

## Terms of Reference (TOR)

### Third Party Evaluation of the Scheme: NMHS

September 2018

#### 1. Background

Realizing the significance of the Himalaya for Ecological Security of the nation, the Government of India attaches highest priority to protect unique but highly fragile Himalayan ecosystem by launching in year 2015–16 the **National Mission on Himalayan Studies (NMHS)** as a Central Sector (CS) Grant-in-aid Scheme of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), New Delhi and G.B. National Institute of Himalayan Environment and Sustainable Development, Kosi-Katarmal, Almora, Uttarakhand as the Nodal Institute for the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR).

The jurisdiction of NMHS includes all IHR states with a broad Vision “*to support the sustenance and enhancement of the ecological, natural, cultural, and socio-economic capital assets and values of the IHR*”. The mission is to launch and support innovative studies and related knowledge interventions with strategy to focus on enhancing livelihoods of local communities, in line with the National Environment Policy, 2006 of the Government. To guide the overall implementation, a Steering Committee, chaired by the Secretary, EF&CC, is in place. Also, a Scientific and Technical Advisory Group (STAG) with wide base representation of stakeholder groups, and under the Chair of Additional Secretary, MoEF&CC, has been constituted; and both are presently in motion towards supervising the progress of the Mission.

The large grant proposals are fundamentally envisioned to be used as a mechanism to create new knowledge-based solutions and robust database for a data-deficient region like IHR for enabling informed policy decisions. The Medium and Small grant projects are especially taken up to upscale pilots/interventions and also to consolidate existing knowledge, especially relevant to mountain resources management. The Monitoring, Learning and Evaluation (MLE) Missions/Panels comprising 36 Expert Members with respect to each Thematic Area had been constituted to sustain the quality and pace of the progressive work under the Project Grant of NMHS.

The objectives of the Scheme include the following:

- (i) To build a body of scientific and traditional knowledge through demand driven action research and technological innovations along with institutional strengthening & capacity building;
- (ii) To strengthen technological innovations leading to sustainable management of natural resources of Himalaya for ensuring the ecological, water, livelihood security at the local, regional and national levels;
- (iii) To create science-policy-practice connect through a network of policy makers and practitioners (individual and institutions) engaged in working solutions to problems in the thematic areas;
- (iv) To demonstrate workable/implementable/replicable solutions to the problems in the priority thematic areas.

Further detailed information regarding the scheme NMHS is available in the website accessible at <http://nmhs.org.in>.

## 2. Context and Purpose of the Evaluation

As per the directive by the Standing Finance Committee in year 2017, an independent Third Party Review/ Audit of the CS Scheme NMHS is to assess the performance of the scheme in respect of achieving the set Vision, Mission and Objectives in past three (3) years and the need to continue its activities 2020 onwards based on the recommendations. Since the launch in year 2015–16, the 1<sup>st</sup> independent Third Party Audit/ Review for the period of 2015–2017 is scheduled for the first time in year 2018.

In consultation with NMHS Project proponents, Fellowship Institutions, Him-NLC proponents, SGP proponents, etc. and other Himalayan stakeholders, the NMHS-PMU has developed its Strategic Framework and Schematic Implementation Plan, improvised based on the Standing Finance Committee (SFC) Committee's directives.

The evaluation shall provide a timely opportunity to review achievements and critical issues, the current strategic direction and to identify prominent growth direction and options for the future. This independent evaluation will play an important role in assessing NMHS's contribution, functioning and future direction by defining and recommending directions for NMHS Strategic Orientation ahead of year 2018.

## 3. Objectives of the Evaluation

The following would be the Terms of Reference (TOR) for undertaking the evaluation audit for the performance in last Plan Period, i.e. 11<sup>th</sup> Plan (since the last independent evaluation):

- (i) Assess the performance of NMHS scheme based on its SFC-directed Strategic and Outcomes Framework in terms of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of results, i.e. overall evaluation of the scheme to assess to what extent the NMHS has achieved the objectives and present suggestions for improvements;
- (ii) To assess the strengths and weaknesses of the Mission (**National Mission on Himalayan Studies**) whether the set rules and procedures of planning, monitoring and evaluation of R&D activities and administration need any review to meet the objectives of the scheme;
- (iii) Provide recommendations of how NMHS-PMU can improve its Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan in the future.
- (iv) Need for continuing this scheme and its new programmes 2020 onwards.

The Recommendation part of Final Evaluation Report should include the overall evaluation of the Scheme (NMHS) and be able to clearly spell out achievements, constraints and way forward with respect to the Scheme mandate, especially focusing on the Demand-driven Himalayan Action Research Studies and Demonstrative Developmental Activities.

## 4. Methodology and Strategic Format

The methodology of the Evaluation Audit Report shall be comprehensive, involving both desk review and field checks on inter- and intra-communication modes. It would include:

- (i) Project Sites Visits/ Field Surveys, including interaction with the NMHS-PMU staff, Project PIs, and other stakeholders, including concerned officials of MoEF&CC and State government agencies to know about the current status, achievements and weaknesses, future plans, resources, future requirements, etc.;
- (ii) Discussion with the Members of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Group (STAG) and Monitoring, Learning and Evaluation (MLE) Panel of the NMHS;

- (iii) Quantitative and Qualitative Assessment of resource utilization and physical achievements;
- (iv) Collection, Compilation and Evaluation of the reports and records of PMU and any of the Proponents (Project, Fellowship Institution, NLC, SGP, etc.) such as the published papers, reports, records, office files, etc.

The Evaluating Agency will discuss the draft Final Evaluation Report with the Director, GBPNIHESD, Nodal Officer NMHS-PMU and also with Director (MD) MoEF&CC before submitting it to the Appointing Authority. The **format of the Final Evaluation Audit Report** shall be prepared as per the TOR and would include **Background, Mandate of the NMHS, Present Status, SWOT Analysis** and **Detailed Recommendations** for each and every aspect. The report should also contain “**Executive Summary**” in the beginning.

Please find the suggested list of evaluation parameters in **Annexure-I**.

## 5. Quantifiable Deliverables

- I. Presentation of detailed methodology developed by the evaluating agency, including the details of the sampling strategy selected for the NMHS within **15 days** of acceptance of order.
- II. Presentation of preliminary findings, desk review, questionnaire and the field study within **30 days** of acceptance of order.
- III. Presentation of draft report within **60 days** of acceptance of order.
- IV. Comments of NMHS-PMU, GBPNIHESD and MoEF&CC on the draft report within **70 days** of acceptance of order.
- V. Submission of final report within **90 days** of acceptance of order.

## 6. Required Expertise for Evaluation of Scheme

The Evaluation Audit will be undertaken by a reputed Agency/Organization/Institution, with demonstrated expertise/experience in the evaluation of such schemes dealing with research, demonstration and dissemination of outputs in the field of environment and development, especially the mountainous regions. The concerned organization/agency/Institution should have in-house core competence, skilled manpower and sufficient experience of the Himalayan environment & development.

Please provide a **brief report of the previous five (5) assignments** completed in recent past at the regional, national or international levels.

## 7. Payment Terms & Conditions

- (i) The payment would be released in the following three instalments:
  - 30% of total amount – on acceptance of offer;
  - 30% of total amount – on submission of draft report;
  - 40% of total amount – on acceptance of final report.
- (ii) No capital costs would be incurred under the amount provided; neither any liability would be created for GBPNIHESD beyond the original amount.
- (iii) The payments will be subjected to deduction of taxes as per prevailing Government of India rules.

## 8. Others

- (i) The Final Evaluation Audit Report would be open to review by NMHS officials, and jointly agreed issues would be duly addressed in a time-bound manner.
- (ii) The Competent Authority NMHS reserves the right to terminate the Final Evaluation Audit Report at any point of time without assigning reasons thereto.
- (iii) Competent Authority NMHS/GBPNIHESD reserves the right to cancel the contract awarded to the selected evaluator, should it find that the progress of the evaluation is not up to the satisfaction of NMHS-PMU/GBPNIHESD. In the event of a contract being cancelled, after reasonable opportunity given to the Evaluating Agency to improve performance, the already paid amount shall be recovered in addition to the difference in the cost of Evaluation Report awarded to the next higher bidder.
- (iv) The intellectual property right of the Final Evaluation Audit Report and its outputs shall be the property of NMHS.

## 9. Time schedule for Completion

The Final Evaluation Report should be submitted **within 90 days** from the date of appointment of the selected Audit Agency. The following reports will be submitted during the course of the review:

1. Inception Report;
2. Detailed Plan and Budget;
3. First Draft of the Evaluation Report;
4. Final Evaluation Report (10 copies).

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## Suggested Performance Indicators for NMHS Projects

<b>Indicators of different Broad Thematic Areas (BTAs)</b>
<b>1. Water Resource Management (WRM)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Initiate a programme for rejuvenation of Himalayan springs;</li><li>• Harvesting Technology Standardization;</li><li>• Monitoring and Modelling for prediction of hazards (inundation, flash floods, landslides);</li><li>• Capacity building for disaster preparedness and mitigation;</li></ul>
<b>2. Livelihood Options and Employment Generation (LOEG)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Database Status on Resource Status, availability, and use patterns;</li><li>• Demonstration of Eco-Restoration Models;</li><li>• Adoption/ adaptation of tested farming options/ technologies for improved livelihood and rural employment;</li><li>• Operational Database on IKS;</li><li>• Development of appropriate technologies for income generation and impact on income levels;</li></ul>
<b>3. Biodiversity Conservation and Management (BCM)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• MBDIS functional for IHR State(s);</li><li>• Mountain Biodiversity Network initiated/ strengthened;</li><li>• Creation of ecosystem integrity profiles for critical ecosystems;</li><li>• New approaches for delineating critical components/ processes;</li><li>• Field models on recovery of threatened species in degraded system;</li><li>• Biodiversity Information Maps;</li><li>• Sensitization/ motivation of educational institutions linking with NLCs;</li></ul>
<b>4. Skill Development and Capacity Building (SDCB)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased, improved and alternate livelihood options, particularly for marginal, BPLs, SC/ST, and other weaker sections;</li><li>• Adoption/ adaptation of tested options/ technologies for improved livelihood;</li><li>• Strengthening and up-scaling of traditional practices and knowledge systems;</li></ul>
<b>5. Infrastructure Development (ID)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creation of Ideal and safe Himalayan Habitat linked with ecotourism</li><li>• Assessment of technical and financial viability and success rate.</li></ul>
<b>6. Physical Connectivity in Himalaya (PC)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New options developed for all weather connectivity for improving accessibility</li><li>• Financial viability assessment for such projects</li></ul>
<b>7. Handling of Hazardous Substances</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Data on quantification of hazardous materials</li><li>• Options for safe transport, storage and handling of Hazardous material</li><li>• Innovative approaches for making Plastic free Himalaya.</li></ul>

The Final Review Report should comprise the following sections:

***Executive Summary***

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Background**
- 3. Achievements on Envisaged Strategic Goals of the Scheme**
- 4. Scheme Effectiveness**
- 5. Governance, Monitoring and Management**
- 6. Financial management – Challenges and Opportunities**
- 7. Conclusions with SWOT Analysis**
- 8. Recommendations**