financing allocations, lack of details on stakeholder engagement to date, lack of clarity on implementation arrangements, and inconsistencies with the PFG budget etc. as discussed in the number of Clarification Requests (CRs) and Corrective Action Request (CAR) raised in the review.

The second technical review raises some issues, such as the need to strengthen the Theory of Change, provide output-level financing allocations, and address inconsistencies in the PFG budget, among others, as discussed in the number of Clarification Requests (CRs) and Corrective Action Request (CAR) raised in the review.

The third technical review finds that most of the outstanding issues have been addressed however some CRs and CARs remain concerning PFG execution entity clarification, proper template for project component & financing table as confirming the presence of USPs as raised in the few remaining CRs and CARs.

The fourth technical review finds one outstanding CR/CAR remains concerning the proper cover page.

the fifth technical review finds that all outstanding CRs and CARs have been addressed.

Country Eligibility

Are all of the participating countries party to the Kyoto Protocol, or the Paris Agreement?

Response:

Yes

Secretariat: Yes.

Bhutan, India and Nepal are Parties to both the Kyoto Protocol and Paris Agreement.

Are all of the participating countries developing countries particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change?

Response: Pending

Secretariat: Yes.

Bhutan, India, and Nepal are all developing countries within the Hindu Kush Himalayan region, which is highly vulnerable to increasing risks from glacial melt, floods, landslides, and changing monsoon patterns.

The Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) region is highly vulnerable to multiple hazards driven by climate change, urbanisation, and socio-economic change. Nepal, India, and Bhutan face diverse but interconnected risks including Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs), landslides, riverine flooding, and droughts. Rapid warming at more than double the global average rate is intensifying glacial melt, destabilising slopes, and shifting monsoon patterns. Heavy rainfall in upstream Nepal and Bhutan frequently leads to catastrophic flooding in India.

Project Eligibility

Have the designated government authorities for the Adaptation Fund from each of the participating countries endorsed the project/programme?

Response: Pending

Secretariat: Yes.

As per the Bhutan Endorsement letter dated January 30, 2026.

As per the India Endorsement letter dated June 4, 2026.

As per the Nepal Endorsement letter dated January 25, 2026.

Has the pre-concept provided necessary information on the problem the proposed project/programme is aiming to solve, including both the regional and the country perspective?

Response: Pending

Secretariat: Yes, but further information is required.

The proposed project provides regional and subnational information, as well as clear adaptation solutions to address the impacts of climate change in each country. It also highlights shared challenges and opportunities across countries, thereby supporting the rationale for a regional approach. However, more details are required.

CAR1: Please ensure that:

1. The full names of organizations, programs, and other terms are provided when first introducing an acronym.
2. Full numerical figures are used throughout the document (cover page, tables, etc.). For example, use "30,000,000" instead of "30 million" and "5,000,000" instead of "5".

3. Please remove all non-EEs from the proposal cover page.

CR1: Kindly provide clear linkage between the climate conditions affecting each country and the proposed solutions. These references should be specific to show this correlation and properly justify the proposed project. This may include information about environmental, economic and social impacts due to climate change.

CR2: Please clarify the main regional adaptation challenge that the proposed project seeks to address.

Response: Not Cleared

Secretariat: Yes, but further information is required.

The pre-concept provides a clear description of the problem from both the regional and country perspectives. It explains the shared climate risks across the Hindu Kush Himalayan (HKH) region and demonstrates why these risks require coordinated transboundary action. It summarizes the existing disaster risk reduction frameworks and capacities in Bhutan, India, and Nepal, while identifying common gaps. However, more details are needed.

CR3: The country-specific problem analysis is relatively brief and focuses more on existing institutions than on the specific vulnerabilities and adaptation gaps in each country. Please provide some additional discussion of how risks and needs differ among Bhutan, India, and Nepal.

CR4: Please integrate some quantitative data to better demonstrate the scale and urgency of the problem (e.g., historical losses, populations at risk, economic damages, trends in flood and landslide frequency).

CR5: Please provide additional details on why existing bilateral or regional initiatives have been insufficient and how the proposed project will address these remaining gaps without duplicating ongoing efforts.

Response: Cleared

Secretariat: CAR1: Cleared.

1. Full names of organizations, programs, and other terms have been revised and amended accordingly.
2. All figures throughout the PCN are presented as full numbers (e.g., "30,000,000").
3. All non-EEs have been removed from the proposal cover page.

CR1: Cleared.

As per revised Page 1. The proposal states that: "These hazards are also inherently transboundary: Heavy rainfall in upstream Nepal and Bhutan frequently leads to catastrophic flooding in India (e.g. Koshi 2008 and 2017; Manas 2004 and 2007; Ganges 1998 and 2004)- risk generated in one country routinely determines outcomes in another."

The solution will help to have cross-border coordination using the existing national early warning systems of each country.

CR2: Cleared.

As per revised Page 1. The proposal states that, while each country has early warning systems, these operate at the national level and do not support cross-border coordination. As a result, significant gaps remain that are inherently transboundary in nature, including limited information sharing and harmonised thresholds, gaps in impact-based forecasting, weak last-mile dissemination of warnings, and underutilised ecosystem-based solutions.

CR3: Cleared.

As per revised Page 2. The proposal provides information regarding the specific vulnerabilities and adaptation gaps in each country. Please provide some additional discussion of how risks and needs differ among Bhutan, India, and Nepal.

CR4: Cleared.

As per revised Page 2. Quantitative data has been included for each country to demonstrate the scale and urgency of the problem. The proposal states that: "The 2008 Koshi (Kushaha) embankment breach affected an estimated 4.3 million people and forced the evacuation of over 2 million across eight districts of Bihar, with more than 500 deaths and around 19,000 livestock lost; crop losses alone reached approximately US\$18.7 million, reducing Nepal's national GDP by an estimated 0.3%, and some 223,000 houses were damaged."

CR5: Cleared.

As per revised Page 3. The proposal provided additional details to ensure additionality through direct coordination with existing bilateral mechanisms in the project's regional governance structure. For details about duplication-avoidance mapping will be provided at the Full Proposal.

Have the project/programme objectives, components and financing been clearly explained?

Response: Pending

Secretariat: Yes, but further clarification is needed.

The proposed project provides an outline of the objectives, components and financing. However, the description of components are not clearly defined.

CR6: Kindly provide brief yet clear explanations of what will be financed under each component.

CR7: Kindly revise the outcomes and outputs for each component to ensure they are properly defined. Please note that indicators must be SMART.

Response: Not Cleared

Secretariat: Yes, but further information is required.

The pre-concept clearly states the overall objective of enhancing flood and landslide resilience in the Hindu Kush Himalaya through improved early warning systems, resilient infrastructure, inclusive governance, and regional cooperation. It also presents five logical project components, with associated expected outcomes, outputs, participating countries, and indicative financing allocations. However, more details are needed.

CR8: Please provide an explicit description of the project's theory of change that demonstrates how the five components collectively contribute to the overall objective and reinforce one another.

CR9: Please provide proposed financing allocations at the output level. Also provide some discussion of how these budget allocations would be impactful and cost-effective.

Response: Not Cleared

Secretariat: CR6: Not cleared.

A brief description of what will be financed has been included for each component in Table of "Project/Programme Components and Financing":

However, please:

- number the specific objectives.
- make the title "What Will Be Financed" in Component 4 bold.

CR7: Not cleared.

Please rephrase outcome 3 in Component 5 as: "Communities in high-risk areas adopt improved DRR and preparedness practices" instead of "Awareness campaigns shift behaviour in high-risk areas".

CR8: Not cleared.

Please revise and strengthen the Theory of Change as follows:

- Explicitly identify the key assumptions underpinning the Theory of Change and describe the measures proposed to mitigate associated risks.
- Use this structure: "If (climate adaptation challenge being addressed) and if (key barriers/gaps preventing adaptation), then (describe the project's long-term objective). This will be achieved by: (i) (how Component 1 contributes to addressing the challenge); (ii) (how Component 2 contributes); (iii) (how Component 3 contributes); (iv) (how Component 4 contributes); and (v) (how Component 5 contributes). Together, these interventions will lead to (expected outputs and outcomes), resulting in (expected adaptation impact). Key assumptions include: (i) (assumption 1) and (ii) (assumption 2), with corresponding mitigation measures consisting of (describe mitigation measures)."

CR9: Not cleared.

The proposal already includes a brief discussion on the cost-effectiveness of the proposed project (page 7). However, please provide the proposed financing allocations at the output level in the Table of "Project/Programme Components and Financing".

Response: Not Cleared

Secretariat: CR6: Not cleared.

1. Please comply with the table template for the components financing table and separate out the output and components column.
2. Please provide the "What Will Be Financed" information below the table and not within the table.

CR7: Cleared.

As per amendment to component 5.

CR8: Cleared.

As per updated Theory of change.

CR9: Cleared.

Project/Program Components & Financing now included the cost at output level.

At part II, given the description of components 3 and 2 please confirm if the project will contain USPs as per <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Updated-guidance-on-USPs-.pdf>

Response: Cleared

Secretariat: CR6: Cleared.

Based on updated Components and Financing Table.

Has the project/programme been justified in terms of how: - it supports concrete adaptation actions? - it builds added value through the regional approach? - it promotes new and innovative solutions to climate change adaptation? - it is cost-effective? - it is consistent with applicable strategies and plans? - it incorporates learning and knowledge management? - it will be developed through a consultative process with particular reference to vulnerable groups, including gender considerations, in compliance with the Environmental and Social Policy of the Adaptation Fund? - it will take into account sustainability?

Response: Pending

Secretariat: Yes, but further information is required.

The document outlines concrete adaptation actions, explains the innovative approach behind the proposed solutions, demonstrates alignment with relevant strategies and plans, provides a cost-effectiveness rationale, states that an inclusive consultation process will be conducted during project preparation, and includes a learning and knowledge management component (Component 5). It also contributes to the thematic focal area of Disaster Risk Reduction and Early Warning Systems. However, the regional added value and the baseline information supporting the proposed approach could be strengthened.

CR10: Please ensure the following:

- (i) Adaptation actions are specific, clearly explained and well-defined. For example, clarify what is meant by "innovation" in Component 1 and "Inclusive" in Component 2.
- (ii) The added value of adopting a regional approach is clear for Nepal and Bhutan; but, please explain the specific benefits for India.
- (iii) A sustainability approach is included, and its integration into the project is clearly described.

CR11: Please include a statement that indicates how the project contributes to the "Disaster risk reduction and early warning systems" thematic focal area as specified on the cover page. Please consider whether the project also contributes to the "Transboundary water management" thematic focal area.

CR12: Please describe any stakeholder engagement to date as well as how the planned stakeholder consultations will be used to inform project design.

Response: Not Cleared

Secretariat: CR10:

- (i) Not cleared. Please ensure the following:

Adaptation actions are specific, clearly explained and well-defined. For example, clarify what is meant by "innovation" in Component 1 and "Inclusive" in Component 2.

- (ii) Cleared.

As per revised page 7. The proposal states that: "For India, the regional approach provides earlier access to upstream hydrological and glaciological data from Nepal and Bhutan, the only realistic source of additional lead

time for floods that materialise downstream in Bihar, Assam and West Bengal, since India's own monitoring networks cannot observe hazard formation occurring upstream of the border. "

(iii) Cleared.

As per revised page 8. A sustainability approach has been included. All technical systems will be part of existing government platforms, co-organised by the countries themselves rather than as ICIMOD-parallel systems, with recurrent operating costs progressively absorbed into national budgets.

CR11: Cleared.

As per revised page 7. A statement on the project's contribution to the "Disaster Risk Reduction and Early Warning Systems" thematic focal area has been included.

CR12: Not cleared.

Please briefly indicate whether consultations will be conducted during the concept stage, and how the planned stakeholder consultations will be used to inform the project design.

Response: Cleared

Secretariat: For future submissions, the long narrative in the review sheet should be shortened, the necessary information should be placed in the proposal. The review sheet should point to where the information can be found in the proposal.

CR10: Cleared.

As per updated information on component 1 in Part II.

CR11: Cleared.

As per clarification in the review sheet.

The IE is advised to ensure that these linkage are strengthening and included in the concept note phase of the proposal

CR12: Cleared.

As per updated Consultative process and gender considerations section in Part II.

Does the pre-concept briefly explain which organizations would be involved in the proposed regional project/programme at the regional and national/sub-national level, and how coordination would be arranged? Does it explain how national institutions, and when possible, national implementing entities (NIEs) would be involved as partners in the project?

Response: Pending

Secretariat: Yes, but further information is required.

Part III includes all required implementation arrangements. However, the information provided is not fully consistent with the cover page and requires further clarification.

CAR2: Please provide some details on the proposed governance and coordination structure for the project,

including decision-making arrangements, roles and responsibilities of the various partners, and mechanisms for coordinating implementation across countries. Additionally, please clarify the role of each entity and specify whether its responsibilities are at the regional, national, or subnational level.

CAR 3:

1. Please clarify if ICIMOD serving as an Implementing Entity (IE), an Executing Entity (EE), or both?
2. Please clarify which organizations are the Executing Entities: ADPC and NDMA, or ADPC and IFRC?
3. Please ensure consistency between the cover page and Part III regarding the Executing and Implementing Entities.

Response: Cleared

Secretariat: CAR2: Cleared.

As per revised Part III. An overview of the key roles and responsibilities of each entity has been included. However, please note that this information will need to be further detailed at the Full Proposal stage.

CAR 3:

1. Cleared.

ICIMOD serves as IE and EE.

2. Cleared.

EE are three: ICIMOD, ADPC and NDMA.

3. Cleared.

There is consistency between the cover page and Part III regarding the Executing and Implementing Entities.

Resource Availability

Is the requested project / programme funding within the funding windows of the programme for regional projects/programmes?

Response: Cleared

Secretariat: Yes.

The financing requested from the Adaptation Fund is USD 30,000,000.

Are the administrative costs (Implementing Entity Management Fee and Project/ Programme Execution Costs) at or below 10 per cent of the project/programme for implementing entity (IE) fees and at or below 10 per cent of the project/programme cost for the execution costs?

Response: Pending

Secretariat: Yes, but some amendments are required.

All figures are not rounded to a whole number. Both the IE Management Fee and Project Execution costs are below 10% of the Project Total Cost and, therefore, are correct in size. It is not clear whether the IE is serving as EE as well. The PFG requested needs amendments.

CAR4: Kindly revise and amend the following:

1. Please update the PFG request from as well as the cover page of the proposal to reflect the appropriate amount for the pre-CN stage which is \$33,000.
2. Please remember to include the IE fee for the execution of the PFG as a specific budget 3. Please clarify if ICIMOD will self-execute the PFG. If yes, please update the PFG request from to reflect this.
4. Please update the start date of the PFG.
5. Please include AF project ID/FIF ID with resubmission.

Response: Not Cleared

Secretariat: CAR4:

1. Not cleared.

Figures are rounded to whole numbers in the PCN, however, not in the PFG. Please amend accordingly. In addition, please ensure consistency of the amount of the PFG request in the cover page and the PFG form.

2. Cleared.

As per revised PFG form. The PFG includes a IE management fee of 8.5% of the total PFG.

3. Not cleared.

As per revised PFG form. ICIMOD will serve as both the IE and EE. However, please amend the EE entities listed in the PFG form to reflect their exact names (avoiding generic references such as "national disaster management authorities of the three countries"). Please ensure that the clean and the track version are the same.

4. Cleared.

As per revised PFG form. The start date of the PFG has been updated to November 2026.

5. Cleared.

As per revised PFG form.

Response: Not Cleared

Secretariat: CAR4 (3):

1, The PFG form provides conflicting information on who is executing the PFG. It contains a note that the PFG will be executing by ICIMOD yet the header of the PFG form includes 3 other agencies. Please update the header of the PFG form in ICIMOD is also executing the PFG to show ICIMOD and delete the other named agencies on the PFG form.

2. Please delete in the PFG form the note under the table which addresses the amount of funds accessed now and what will be accessed later. Also no need for note on PFG execution below the table. see CAR4(3) 1 above.

3. Please ensure that the cover page only includes information related to PART I: PROJECT/PROGRAMME INFORMATION. Please commence part II on a separate page.

Response: Not Cleared

Secretariat: CAR4 (3): Not Cleared.

PFG form has been updated. However the cover page should have as the last section the stage of submission. Please amend and re-submit.

Response: Not Cleared

Secretariat: CAR4 (3): Not Cleared.

This has not been addressed.

The cover page should not contain Project/programme Background and Context information. That should commence on page 2 of the proposal. Please address and re-submit the package.

Response: Cleared

Secretariat: CAR4 (3): Cleared.

The cover page is now devoid of the project descriptive information.

Eligibility of IE

Is the project/programme submitted through an eligible Implementing Entity that has been accredited by the Board?

Response: Pending

Secretariat: Yes.

International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) is a Regional Implementing Entity (RIE).

Accreditation status: Accredited (Special extension per Decision B.46/9)



PRE-CONCEPT FOR A REGIONAL PROJECT/PROGRAMME

PART I: PROJECT/PROGRAMME INFORMATION

Title of Project/Programme: Strengthening Adaptation and Flood and Landslide Early Warning for the HKH (SAFE NIB)

Countries: Bhutan, India, Nepal

Thematic Focal Area¹: Disaster risk reduction and early warning systems

Type of Implementing Entity: Regional Implementing Entity

Implementing Entity: International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)

Executing Entities: International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC), and the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), India.

Amount of Financing Requested: 30,000,000 (in U.S Dollars Equivalent)

Project Formulation Grant Request: Yes ☒ No ☐

Amount of Requested financing for PFG: USD 32,958

Letters of Endorsement (LOE) signed for all countries: Yes ☒ No ☐

NOTE: LOEs should be signed by the Designated Authority (DA). The signatory DA must be on file with the Adaptation Fund. To find the DA currently on file check this page: <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/apply-funding/designated-authorities>

Stage of Submission:

☒ This pre-concept has been submitted before

☐ This is the first submission ever of the pre-concept

In case of a resubmission, please indicate the last submission date: [9/9/2026](#)[9/12/2026](#)

Please note that pre-concept should not exceed 5 pages (in addition to this first cover page)

¹ Thematic areas are: Food security; Disaster risk reduction and early warning systems; Transboundary water management; Innovation in adaptation finance.

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Project/Programme Background and Context: Bhutan, India and Nepal face interconnected climate hazards, Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs), landslides, riverine flooding, and droughts, driven by climate change, urbanisation and socio-economic change. The Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) is warming at more than double the global average rate, intensifying glacial and snow melt, destabilising slopes and shifting monsoon patterns. The region has lost over 25% of its glacier volume since the 1970s and temperatures are projected to rise a further 1.5-2.1°C by 2050. These hazards are inherently transboundary: Heavy rainfall in upstream Nepal and Bhutan frequently leads to catastrophic flooding downstream in India (e.g. Koshi 2008 and 2017; Manas 2004 and 2007; Ganges 1998 and 2004)- risk generated in one country routinely determines outcomes in another.

This is the central adaptation challenge SAFE NIB addresses: climate change is intensifying flood and landslide risk across these shared basins faster than the region's early warning and anticipatory-action systems can adapt. With no operational mechanism for cross-border sharing of impact-based forecasts, harmonised alert thresholds, or coordinated anticipatory action, the most vulnerable communities often receive warnings that are too late, too generic, or absent altogether. Nor are the impacts felt equally: women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, and low-income households often face greater barriers to early warning information, evacuation support, and adaptation resources, and their limited representation in disaster risk management and climate decision-making compounds that vulnerability. Closing this last-mile, transboundary gap is the core challenge the regional approach is designed to address.

Meeting this challenge means building on what already exists nationally rather than replacing it. All three countries have established national DRR institutions and frameworks (detailed in Part III below): Nepal's BIPAD (Building Information Platform against Disaster) portal supports community-based flood early warning, Bhutan's Department of Local Governance and Disaster Management (DLGDM) anchors localised EWS in community and traditional knowledge, and India's National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) anchors a comparatively well-resourced national system. None was designed for cross-border coordination, and the gaps that remain -limited cross-border information sharing and harmonised thresholds, thin impact-based forecasting, weak last-mile dissemination of warnings, and underutilised ecosystem-based solutions, are inherently transboundary and cannot be closed by a national programme alone. A country-by-country overview shows how these shared gaps take different forms:

Bhutan faces growing climate risks from GLOFs, flash floods, and landslides driven by its rugged Himalayan terrain and high concentration of glaciers and glacial lakes. Recent disasters like 2023 flash flood triggered by extreme rainfall and the 2021 severe monsoon rains exposed vulnerabilities in communities, infrastructure, and livelihoods, emphasising the need for strengthened glacial monitoring, impact-based early warning systems, slope stabilisation, ecosystem restoration, benefit sharing mechanisms, and community preparedness.

India faces increasing risks from recurrent flooding across the densely populated floodplains of Assam, Bihar, and West Bengal, driven by extreme monsoon rainfall and upstream hydrological processes. National forecasting systems are comparatively strong, but vulnerability remains high because access to real-time upstream risk information is limited. Strengthening transboundary information sharing, impact-based forecasting, anticipatory action, benefit sharing mechanisms, and last-mile early warning dissemination is critical to protecting exposed communities, livelihoods, and infrastructure.

Nepal faces escalating risks from recurrent floods, landslides, and GLOFs driven by fragile mountain geology, intense monsoon rainfall, and climate change. High exposure in the Koshi sub-basin, combined with remote and vulnerable communities, underlines the need for integrated early warning systems, improved last-mile dissemination, stronger institutional coordination, benefit sharing mechanisms, and anticipatory action.

The scale of what is at stake if these gaps persist is significant. The transboundary basins SAFE NIB targets sustain some of the largest and most flood-exposed populations in the HKH. Around 40 million people depend on the Koshi sub-basin for water, ecosystem services and livelihoods - roughly 10 million upstream in Nepal and more than 30 million downstream in India - with close to 8 million in the Lower Koshi River Basin specifically exposed to climate-driven flood risk. In the Manas sub-basin, seven districts of Bhutan (Sarpang, Trongsa, Zhemgang, Bumthang, Mongar, Lhuentse and Pemagatshel) fall within a flood-vulnerable zone identified from 116 historical flood events between 1968 and 2020, with impacts cascading downstream into Assam, India.

The impact figures show that human and economic toll of individual events illustrates the urgency. The 2008 Koshi (Kushaha) embankment breach affected an estimated 4.3 million people and forced over 2 million to evacuate across eight districts of Bihar, with more than 500 deaths and around 19,000 livestock lost; crop losses alone reached approximately US\$18.7 million, reducing Nepal's national GDP by an estimated 0.3%, and some 223,000 houses were damaged. The 2019 monsoon floods affected around 2.5 million people across 12 districts within 24 hours. Losses have continued to mount: the 2014 June landslide-dam event in the Sun Koshi caused around

Commented [NR1]: Addressed comment CR 2: Clarify the main regional adaptation challenge the project addresses.

Commented [NR2]: Addressed CR 3: Country-specific problem analysis is too brief and institution-focused; differentiate risks/gaps across Bhutan, India, Nepal.

Commented [NR3]: Addressed CR4; quantitative data on scale/urgency; historical losses, populations at risk, economic damages, hazard-frequency trends.

US\$10.3 million in damages, while the 2017 Terai floods within the Koshi sub-basin caused an estimated US\$584.7 million in damage and US\$701.9 million in reconstruction costs. In the Manas sub-basin, the 2004 Tsatichu landslide-dam burst contributed to roughly US\$170 million in flood losses reported by Assam state, and in the wider Ganges system the 2004 Bihar floods affected some 21 million people, caused 885 deaths and inflicted an estimated US\$220–230 million in property and public damage.

These risks are intensifying rather than stabilising. ICIMOD's GLOF inventory for High Mountain Asia (1833–2024) and national disaster records show a rising frequency of GLOFs and landslides across the region since the 1990s. The underlying hazard is well characterised: of around 2,064 glacial lakes mapped across Nepal's Koshi, Gandaki and Karnali basins, 42 are classified as potentially dangerous (PDGL), while Bhutan's 2019 reassessment by the National Centre for Hydrology and Meteorology identifies 17 PDGLs, concentrated in the Pho Chhu(9), Mangede Chhu(3), Mo Chhu(2), Chamkhar Chhu(2) and Kuri Chhu(1) sub-basins.

Despite this rising exposure, cross-border cooperation remains limited to ad hoc bilateral arrangements: India and Nepal share information through different commissions and committees; India and Bhutan operate hydromet information-sharing arrangements. These have enabled, station-specific flood data transfer, but they do not extend to impact-based forecasting, landslide risk, or joint contingency planning, and they operate outside any shared institutional platform. The communities most exposed to climate-driven flood and landslide risk therefore remain outside any operational transboundary warning service.

This gap is exactly what the global disaster-risk community has identified as a priority. The Sendai Framework (2015–2030) and the Early Warnings for All (EW4All) initiative call for universal, impact-based early warnings, last-mile communication, and regional data sharing-priorities that are particularly acute in the HKH given the scale and transboundary nature of flood and landslide risks. SAFE NIB is designed to complement these efforts by building the missing operational layer: harmonised alert thresholds, joint anticipatory action protocols, and a shared regional knowledge platform (Component 4). To ensure additionality, the project will be developed in direct coordination with existing bilateral mechanisms, including formal representation of these bodies (JCWR/JCIFM and the India–Bhutan arrangements) in the project's regional governance structure. The project aligns with global frameworks and national plans across all three countries: Bhutan emphasises localised EWS and traditional knowledge integration; India's National Disaster Management Plan (NDMP) and National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) call for improved impact-based forecasting and Ecosystem Based solutions; and Nepal's National Adaptation Plan (NAP) prioritises strengthened EWS, and inclusive disaster governance.

Within this shared regional challenge, two basins offer the clearest, most evidence-based entry point, identified from existing vulnerability assessments and ICIMOD's ongoing hydrological and upstream–downstream linkage work: the Koshi sub-Basin (Nepal–India), which is highly GLOF, flood, and flash flood-prone, data-rich, and is well-suited to impact-based forecasting and anticipatory action; and the Manas Sub-Basin (Bhutan–India), with moderate data availability and more natural flow regimes useful for testing approaches in less regulated systems. Potential inclusion of Teesta sub-basins will be explored in consultation with national agencies. Final basin selection will be confirmed jointly with relevant government stakeholders from the targeted countries and technical agencies during the full concept stage.

Project/Programme objectives:

The main objective is to enhance flood and landslide resilience in the Himalayas through innovative early warning systems, resilient infrastructure, inclusive governance, and regional collaboration, aligned with climate adaptation solutions. Specific objectives are: (1) to enhance anticipatory actions through impact-based forecasting and last-mile risk communication for floods and landslide preparedness. (2) to promote hybrid climate-resilient infrastructure solutions combining engineering with nature-based interventions to reduce flood and landslide risk. And, (3) to strengthen transboundary cooperation through information sharing, harmonised forecasting protocols, and joint planning across upstream–downstream basins, the primary value-add of the regional approach.

Theory of

IF national and local authorities in Bhutan, India and Nepal gain access to impact-based, transboundary early warning information, and if the current cross-border information sharing, harmonised alert thresholds, and last-mile delivery channels reach vulnerable groups, women, youth, persons with disabilities and marginalised communities, **then** flood- and landslide-affected communities across the HKH's shared river basins will take timely anticipatory action that reduces loss of life, assets and livelihoods, with disaster risk reduction embedded in resilient regional and national systems.

Commented [NR4]: Addressed CR8: Provide an explicit Theory of Change linking all 5 components to the overall objective.

Response: Added a Theory of Change section with an if/then/because narrative and key assumptions

Commented [NR5R4]: Addressed the theory of change CR 8 comment in the second round

This will be achieved by: (i) **Component 1**, which builds an operational impact-based forecasting system on shared hydrological and climate data, giving national and local authorities the transboundary information needed to issue timely warnings; (ii) **Component 2**, which builds the community-level skills, sensor networks and inclusive governance structures needed for vulnerable groups to receive and act on those warnings; (iii) **Component 3**, which reduces physical exposure through hybrid engineered and nature-based infrastructure, lowering risk even where warning lead times are short; (iv) **Component 4**, which establishes the regional knowledge platform and harmonised cross-border protocols that let information and lessons flow between countries; and (v) **Component 5**, which builds and sustains the institutional and community capacity, and behaviour change, needed to trust and maintain these systems over time. Together, these interventions will lead to functioning transboundary, impact-based early warning systems that government authorities use and that at-risk communities understand and act on, resulting in reduced loss of life, assets and livelihoods from floods and landslides, and strengthened institutional resilience across the HKH's shared river basins.

Key assumptions include: (i) national hydromet agencies are willing to share real-time upstream information under agreed protocols, the binding assumption, since without it Component 1's forecasts cannot be transboundary, with mitigation consisting of the joint governance structure and harmonised information-sharing protocols developed under Component 4, which formalise exchange rather than relying on ad hoc goodwill; (ii) community volunteer structures and local institutions remain functional and adequately resourced to sustain last-mile delivery, mitigated by Component 5's capacity-building activities and Component 2's co-designed, institutionally embedded governance structures; and (iii) that government co-financing sustains systems post-project, mitigated by structuring all technical systems for handover to existing national platforms from the outset, with recurrent operating costs progressively absorbed into national budgets and institutional ownership established during implementation rather than at close-out.

The country-specific climate risks set out above led to the identification of the following country-specific components and solutions. In Bhutan, Component 1's catchment risk maps and EWS models, paired with Component 2's community sensor networks, aim to close the environmental and social coverage gap, extending reliable warning beyond pilot valleys to protect remote communities and reduce undetected GLOF and landslide losses. In India, Component 1's impact-based forecasting (built on upstream data) and Component 4's cross-border protocols aim to convert India's existing forecasting capacity into actionable lead time, reducing the scale of economic damage and displacement seen in past floods (e.g. the 2008 Koshi breach, 2004 Bihar floods) without duplicating national systems. In Nepal, Component 2's inclusive EWS committees and Component 5's capacity building aims to address the last-mile and institutional-fragmentation gap in the Koshi sub-basin, while Component 3's hybrid, nature-based infrastructure seeks to reduce landslide-related economic and social losses in exposed mid-hill districts.

Project/Programme components and financing:

Project/Programme Components	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Countries	Amount (USD)
1. Innovation in integrated risk management, and impact based early warning systems.	National and local authorities take anticipatory action using integrated and impact-based EWS for decision-making.	1.1 Impact-based flood and landslide risk maps at catchment scale, incorporating downscaled climate projections and socio-economic vulnerability.	Bhutan, India, Nepal	1,135,000
		1.2 Catchment-based integrated and inclusive early warning system incorporating nature-based solutions.		1,135,000
		1.3 Operational impact-based forecasting system delivering 6–72-hour actionable lead times, built on a multi-model hydrological and inundation framework with CMIP6 climate inputs, interoperable with relevant government organizations like IMD, CWC, DHM, NCHM and existing ICIMOD systems.		2,270,000
2. Inclusive Early Warning Systems for All	Communities, especially vulnerable groups, use early warnings to take timely action for	2.1 Community-based early warning systems established in pilot sites, integrating low-cost sensors with hydromet networks for real-time community-based monitoring.	Bhutan, India, Nepal	2,000,000

	preparedness. Local DRR institutions and school systems adopt inclusive EWS practices.	2.2. Trained community disaster volunteer networks — building on Aapda Mitra in India and equivalent structures in like NDRRMA's youth volunteers in Nepal and DLGDM, Bhutan — and functioning inclusive EWS committees with meaningful participation of women, people with disabilities and marginalised groups.		1,500,000
		2.3 DRR integrated into school curricula in pilot districts, with trained teachers and student-led preparedness activities.		750,000
		2.4 Youth and women-led innovation hubs piloted to co-design locally appropriate EWS tools, alert formats, and last-mile delivery mechanisms.		750,000
3. Resilient Infrastructure & Adaptive Design	Local governments adopt resilient infrastructure designs protecting vulnerable communities, integrating engineered and nature-based approaches for durability, safety, and environmental stability.	3.1 Flood and landslide risk reduction activities piloted in vulnerable sites, with hybrid engineered and nature-based infrastructure (riverbank stabilisation, drainage improvement, ecological restoration, bioengineering, and vegetation for slope and soil stability etc).	Bhutan, India, Nepal	5,600,000
		3.2 Technical manuals and design guidelines for climate-resilient and hybrid infrastructure, adapted to local conditions and accessible to sub-national engineers and planners.		400,000
		3.3 Retrofitting and adaptive design options demonstrated at selected vulnerable sites, with documentation of lessons for replication/scaling.		1,600,000
		3.4 Shared standards and protocols for resilient, hybrid engineered and nature-based infrastructure developed in coordination with relevant entities, ensuring alignment and avoiding duplication across regional investments.		400,000
4. Regional Knowledge Sharing	- Regional and national stakeholders use shared information, platforms, and policy recommendations to inform DRR strategies. - Funding agencies; development partners recognize and support transboundary DRR initiatives.	4.1 Regional DRR knowledge hub (HKH DRR Hub) operational with dashboards and knowledge products.	Bhutan, India, Nepal	1,700,000
		4.2 Policy briefs and advocacy tools for transboundary DRR investment.		430,000
		4.3 Annual regional learning and policy forum.		1,067,000
		4.4 Cross-border protocols and operational mechanisms for joint contingency planning, shared thresholds, and coordinated alerts across the sub-basin countries in Koshi and Manas.		1,068,305
5. Capacity Building, Awareness, and Communication	- National training institutes integrate modules into their programs. - Media and youth champions promote DRR practices across borders. - Awareness campaigns shift behaviour in high-risk areas.	5.1 Certified DRR training curricula developed and institutionalised within national training systems in all three countries, covering multi-hazard risk, early warning, and community preparedness.	Bhutan, India, Nepal	700,000
		5.2 Technical training delivered to sub-national engineers and planners on climate-resilient and hybrid infrastructure design, with cross-country peer exchange-built in.		525,000
		5.3 South-South learning exchanges and regional peer networks established, connecting DRR practitioners, government officials, and researchers across Bhutan, India, and Nepal.		525,000
		5.4 Targeted behaviour change communication campaigns developed and deployed in high-risk communities, with materials in local languages and formats suited to low-literacy audiences.		875,000

	5.5 Regional media and youth recognition programme established to champion DRR practices and amplify community-level early warning culture.	350,000
	5.6 National research and academic institutions strengthened as long-term custodians of project outputs — including G.B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment (GBPNIHE) and Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG) in India, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu University, and Nepal Administrative Staff College (NAST) in Nepal, and the College of Natural Resources and relevant research bodies (Bhutan) — through curriculum embedding, applied research collaboration, and practitioner–academia partnerships.	525,000
6. Project/Programme Execution cost (9.5% of total programme cost, 1.5% of executed portion if IE is EE)		1,967,423
7. Total Project/Programme Cost		27,272,728
8. Project/Programme Cycle Management Fee charged by the Implementing Entity (8.5% of the total programme cost)		2,727,272
Amount of Financing Requested		30,000,000

Project Duration: 5 years

Here below is a brief on what will be financed in each component:

- **Component 1:** hydrological/inundation modelling licences and technical staff time, downscaled climate data products, risk-mapping consultancies, and the software/hardware integration needed to make the forecasting system interoperable with IMD/CWC/DHM/NCHM.
- **Component 2:** sensor procurement, volunteer training and stipends/materials, curriculum development and teacher training, and seed funding/mentoring for youth- and women-led innovation hubs.
- **Component 3:** civil works and bioengineering materials, labour for pilot sites, technical design consultancies, and coordination costs for joint standard-setting.
- **Component 4:** knowledge hub platform development and hosting, policy-brief production, the annual regional forum (venue, travel, facilitation), and facilitation of cross-border protocol negotiations.
- **Component 5:** curriculum development and institutional certification costs, technical training delivery and peer-exchange travel, Training for Trainers (ToT) behaviour-change campaign production/dissemination, and the media/youth recognition programme.

Commented [NR6]: Addressed CR6: Provide brief, clear explanations of what will be financed under each component.

Commented [NR7R6]: CR 6 second round of comment is now addressed.

PART II: PROJECT/PROGRAMME JUSTIFICATION

Climate resilience and added value: SAFE NIB seeks to enhance climate resilience across Bhutan, India, and Nepal through a regional DRR programme addressing recurring floods and landslides. It focuses on impact-based EWS, ecosystem and nature-based solutions for slope, bank and watershed management, and community-centred governance for disaster preparedness and recovery. These adaptation activities will build systemic resilience by bridging upstream-downstream linkages, creating cross-border communication, and improving coordination in river basins that transcend national boundaries. The project's primary added value is transboundary: it links India's national DRR systems with upstream risk information from Nepal and Bhutan, enabling two-way information exchange, shared alert thresholds, and coordinated anticipatory action across shared river basins-benefits impossible to achieve through isolated national interventions. National activities will be implemented through and aligned with existing systems, not parallel to them.

For India, the regional approach provides earlier access to upstream hydrological and glaciological data from Nepal and Bhutan, the only realistic source of additional lead time for floods that materialise downstream in Bihar, Assam and West Bengal, since India's own monitoring networks cannot observe hazard formation occurring upstream of the border. In exchange, India's comparatively advanced forecasting capacity (IMD, CWC, FloodWatch India) is made available regionally, strengthening Bhutan's and Nepal's own forecasting products. This two-way exchange, not available under any purely national programme is the specific benefit the regional approach delivers.

Innovation and new approaches: The project introduces practical community-centred innovations, including impact-based forecasts that convert rainfall and flood predictions into crop, livestock, and mobility advisories, and local early warning delivery through community radio, SMS groups, and women-led alert networks. It strengthens hybrid knowledge systems by combining traditional flood and glacial change indicators with satellite and hydrological data, and pilots catchment-based risk management in high-risk areas. Youth and women-led innovation hubs and community co-creation labs will produce low-cost sensors, alert in different languages and formats, and locally tailored preparedness tools, driving an inclusive and anticipatory climate action, particularly for marginalised and hard-to-reach populations.

In Component 1, "innovation" specifically means coupling multi-model hydrological and hydrodynamic forecasting (e.g. HEC-HMS rainfall-runoff and HEC-RAS hydraulic routing) with downscaled CMIP6 climate projections to generate 6–72-hour impact-based forecasts, i.e., forecasts expressed as expected impacts on people, livelihood, infrastructure, and economies rather than rainfall or river-stage thresholds alone, interoperable with government systems across the countries. In Component 2, "inclusive" means EWS design and governance that deliberately builds in the participation, alert formats and last-mile channels needed to reach women, youth, persons with disabilities and marginalised groups, rather than assuming a single generic warning reaches all groups equally.

Cost-Effectiveness of the regional approach: SAFE NIB will ensure cost-effectiveness by enabling joint investments in shared infrastructure, tools, and institutional capacity across countries avoiding redundancy and maximising economies of scale, while standardised regional protocols streamline operations and minimise transaction costs across borders. The World Bank and UNDRR estimate that every USD 1 invested in early warning saves USD 6–10 in avoided losses, while NbS such as ecosystem reforestation to reduce flood damages by up to 35–40%.

Alignment with national and regional strategies: The programme reflects key priorities in each country's NAP/NDC. In India, it directly supports NDMP and NAPCC goals on impact-based forecasting, NbS adoption, and last-mile communication, and complements Mission Mausam's enhanced weather observation agenda. In Bhutan, it supports localised EWS and community-based preparedness and climate-resilient infrastructure utilizing hybrid solutions. In Nepal, it supports NDRRMA's BIPAD portal, advances EWS strengthening and inclusive adaptation. Regionally, it supports the SAARC DRR Framework and HKH Call to Action. Globally, it aligns with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030) and the Early Warnings for All (EW4All) initiative.

SAFE NIB contributes directly to the Adaptation Fund's Disaster Risk Reduction and Early Warning Systems thematic focal area by strengthening impact-based forecasting, last-mile risk communication, and community and institutional preparedness across Bhutan, India and Nepal (Components 1, 2 and 5). Given its central focus on shared river basin management, cross-border information sharing, and joint contingency planning across the Koshi and Manas sub-basins (Components 1 and 4), the project also has strong secondary linkages to the Transboundary Water Management thematic focal area; ICIMOD will consult the Secretariat at full proposal stage on whether dual tagging across both focal areas would be appropriate.

Learning and knowledge management: Learning and knowledge sharing will be central to the programme, with Component 5 dedicated to this. The project will generate and share actionable knowledge to influence adaptation

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Commented [NR9R8]: This was addressed in the previous comments and have come back again. Pls see

Commented [NR10]: CR11 response : Thematic focal area contribution

policy and practice and to ensure its lessons inform wider regional efforts and contribute to long-term resilience building. Lessons will be captured through periodic learning reviews, case documentation, and monitoring insights, and synthesised into standardised formats for direct submission to the Adaptation Fund Knowledge Platform, ensuring visibility and wider learning uptake. Special focus will be given to gender-responsive youth and women-led innovations.

Consultative process and gender considerations: An inclusive consultative process will be conducted during project preparation in all three countries, engaging vulnerable and marginalised groups, especially women, youth, indigenous peoples, and persons with disabilities. Full proposal consultations will engage NDAs, NDMAs, hydromet departments, and civil society in each country. All consultation processes will follow the principles of free, prior, and informed consent, in line with the Adaptation Fund's Environmental and Social Policy. Stakeholder engagement to date has included scoping discussions with NDMA, NDRRMA, DLGDM and other agencies. Consultation findings will directly inform activity design, site and beneficiary selection and implementation arrangements, and consultations will continue during implementation in line with the Fund's Environmental and Social Policy and Gender Policy. Detailed account of consultations with GoI is as below.

Consultation / feedback	Date
Proposal presented to DNA, AF Office, MoEFCC	26 Nov 2025
MEA, MoEFCC clarifications	30 Dec 2025
MoEFCC clarifications	7 Jan 2026
Adaptation Cell, MEA comments	25 Feb 2026
Mountain Division comments on pre-concept note	23 Apr 2026
DST comments	5 May 2026
Comments from Ministry of Earth Sciences	7 th May 2026

Sustainability of outcomes: Sustainability is anchored in institutional ownership, integration with national systems, and use of existing capacities. Outputs-training curricula, tools, and protocols, will be embedded in national institutions across all three countries: NDMA, SDMA, DDMAs, and NIDM in India; NDRRMA and DHM in Nepal; and DLGDM and DGM in Bhutan. Concretely, sustainability is designed in through three mechanisms: (1) all technical systems (forecasting models, knowledge hub, training curricula) are built on and handed over existing government platforms (BIPAD, DHM, IMD/CWC systems), co-organised by the countries themselves rather than run as ICIMOD-parallel systems, with recurrent operating costs progressively absorbed into national hydromet and DRR budgets over the project period; (2) national counterpart institutions co-design tools from the outset (Components 1, 2 and 5) so that ownership is established during implementation, not only at close-out; and (3) Component 5.6 embeds project methods in academic/research institutions (GBPNIHE, WIHG, Tribhuvan University, NAST, College of Natural Resources) so technical capacity persists even amid government staff turnover. A comprehensive sustainability plan with institutional ownership, cost sharing arrangements, and a results framework with baselines and targets will be developed at full proposal stage.

Economic, social, and environmental benefits: The project aims to deliver economic co-benefits (reduced losses, livelihood security), socially, it will promote inclusive governance, gender equity, youth innovation and empowerment of marginalised communities (ESP 4 and 5). Environmentally, it will deal with NbS, which will involve among others, soil stabilization, and biodiversity protection (ESP 9, 10 and 15). Risk mitigation measures will be incorporated to avoid adverse impacts and ensure compliance with the Adaptation Fund's safeguard policies (ESP 12 and 13).

Compliance with technical standards and safeguards: All activities adhere to national technical standards and the Adaptation Fund's Environmental and Social Policy. An Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) will be developed to screen, assess, and mitigate potential risks throughout the project.

Avoiding duplication and leveraging synergies: SAFE NIB complements rather than replaces existing national systems, working with CWC/Flood Watch India/IMD (India), DHM's existing forecasting systems (Nepal), DGM (Bhutan) for data interoperability. It builds on community volunteer structures (Aapda Mitra in India, community-based EWS networks in Nepal and Bhutan) for last-mile delivery, and coordinates with CDRI on resilient hybrid engineered and nature-based infrastructure across all countries. A detailed mapping of existing programmes will be conducted at full concept stage to clearly articulate additionality across all three countries. The project will also build on existing ICIMOD initiatives in these countries, scaling up existing projects where feasible.

Justification for adaptation funding: Existing community-based EWS are isolated, lack hydromet linkages, and have insufficient lead times. Gaps persist in NbS scaling, climate-risk integration in infrastructure, and transboundary cooperation. Adaptation Fund financing provides the critical incremental resources to address these systemic gaps.

Commented [NR11]: CR12 response — Stakeholder engagement to date. factual record of stakeholder consultations

Commented [NR12]: ADDRESSED: CR10(iii) response — how sustainability is built in:

Environmental and social risks: Environmental and social risks are low to moderate. Risks (e.g. construction disruption, exclusion of vulnerable groups) will be addressed through a robust safeguards' framework. Risk mitigation will be embedded into project design, implementation, and monitoring, ensuring equity, safety, and sustainability, which will be reviewed and updated throughout the programme.

PART III: IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

ICIMOD serves as the Implementing Entity (IE) and, given its long-standing regional technical presence, will also self-execute regional-level activities under Components 1 and 4 in its capacity as an Executing Entity (EE). ADPC is a regional EE, providing technical assistance across all three countries on impact-based forecasting and hybrid infrastructure design (Components 1 and 3). NDMA, India is the national EE for India-based activities. IFRC, CDRI and the national DRM agencies of Bhutan and Nepal participate as a technical/knowledge partner, not as a formal Executing Entity.

A Regional Steering Committee (RSC), co-chaired by ICIMOD and rotating national focal points from Bhutan, India and Nepal, will meet at least biannually to approve annual workplans and budgets, review progress, and resolve cross-border issues (e.g. information-sharing arrangements). A Regional Project Management Unit (RPMU), hosted by ICIMOD, will handle day-to-day coordination, fiduciary/financial management, and delivery of regional-level outputs under Components 1 and 4. At national level, National Project Coordination structures- anchored in NDMA (India), NDRRMA (Nepal) and DLGDM (Bhutan), will lead in-country delivery of Components 2, 3 and 5, reporting to both the RPMU and their own national disaster management authorities. G.B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment (GBPNIHE), IFRC, CDRI and other technical partners contribute specialist guidance. A detailed governance charter, including a decision-making protocol and an escalation pathway for cross-border information-sharing disagreements — will be finalised at full proposal stage in direct consultation with National Designated Authorities (NDAs) and the concerned line ministries.

In India, implementation will be anchored in national institutions: NDMA as primary coordination partner; GBPNIHE and WIHG for Himalayan-specific risk and vulnerability assessments; NIDM for capacity building and training; IIRS for geospatial inputs to EWS and modelling; and IMD/CWC/SDMAs/DDMAs for operational EWS and last-mile delivery. In Nepal, NDRRMA leads national coordination and works with provincial, and local disaster management authorities. In Bhutan, DLGDM, Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport (MoIT), Department of Geology and Mines (DGM), and Department of Information Technology and Telecom (DOIT) serve as key partners. Final determination of executing roles will be made during full proposal phase in consultation with NDAs and concerned ministries.

Commented [NR13]: ADDRESSED. CAR3 response — roles of ICIMOD, ADPC, NDMA

Commented [NR14]: CAR2 response — Governance and coordination structure

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PART IV: ENDORSEMENT BY GOVERNMENTS AND CERTIFICATION BY THE IMPLEMENTING ENTITY

A. Record of endorsement on behalf of the government

(Mr. Tshering Dorji, Director- Department of Macro-fiscal and Development Finance, Ministry of Finance)	Date: January 30, 2026
(Ms. Rajasree Ray, Economic Advisor - Climate Change, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change)	Date: (June 4, 2026)
(Mr. Suman Subedi, Under Secretary - Adaptation Section, Ministry of Forests and Environment)	Date: (January 25, 2026)

B. Implementing Entity certification

I certify that this proposal has been prepared in accordance with guidelines provided by the Adaptation Fund Board, and prevailing National Development and Adaptation Plans and subject to the approval by the Adaptation Fund Board, <u>commit to implementing the project/programme in compliance with the Environmental and Social Policy of the Adaptation Fund</u> and on the understanding that the Implementing Entity will be fully (legally and financially) responsible for the implementation of this project/programme.	
Dr. Pema Gyamtsho	
 Name & Signature Implementing Entity Coordinator	
Date: (June 05, 2026)	Tel. and email: +97715275223; pema.gyamtsho@icimod.org
Project Contact Person: Neha Rai, Prerana Dhakhwa	
Tel. And Email: neha.rai@icimod.org Prerana.dhakhwa@icimod.org , +977 152 75 223	

AF Project ID: AF00000548



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Department of Macro-fiscal and Development Finance
Ministry of Finance
Royal Government of Bhutan

MoF/DMD/DCDMD/AF_ICIMOD/2025-2026/1992

30th January, 2026

To: The Adaptation Fund Board
c/o Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat
1818 H Street NW
MSN N7-700
Washington, D.C., 20433
United States of America
Email: Secretariat@Adaptation-Fund.org
Fax: 202 522 3240/5

Subject: Endorsement for Strengthening Adaptation and Flood and Landslide Early Warning for the HKH (SAFE NIB) – a regional project proposal (Bhutan, Nepal and India).

In my capacity as designated authority for the Adaptation Fund in Bhutan, I confirm that the above proposal is in accordance with the government's national priorities in implementing adaptation activities to reduce adverse impacts of, and risks, posed by climate change in Bhutan.

Accordingly, I am pleased to endorse the above grant proposal with support from the Adaptation Fund. If approved, the project will be implemented by International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) and executed by ICIMOD, Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport, Ministry of Home Affairs, National Center for Hydrology and Meteorology, Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and along with Disaster Risk Management Agencies of Bhutan, India and Nepal.

Thanking you.

Yours sincerely,

(Tshering Dorji)

Director General/ Designated Authority of Bhutan to the Adaptation Fund

Copy to:

1. Hon'ble Secretary, Ministry of Finance for kind information.
2. Director General, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) for kind information and support.



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Department of Macro-fiscal and Development Finance
Ministry of Finance
Royal Government of Bhutan

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3. Director General, Department of Local Governance and Disaster Management, Ministry of Home Affairs for kind information.
 4. Director General, National Center for Hydrology and Meteorology for kind information.
 5. Director General, Department of Human Settlement, Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport for kind information.



राजश्री रे
RAJASREE RAY



सत्यमेव जयते



आर्थिक सलाहकार
पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय
भारत सरकार
ECONOMIC ADVISER
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST
AND CLIMATE CHANGE
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

No. 20/05/2024-CS-I

4th June 2026

To,

The Adaptation Fund Board
C/o Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat
Email: afbsec@adaptation-fund.org
Fax: 202 522 3240/5

Subject: Endorsement for Strengthening Adaptation and Flood and Landslide Early Warning for the HKH (SAFE NIB)

Dear Sir/Madam,

In my capacity as designated authority for the Adaptation Fund in India, I confirm that the above regional project proposal is in accordance with the government's national priorities in implementing adaptation activities to reduce adverse impacts of, and risks, posed by climate change in India.

Accordingly, I am pleased to endorse the above project proposal with support from the Adaptation Fund. If approved, the project will be implemented by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) and executed by ICIMOD, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) and National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA).

Yours sincerely,

(Rajasree Ray)



Government of Nepal
Ministry of Forests and Environment



P.O. Box No. 3987
Singh Durbar, Kathmandu

Ref. No. 241

Date: January 25, 2026

To: The Adaptation Fund Board
c/o Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat
Email: Secretariat@Adaptation-Fund.org
Fax: 202 522 3240/5

Subject: Endorsement for regional project pre-concept note "Strengthening Adaptation and Flood and Landslide Early Warning for the HKH (SAFE BaNIB)"

In my capacity as designated authority for the Adaptation Fund in Nepal, I confirm that the above regional project pre concept note is in accordance with the government's national priorities in implementing adaptation activities to reduce adverse impacts of, and risks, posed by climate change in the Nepal

Accordingly, I am pleased to endorse the above project pre concept note with support from the Adaptation Fund. If approved, the project will be implemented by International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) and executed jointly by Disaster Risk Management Agencies of Government of Nepal along with Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), and ICIMOD.

Sincerely,

Suman Subedi
Primary Contact Point, Adaptation Fund
Under Secretary, Adaptation Section
Ministry of Forests and Environment
Email: s_subedi2003@yahoo.com
Suman.subedi@nepal.gov.np



Revised PFG Submission Form¹ (additions in red)

Project Formulation Grant (PFG)

Submission Date: ~~August 18~~ September 12, 2026 (Resubmission)

Adaptation Fund Project ID: AF00000548

Country/ies: Bhutan, India and Nepal

Title of Project/Programme: Strengthening Adaptation and Flood and Landslide Early Warning for the HKH (SAFE NIB)

Type of IE (NIE/RIE/MIE): RIE

Implementing Entity: International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)

Executing Entity/ies: ICIMOD

A. Project Preparation Timeframe

Start date of PFG	Nov 2026
Completion date of PFG	Mar 2027

B. Proposed Project Preparation Activities (\$)

List of Proposed Project Preparation Activities	Output of the PFG Activities	US\$ Amount	Budget note²
Technical leadership and regional coordination of concept development	Technically sound, regionally coherent draft concept reflecting DRR and early warning priorities across Bhutan, India and Nepal, with inputs coordinated across executing entities	USD 12,019	Staff time: Water and DRR Lead (10 days @ \$609/day = \$6,090); and Intervention Manager- DRR (11 days @ \$539/day = \$5929)
Strategic oversight, quality assurance, and AF compliance review	Institutional sign-off confirming alignment with ICIMOD's regional programme priorities and the Adaptation Fund's eligibility criteria prior submission	USD 4,770	Staff time: Head, Strategic Results, Partnerships and Business Development (SRPBD) (5 days @ \$954/day)

¹ As presented in AFB/PPRC.33/40 Annex 1.

² The proposal should include a detailed budget with budget notes indicating the break-down of costs at the activity level. It should also include a budget on the Implementing Entity management fee use.

Concept note drafting and proposal development	Draft AF compliant regional project concept note, including theory of change, preliminary results framework and indicative budget	USD 7,500	Consultant time: Proposal design and development consultant (15 days @500/day)
In-country coordination, secondary data compilation and stakeholder liaison	Compiled secondary data (national adaptation plans, DRR strategies, existing hazards/vulnerability assessments) and liaison with National Designated Authorities (NDAs) and line ministries to ground the concept in national priorities.	USD 6,087	Staff time: BDRM Officer (20 days @ \$133/day = \$2660); SRPBD Associate (12 days @ \$61/day = \$732), Country Focal Points (5 days @ \$539/day = \$2,695)
Total Project Formulation Grant		USD 30,376	
IE Management Fee (8.5%)		USD 2,582	
Total Project Formulation Grant		USD 32,958	

Please describe below each of the PFG activities and provide justifications for their need and for the amount of funding required:

Activity 1: Technical Leadership and Regional Coordination of Concept Development
Proposed Budget: USD 12,019

Description: This activity covers the time of ICIMOD's Water and DRR Lead and Intervention Manager—DRR to provide technical direction to the concept development process, ensure the proposed early warning and adaptation approach is technically robust across the three countries' differing hydro-meteorological and landslide risk contexts, and coordinate inputs from the executing entities (IFRC, ADPC, NDMA, MOIT, DGM) into a single, consistent regional concept.

Justification: A three-country regional early warning project requires technical coherence across differing national systems and institutional mandates; without dedicated senior technical time, the concept risks being a loose compilation of country inputs rather than an integrated regional design. Given the reduced pre-concept budget, this technical function is delivered through existing ICIMOD staff time rather than external consultants, keeping cost to USD 12,019 for 21 combined staff-days.

Activity 2: Strategic Oversight, Quality Assurance and AF Compliance Review
Proposed Budget: USD 4,770

Description: This activity covers the time of the Head, Strategic Results, Partnerships and Business Development (SRPBD) to review the emerging concept against ICIMOD's institutional priorities and the Adaptation Fund's access modalities, eligibility criteria and quality standards, and to provide sign-off ahead of submission.

Justification: AF quality standards require institutional-level review before submission; this is a fixed, non-discretionary internal governance step. At USD 4,770 for 5 days, it is the minimum senior-level oversight needed to align institutional mandate and avoid rejection or resubmission delays at the Board review stage.

Activity 3: Concept Note Drafting and Proposal Development
Proposed Budget: USD 7,500

Description: This activity engages a Proposal Design and Development Consultant to draft the AF-compliant regional concept note, translating technical and country inputs into the required narrative, theory of change and indicative results framework.

Justification: Producing an AF template-compliant concept note is a specialized drafting task distinct from technical or coordination work. At this funding level, dedicated consultant drafting time (rather than committing already-stretched senior staff to full drafting) is the most cost-effective way to secure a submission-ready document within the available USD 33,000 ceiling.

Activity 4: In-Country Coordination, Secondary Data Compilation and Stakeholder Liaison
Proposed Budget: USD 6,087

Description: This activity covers the time of the BDRM Officer, SRPBD Associate and the three Country Focal Points to compile existing secondary data, national adaptation plans, DRR strategies, and prior hazard/vulnerability assessments already available for Bhutan, India and Nepal and to liaise with National Designated Authorities (NDAs) and line ministries so the concept reflects current national priorities.

Justification: At the pre-concept stage, funding is not available for new field consultations or primary data collection; this activity instead maximizes use of already-existing secondary sources and ICIMOD's established country-level relationships, ensuring the concept remains grounded in national realities at minimal cost (USD 6,087 for 37 combined staff-days across three focal points and two support staff).

For LLA Projects only:

If requesting additional funding for LLA projects to enable devolving decision making to the local level, please specify the activities that would directly serve to enable devolving decision making to the lowest appropriate level and enable local actors to make informed decisions on how adaptation actions are defined, prioritized, designed and implemented:

Please provide justifications for their need and for the amount of additional funding required:

C. Implementing Entity

This request has been prepared in accordance with the Adaptation Fund Board's procedures and meets the Adaptation Fund's criteria for project identification and formulation

Implementing Entity Coordinator, IE Name	Signature	Date (Month, day, year)	Project Contact Person	Telephone	Email Address
Dr. Pema Gyamtsho, Director General, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)		17 July, 2026	Neha Rai Prerana Dhakwa	+977 1- 527-5222	Neha.ra@icimod.org prerana.dhakhwa@icimod.org