

# ICIMOD/ SERVIR-Himalaya Small Grants Programme

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Concept Paper Guidelines

Programme Title:	<b>ICIMOD/ SERVIR-Himalaya Small Grants Programme</b>
Announcement Type:	<b>Request for Proposal - Concept Paper</b>
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Questions Due By:	Questions accepted continuously
Deadline for Submission of Concept Papers:	<b>15 December, 2013</b>
Submit Concept Papers to:	sgp_servir@icimod.org

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**To: The Interested Applicants in ICIMOD/SERVIR-Himalaya member countries**

This Request for Proposal (RFP) invites Concept Papers for the SERVIR-Himalaya Small Grants Programme, carried out under the auspices of the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD). Proposals are funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in partnership with National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to help grow the network of organizations, universities, and institutions within the Hindu Kush Himalayan region that utilize geospatial tools and services to improve decision making related to sustainable mountain development with a special focus on climate adaptation, vulnerability, or mitigation. Only organizations within the ICIMOD member countries are eligible to apply.

ICIMOD/SERVIR-Himalaya anticipates awarding about 10-20 grants to fund successful applications submitted in response to this RFP. Once awarded, the implementation phase of the grant will be 9-12 months, with an additional four months to closeout and provide final reporting. Each Project funded under this RFP will not exceed USD 25,000. ICIMOD/SERVIR-Himalaya may choose to fully fund or incrementally fund the selected application(s).

Full proposals will be requested for the selected concept papers upon the first round of evaluations. It is likely that all of the available funds for this RFP may be allocated to awards resulting from the first round of evaluations. This RFP is seeking applicants to propose creative and effective approaches to sustainable mountain development with a focus on climate change decision making using geospatial information as outlined in the Overview section. Applicants may choose among a range of initiatives or scale up small projects that have demonstrated success. Awardees will be expected to share evaluation results and key lessons, and disseminate periodic activities and outcomes with the broader community.

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# 1

## **SECTION I –PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION**

### **1.1. Description of the Small Grants Programme**

#### **1.1.1. Background**

The SERVIR programme is a unique science, technology and development programme established through a joint partnership between United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), in collaboration with regional institutions in East Africa, the Himalayas, and Mesoamerica. The SERVIR programme's broad community of partners includes United States Government agencies, foreign ministries, public international organizations, non-governmental organizations, universities, private sector companies, national space agencies, and other donors. The SERVIR programme touches upon multiple sectors related to international development and supports the objectives of the intergovernmental Group on Earth Observations (GEO) in the areas of agriculture, biodiversity, climate change, disasters, ecosystems, health, water, and weather.

The overarching goal of the SERVIR programme is to improve environmental management and resilience to climate change. With an eye toward this goal, the SERVIR programme works to build the capacity of SERVIR regional hub institutions, governments and other key stakeholders to integrate earth observation information and geospatial technologies into development decision-making. The SERVIR programme, which in Spanish means 'to serve', provides geospatial applications, services, and capacity building for sharing, integrating, mapping, and forecasting using different kinds of geo-information from different sources. NASA's work with the SERVIR programme focuses on providing access to decision-support tools and information services, i.e., the 'supply' of SERVIR programme offerings. The work of USAID is focused on building awareness and capacity among the community of users, as well as improving and understanding the impacts of SERVIR – the 'demand' side for SERVIR offerings. Each SERVIR programme centre, or 'hub', is hosted by an institution that serves multiple countries within its region. The regional SERVIR programme hubs are the primary interface between users of SERVIR programme products in developing countries and supply from local and NASA scientists. To date, the SERVIR programme has been serving three regions: Mesoamerica, with a centre based in Panama; Eastern Africa, with a centre based in Kenya; and the Hindu-Kush-Himalaya region, with the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) based in Nepal. This grants programme will be implemented by the SERVIR-Himalaya hub hosted by ICIMOD.

#### **1.1.2. Overall programme objectives**

The objective of the SERVIR-Himalaya grant programme is to help grow the network of organizations, universities, and institutions in the Hindu Kush-Himalaya region that utilize geospatial tools and information to improve decision making related to sustainable mountain development with special focus on climate adaptation, vulnerability, or mitigation. The anticipated outcome of the grant activities is to stimulate the innovative use of geospatial tools and information to translate science into sustainable policy and practice that addresses the development challenges posed by climate stresses.

### 1.1.3. Overview

This RFP invites concept papers to explore innovative approaches and thinking to help country partners speed their transition to climate-resilient, sustainable economic growth through improved policy and practice. To accomplish this, proposals shall focus on applying geospatial tools and information to the climate-related challenges of sustainable landscapes, Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD), and adaptation to change (Adaptation means helping countries and communities prepare for and adapt to changes in climate by building the climate resilience of people, places and livelihoods).

The SERVIR-Himalaya programme seeks to broaden its network of organizations that work with geospatial tools and information by funding proposals that may address one the following illustrative themes:

**The proposed project needs to be within the framework of the following themes (Table-1) and also it must confirm the ‘overall objectives’ (see Section-1.1.2) described in this document.**

**Table-1: Thematic areas and topics for the Grants Projects**

Theme	Examples of topics on Geospatial and/or earth observation based applications, tools, and methodologies
<b>Disaster and Emergency Responses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disaster preparedness, disaster management, disaster and hazard risk reduction and emergency response</li> <li>• Early warning to various natural disaster events such as flash flood, landslide, glacial lake outburst flood, drought, environmental hazards, etc.</li> <li>• Innovative applications and information systems for flood management, drought management and vulnerability assessments</li> </ul>
<b>Ecosystems and Biodiversity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tools and methodology for forest carbon measurement and monitoring, assessment of land degradation, greenhouse gas inventories</li> <li>• Improved and cost-efficient management and monitoring tools for land use planning that reduces deforestation while ensuring the rights and engagement of local and indigenous communities</li> <li>• Geospatial database and information-based products (e.g., on biodiversity, community forests, rangelands, mountain farming, watersheds and wetlands management)</li> </ul>
<b>Cryosphere and Water</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment/mapping of glaciers, snow, permafrost, glacio-hydrology and glacial lakes, and the impact of black carbon/dust on snow and glacier melt river basin</li> <li>• Information and analysis related to water management practices (status and trends in mountain water availability and use, upstream/downstream relations, floods and droughts, water-food-energy nexus, and socioeconomic and gender analysis)</li> </ul>
<b>Agriculture and Food Security</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irrigated landscape mapping, tools, and methodologies for yield determination</li> <li>• Information and statistics on crops, rangeland, livestock and other related agricultural resources</li> </ul>

Theme	Examples of topics on Geospatial and/or earth observation based applications, tools, and methodologies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cropping area and crop growth monitoring using various applications of satellite data</li> </ul>

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### SECTION II- AWARD INFORMATION

#### 2.1. Estimated Funding Level

ICIMOD/SERVIR-Himalaya may choose to fully fund or incrementally fund the chosen application(s). SERVIR-Himalaya expects to award about 10-20 grants. The number of awards and amount of available funding is subject to change and SERVIR-Himalaya reserves the right to make no awards as a result of this RFP.

Applications outside the ICIMOD/SERVIR-Himalaya member countries will not be considered. Applicants must demonstrate success in managing cultural and political considerations in the proposed focus country or region as well as success in addressing the SERVIR programme's development goals.

#### 2.2. Anticipated Start Date of this Award and Implementation Period

ICIMOD/SERVIR-Himalaya anticipates the start date 1 March 2014 upon award with a implementation period of 9–12 months, with up to an additional four months for closeout and final reporting.

#### 2.3. Award Type

SERVIR-Himalaya anticipates awarding up to 10-20 grants (hereafter called Agreement) not exceeding USD 25,000 to successful applications submitted in response to this RFP.

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### SECTION III- ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

#### 3.1. Eligible Organizations/Entities that May Apply

This RFP is issued as a public notice to ensure that all interested and qualified organizations have a fair opportunity to submit applications for funding. Eligible organizations must be located within the ICIMOD/SERVIR-Himalaya member countries – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan. Eligible organizations include non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, research institutions, universities, private organizations, international non-governmental organizations, registered foundations and professional associations, and consortiums of the above. ICIMOD/SERVIR-Himalaya encourages an approach that establishes partnerships with several partner organizations and builds them into legacy institutions capable of sustaining development projects in the future.

Some organizations are legally restricted from receiving US Government funded assistance. In addition, applicants should:

- Be legally recognized and registered. Registration documents and statutes must be submitted.
- Not be affiliated with a political party nor engaged in any political activities.
- Not be focused solely on religious activities.
- Contribute a percentage of the total programme budget in kind and/or cash based on the following guidelines.

### **3.2. Potential New Partners and Team Composition**

ICIMOD/SERVIR-Himalaya strongly encourages applications from potential new partners. Women participation on project teams is highly favourable.

### **3.3. Cost Sharing**

Cost sharing is not required; applicants are encouraged to contribute resources from their own private or local sources for the implementation of this programme where feasible.

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### **SECTION IV- APPLICATION & SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

#### **4.1. Application Process**

Applications will need to be submitted to ICIMOD/SERVIR-Himalaya contact person. All the concept papers received within the deadline will be reviewed by a technical panel of members from the ICIMOD/SERVIR-Himalaya team. The short-listed applicants would be requested to submit a full proposal. Guidelines for writing the full proposal will be sent to the short-listed applicants. The grants will be awarded to the applicants who would satisfactorily write the full proposals following the Small Grants Programme Full Proposal and Implementation Manual (i.e., the Grants Manual, which will be sent only to the successful short listed applicants) and in line with the concept papers submitted by the applicant. The concept paper must be submitted in accordance with the instructions in Section 4.2 below.

#### **4.2. Concept Paper**

In the first stage, all applicants are required to submit a short technical concept paper no longer than 5 pages that is specific, complete, and concise. The concept paper should demonstrate the applicant's capabilities and expertise with respect to achieving the goals of this programme. Concept papers will be reviewed in terms of responsiveness to the RFP, appropriateness of subject matter, and creativity. Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate how their proposed work will contribute to sustainable climate change development solutions, particularly within the ICIMOD/SERVIR-Himalaya member states.

The instructions for developing the concept paper are listed in the next section.

##### **4.2.1. Concept paper instructions**

The concept paper must be submitted in Times New Roman, 12 point font, and must include page numbers. Each page must be marked with the RFP number and name of the organization (at the footer).

Prepare the application for the concept paper according to the structural format set forth below:

**1-Cover Page** [no more than one (1) page], included with the application. The cover page must include:

- a. The RFP number and title of the project;
- b. Name and address of organization (including website);
- c. Type of organization (e.g., for-profit, non-profit, university, etc.);
- d. Major functional areas of the organization;
- e. Contact point (lead contact name; relevant telephone, fax, email information);
- f. Names of other organizations to whom you are submitting and/or have submitted the application and/or who are funding the proposed activity; and
- g. Signature of authorized representative of the applicant.

**2-Technical approach** (no more than three (3) pages): This section should address the programme summary and selected objectives in Section I of this document and should include:

- a. Concise title and project summary
- b. Problem statement, objectives and methodology:  
Discussion of the objectives, the methodology, description of software, hardware and data to be used, the amount of effort to be employed, the anticipated results, and how the work will help accomplish ICIMOD/SERVIR-Himalaya's goal of promoting sustainable development through the use of geospatial tools and information dissemination; and
- c. Type of support the applicant requests from ICIMOD/SERVIR-Himalaya (e.g., funds, facilities, equipment, materials, personnel resources, etc.).

**3- The Concept Paper** should depict clear description of final output/deliverables.

Depending on the type of the project, the output and deliverables can also vary. Project deliverables can be combination of the following example outputs/deliverables:

- a. Final report (mandatory)
- b. Web-based GIS application demonstrating decision support tools on the topics of the example thematic areas given in this RFP
- c. Scientific article/report, such as, in the case of geospatial tools-based analysis, an article on using various GIS and remote sensing data and revealing interesting and useful findings. The deliverables should also include all the GIS maps, graphs, data used in the analysis, and a clear description of the steps and methods used in the analysis, etc.
- d. ArcGIS online story maps, Google Earth KML, Google Earth Movie or similar product
- e. Videos
- f. Presentation
- g. Innovative tools and technologies supporting earth observation and geospatial technologies

**4-Supporting information** (no more than (1) page):

Proposed total estimated cost; Brief cost breakdown (e.g., salaries, travel, etc.); Proposed optional amount of the applicant’s financial as well as in-kind participation if applicable; Proposed amount of prospective or existing partner(s’) financial as well as in-kind participation if applicable; Proposed timeline of the activity; and Brief description of applicant’s, as well as prospective or existing partner(s’) previous work or experience.

ICIMOD/SERVIR-Himalaya will contact selected applicants to request a full proposal based on the evaluation of the concept paper.

5- CVs of team members and institutional profile included in an annex.

#### 4.2.2. Submission instructions

- All materials must be in English.
- The concept paper must be submitted by email to ICIMOD (SERVIR-Himalaya Point of Contact mentioned in Section VII) no later than the deadline on the cover page of this RFP or subsequently announced deadlines if additional reviews are announced. All correspondence must include the relevant RFP number and title.
- Applications must be submitted by the deadline and sent to ICIMOD (SERVIR-Himalaya Point of Contact mentioned in Section VII). Incomplete applications, or those submitted after the deadline, shall not be considered.
- Applicants will receive receipt confirmation of their application within two weeks after the postmark deadline.

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### SECTION V – APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

#### 5.1. Evaluation Criteria for Concept Paper

Concept papers will be reviewed in terms of responsiveness to the RFP, appropriateness of subject matter, and creativity. Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate how their proposed work will contribute to developing solutions for sustainable mountain development with a special focus on climate adaptation, vulnerability, or mitigation, especially within the developing country context. Applicants should note that these criteria: (a) serve as the standard against which all applications will be evaluated, and (b) serve to identify the significant matters that Recipients should address. The following evaluation criteria will be used to evaluate the applications

Criteria	Maximum Score
1. Innovative ideas and relevance of the issues	20
2. Technical approach	40
3. Qualification of the project team	20
4. Clear description and creativity in the deliverables	20

### **5.1.1. Innovative ideas and relevance of the issues**

Application of new and emerging geospatial technologies in solving problems contributing to sustainable climate change development solutions, particularly within the ICIMOD/SERVIR-Himalaya member states.

### **5.1.2. Technical approach**

The following points will be emphasized:

- Demonstrated understanding of the subject content as indicated in the Background and Overview sections; applicant must also demonstrate how the proposed activities will address the emphasized outcomes using prescribed and illustrative indicators.
- Degree to which the programme approach and proposed strategies to address sustainable development with a special focus on climate adaptation, vulnerability, or mitigation are creative, innovative, collaborative, and feasible.
- Collaboration, inclusion, and strengthening of local partners; applications that include local implementing partners and female team members will be considered favourably.

### **5.1.3. Qualification of the project team**

The following points will be emphasized:

- Project management and institutional capacity
- Institutional capacity to manage (technically, administratively and financially) a project relevant to sustainable mountain development with a special focus on climate adaptation, vulnerability, or mitigation, especially in addressing sensitive social norms in a culturally appropriate fashion.
- Long-term experience by key staff in capabilities where appropriate.
- Successful institutional presence in at least one geographic region identified in the RFP.

### **5.1.4. Clear description and creativity in the deliverables**

It will be evaluated whether there are creativities in the deliverables and the deliverables have been clearly described in the Concept Paper.

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## **SECTION VI – AWARD & ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

### **6.1. Post- Selection Information**

Following selection of an awardee (please refer to Section 4.1), SERVIR-Himalaya will inform the successful applicant concerning the award. A notice of award signed by SERVIR-Himalaya's Regional Coordinator (or a person designated by him) is the official authorization document, which SERVIR-Himalaya will provide either electronically or in hard copy to the successful applicant's main point of contact.

## **6.2. General Information on Reporting Requirements**

Programme implementation reporting will be determined based on the outcome of the collaborative finalization of the planned programme and the delineation of roles and responsibilities. A performance monitoring and evaluation plan, using measurable targets and indicators will also be agreed upon. Financial reporting will be in accordance with the requirements of the obligating document and using the format given in the Small Grants Manual (which will be sent to the successful short listed applicants).

## **6.3. Signing the Agreement**

Selected awardees will need to sign an agreement after the successful evaluation of the full proposal using the agreement template given in the Grants Manual (which will be sent only to the successful short-listed applicants). Apart from the obligations to deliver various outputs, the applicants will also need to declare and agree upon certain clauses (such as standard certifications and assurances required by ICIMOD and USAID's operational policies for grants, which will be provided in the full proposal) including the following:

### **6.3.1. Intellectual Property Rights**

Any data or data service, publication, text, methodology or other resources used in the project must be cited and duly acknowledged with complete reference to the source of the resource. In case the resource source need any Intellectual Rights Permission (IRP) to allow the usage of a particular resource, the grantee must ensure that such permission is being taken in written form mentioning that SERVIR-Himalaya might reproduce or publish complete or part of the resource used in the grant project. Such written consent must accompany with the project submission by the grantee.

### **6.3.2. Unrestricted submission of data, data service, publication text, and other resources**

Grantee must submit all data, data service, publication text, programming source codes, and other resources used in the project to SERVIR-Himalaya in unrestricted form. SERVIR-Himalaya would have the right to reproduce or publish complete or part of the resource used in the grant project. In case of such reproduction, SERVIR-Himalaya will duly acknowledge the original source of the resources.

### **6.3.3. Statement on secondary usage of the data or methodology**

If the data, data service, publication, text, methodology, etc. have been used fully or partially or is intended for use in any other project, organization, or any other purposes, complete details of such project need to be clearly mentioned in the full proposal and also in the final report.

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## **SECTION VII – SERVIR-HIMALAYA PROJECT CONTACTS**

The points of contact for this RFP and any questions during the RFP process are:

- Name: SERVIR-Himalaya Initiative
- Address: International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, G.P.O. Box 3226, Kathmandu, Nepal
- Telephone/Fax Numbers: +977-1-5003222, Ext. 105
- Email: [sgp\\_servir@icimod.org](mailto:sgp_servir@icimod.org)

**While contacting SERVIR-Himalaya Initiative with any enquiries, please provide the following information at the bottom of your e-mail message:**

- a) Name of the organization:
- b) Type of the organization (non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, research institutions, universities, private organizations etc.)
- c) Contact point (name, designation, e-mail, phone):
- d) Address of the organization, including website:
- e) Major functional areas:

Any prospective applicant desiring an explanation or interpretation of this RFP must request it in writing by the date listed on the cover letter to allow a reply to reach all prospective applicants before the submission of their applications. Oral explanations or instructions given before award of a grant will not be binding. Any information given to a prospective applicant concerning this RFP will be furnished promptly to all other prospective applicants as an amendment of this RFP if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicants.

A copy of this document can be obtained from ICIMOD

Website: [http://www.icimod.org/sgp\\_servir](http://www.icimod.org/sgp_servir)

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## **SECTION VIII - OTHER INFORMATION**

Issuance of this RFP does not constitute an award or commitment on the part of ICIMOD/SERVIR-Himalaya, nor does it commit ICIMOD/SERVIR-Himalaya to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application.

ICIMOD/SERVIR-Himalaya reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. Further, ICIMOD/SERVIR-Himalaya reserves the right to make no awards as a result of this RFP.