

Governance Framework

UPPER INDUS BASIN NETWORK (UIB-N)

Afghanistan Chapter



Australian Government

ICIMOD



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The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) is a regional knowledge development and learning centre serving the eight regional member countries of the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan – based in Kathmandu, Nepal. Globalization and climate change have an increasing influence on the stability of fragile mountain ecosystems and the livelihoods of mountain people. ICIMOD aims to assist mountain people to understand these changes, adapt to them, and make the most of new opportunities, while addressing upstream and downstream issues. ICIMOD supports regional transboundary programmes through partnerships with regional partner institutions, facilitates the exchange of experiences, and serves as a regional knowledge hub. We strengthen networking among regional and global centres of excellence. Overall, we are working to develop economically and environmentally-sound mountain ecosystems to improve the living standards of mountain populations and to sustain vital ecosystem services for the billions of people living downstream – now and in the future.



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Purpose of the Afghanistan Chapter Governance Framework

This document has been drafted based on the inception workshop on Strengthening Water Resources Management in Afghanistan (SWaRMA) held at New Delhi from 9 to 11 March 2018. The workshop conceptualized regional cooperation on Water Resources Management as one of the thematic areas of SWaRMA. Meanwhile, the third regional Upper Indus Basin Network (UIBN) workshop held at the ICIMOD headquarters in Kathmandu on 24 and 25 April 2018 has given a mandate to expand the network to all the basin countries—Afghanistan, China, India, and Pakistan, with each having its respective country chapters. This document describes the governance framework of the Afghanistan chapter. It includes details on how the Afghanistan chapter will function in the country and contribute to the regional UIBN. It also defines the roles and responsibilities of the Afghanistan chapter Strategic Committee (SC) and its members.

The governance framework of the regional UIBN is available in a separate document.

Background

The Upper Indus Basin (UIB), shared by Afghanistan, China, India, and Pakistan, has been facing the impacts of climate change on its water resources and other sectors. The basin is crucial and important for all these riparian countries—they face many common challenges by way of managing water resources and risks such as flood, glacial lake outburst flood (GLOF), erosion, etc. Therefore, a neutral science-based regional platform like the UIBN can play an important role in understanding the challenges and opportunities; it can foster coordination among the researchers working in the region so that they share their experiences, knowledge and understanding in order to effectively deal with the effects of climate change on the water resources as well as on upstream/downstream linkages.

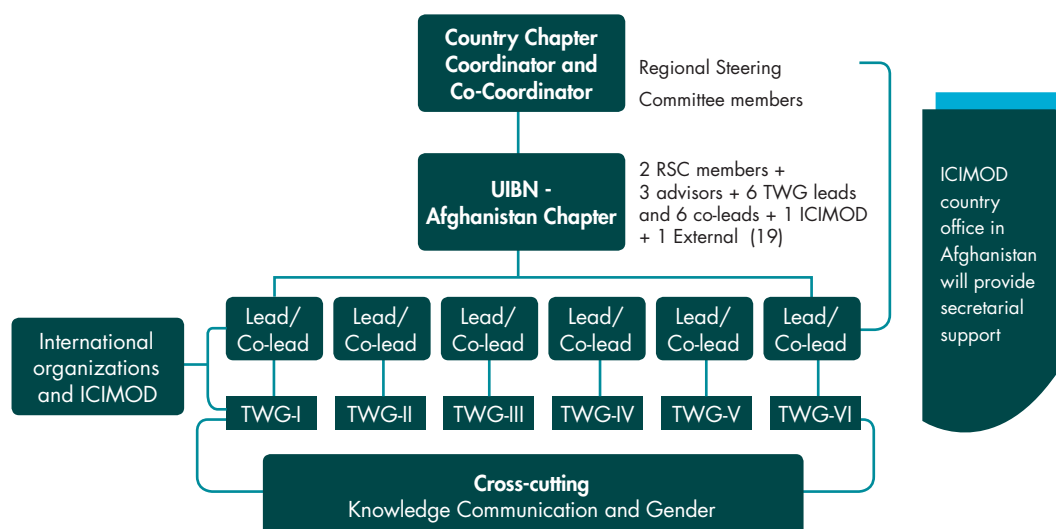
The third regional UIBN workshop saw the participation of different governmental and non-governmental organizations from Afghanistan, China, India, and Pakistan, as well as that of other international research and academic entities. The participants emphasized on the need to use the UIBN as a regional platform to discuss emerging issues and potential solutions related to the UIB. Therefore, it was mutually agreed to expand the UIBN to all the riparian countries sharing the Indus water and form respective country chapters to deal with the issues at the country level.

The third regional UIBN and ICIMOD's SWaRMA (under the regional programme on river basins and the cryosphere) supported the establishment of the Upper Indus Basin Network-Afghanistan Chapter (UIBN-AC). The UIBN-AC is envisioned as a voluntary and informal knowledge and research network to cover the Indus Basin in Afghanistan. It aims to foster coordination in research related to climate, the cryosphere, and water, as well as hazards, vulnerability, and adaptation.

Governance Structure of UIBN-Afghanistan Chapter

The UIBN-AC will comprise a Strategic Committee (SC) and a Technical Working Group (TWG) (Fig 1)

Figure 1: **Composition of UIBN-Afghanistan Chapter**



The Strategic Committee (SC)

The UIBN-AC SC will be coordinated by a Coordinator and a Co-Coordinator, who will represent the UIBN-AC in the Regional Strategic Committee (RSC) of the UIBN. The Afghanistan Chapter SC consists of TWG Leads and Co-Leads, and adviser/s from the UIBN-AC (Table 1). The UIBN-AC Coordinator and Co-Coordinator will coordinate with the TWG Leads and Co-Leads to hold meetings in Afghanistan, at least once every six months, to assess the progress of the TWG and provide support in achieving the desired objectives. Based on these meetings, the UIBN-AC Coordinator and Co-Coordinator will present a progress report on the country chapter in the next RSC meeting. Any representative of ICIMOD or any other relevant international organization can also be a member of the TWG. The ICIMOD country office in Afghanistan will provide secretariat support to the UIBN-AC for organizing meetings.

The tenure of the SC will be of three years. After this period, a selection process shall be conducted for the new committee.

Table 1: **Strategic Committee Structure of UIBN-AC**

| Position | No. | Name |
|---|-----------|------|
| Coordinator | 1 | |
| Co-Coordinator | 1 | |
| Advisers | 3 | |
| Members | 12 + | |
| TWG Leads (6) | | |
| Co-Leads (6) | | |
| ICIMOD (1) | | |
| Other relevant international agencies (1) | | |

The Technical Working Groups (TWGs)

There are six Technical Working Groups (TWGs) in the regional UIBN. The earlier TWGs were renamed by the members during the April 2018 Regional UIB-N workshop. But since knowledge communication and gender cut across all working groups, it was proposed that these be retained as cross-cutting themes. It was also decided that the number of TWGs could be made flexible according to the need of Afghanistan, but not exceeding six (Table 2).

Table 2: **Name of Technical Working Group**

| Group Number | Name of Technical Working Group (TWG) |
|--------------|--|
| Group 1 | Framework of data collection, quality and standardization |
| Group 2 | Climate change, variability of air pollution and black carbon |
| Group 3 | Cryosphere monitoring and modelling |
| Group 4 | Surface and groundwater hydrology, water availability and demand |
| Group 5 | Understanding and managing hazards and risks |
| Group 6 | Managing gendered socio-economic impacts through adaptation measures |
| | Cross-cutting themes (knowledge communication and gender) |

Members of Technical Working Groups

Researchers, government officials, project/programme managers and technical experts can be a member of any TWG based on their expertise and interest (Table 3).

Table 3: **Members in TWG**

| Position | No. |
|----------|------|
| Lead | 1X6 |
| Co-Lead | 1X6 |
| Members | *Nx6 |

*N = Number of members in TWG

Frequency of Meetings

The Afghanistan chapter meetings, including the SC meeting, will be organized biannually, coordinated by the Coordinator and the Co-Coordinator. All the decisions of the SC should be endorsed and approved at these biannual meetings. Likewise, the TWG meeting will also be organized biannually, coordinated by the TWG Leads and Co-Leads. In addition to these biannual TWG meetings, the team will meet as and when necessary to discuss technical issues and the overall progress. Besides, a regional UIBN meeting will be organized once a year where the Coordinator and Co-Coordinator of the Afghanistan chapter will represent the UIBN-AC. The ICIMOD Afghanistan country office will provide secretarial support to these meetings. The frequency of the UIBN-AC SC and TWG meetings are given below (Table 4).

Table 4: **UIBN-AC Meetings**

| Convening Bodies/ Events | Frequency of Meetings | Responsibility to Coordinate & Decide on Agenda | Secretarial Support |
|----------------------------------|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| UIBN-AC, including SC meeting | Once in 6 months | UIBN-AC Coordinator/ Co-Coordinator | Afghanistan ICIMOD Country Office |
| TWGs | Once in 6 months; in addition, the team will meet as and when necessary to discuss technical issues and the overall progress | TWG Leads & Co-Leads | Afghanistan Country Office |

Basic Criteria for SC, TWG and General Membership

- Those who join the UIBN-AC should do so purely on a voluntary basis, and the entry and exit of the members should be approved by the SC.
- Any individual who is part of any organization (either public or private) or works in an individual capacity to help achieve the shared objectives of the UIBN-AC is eligible for membership.
- The UIBN members should understand and contribute proactively to help achieve the UIBN-AC objectives for regional cooperation.
- The UIBN-AC members should be willing to use their own resources for coordinating, knowledge-sharing, and networking with other members concerned, the TWGs, SC, etc.
- Gender inclusion/balance must be encouraged at every tier of the UIBN-AC structure.
- The selected Leads and Co-Leads must accept their role willingly and be committed to play his/her role proactively.

Roles and Responsibilities

Following are some of the basic roles and responsibilities of the UIBN members who contribute to the forum in different capacities. These are just a few guiding points which can be changed and improved by the members over time.

Responsibilities of Coordinator/Co-Coordinator

- Provide leadership and governance to set strategic direction to the UIBN-AC in order to achieve the desired results.
- Promote effective relationships, open communication and an environment that allows constructive discussions among the SC members.
- Convene the SC meetings of the Afghanistan chapter biannually and participate in the regional UIBN meeting annually.
- Set the meeting's agenda in consultation with the SC members.
- Make necessary recommendations to the regional UIBN, country chapters and the TWGs for improved coordination and operations.
- Promote the UIBN in national, regional and global forums, and seek opportunities for the accumulated UIBN knowledge to be used in any relevant policy and planning processes.
- Develop strategy for the financial sustainability of the network.

Responsibilities of Adviser/s

- Communicate regularly with the TWG Leads on the progress made and on the issues and gaps that were identified.
- Communicate regularly with the UIBN-AC advisers and jointly address the identified issues.
- Share issues raised by the TWGs and suggest solutions in the UIBN-AC SC meetings.
- Suggest the way forward and devise working mechanisms for on-ground implementation based on the meeting findings and key decisions.
- Suggest date and venue, agenda, and objectives of the future UIBN-AC SC and TWG meetings.
- Develop a mechanism of coordination among the UIBN-AC, the policymakers, and community members.
- Provide technical inputs and feedback to the funding proposals developed by the TWGs.
- Provide inputs to the knowledge products developed by the TWGs. For example, a guide book on data collection, data-sharing mechanism/policy, and establishment of a data (met, hydrological, socio-economist) repository.
- Suggest measures to further strengthen the UIBN-AC and the regional UIBN as a neutral science-based regional knowledge forum.
- Provide guidelines to integrate new and relevant members in the regional UIBN and UIBN-AC.
- Provide strategic guidelines to strengthen the UIBN-AC and to improve its operational mechanism.
- Help resolve the conflicts or issues among the TWGs, if any.
- Provide strategic and policy direction on the joint research agenda and such.
- Promote the UIBN (regional and country chapters) in national, regional and global forums, and seek opportunities for the UIBN knowledge base to be used in any relevant policy and planning processes.
- Contribute to develop strategy for the financial sustainability of the UIBN-AC.

Responsibilities of Technical Working Group Leads and Co-Leads

- Invite new members to the working groups based on their research experience and interest, ensuring gender representation.
- Proactively develop a plan and lead the group to collect information about ongoing research and activities carried out by the team members and others in the Upper Indus Basin on topics related to the working groups and cross-cutting issues.
- Present a progress update of the group in the UIBN-AC meetings and share the report with the UIBN-AC Secretariat biannually.
- Organize TWG meetings regularly (face-to-face, or virtual) to share the collected information among respective team members.
- Update archives/database of the collected information and experiences—which are to be hosted on the regional UIBN-AC website – with support from the Secretariat.
- Develop policy brief and/or fact sheets as and when required (for example, if a climate change adaptation plan is made for an area).
- Participate and contribute to the regional UIBN, UIBN-AC and TWG meetings, as and when needed.
- Report during the regional UIBN meetings on the progress made by the working groups, the data generated and shared, and on major publications produced, if any.
- Coordinate with the regional UIBN Secretariat and other working group Leads to ensure integration and maintain synergy amongst the working groups.
- Inform the UIBN-AC SC about the progress made by working groups and provide support in making decisions about the future plans of the network.
- Work in the interest of the UIBN-AC to achieve the desired objectives.
- Help the Secretariat to keep a complete track record of the working groups.
- In the absence of one, the other (Lead or Co-Lead) will represent the group.

Responsibilities of Technical Working Group Members

- Be a regular member of a Technical Working Group based on his/her research experience and interest. In addition to the regular group, he/she can contribute to other TWGs as well, based on his/her interest.
- Support the Lead and the Co-Lead to collect, compile and share information on the ongoing research in the Upper Indus Basin on topics related to the working group and cross-cutting issues.
- Contribute specifically and categorically to the network in addition to their responsibilities in their organizations concerned.
- With the consent of the Lead and Co-Lead during their absence, present the progress update of the group in regional UIBN meetings, and share the report with the UIBN-AC Secretariat biannually.
- Participate in regular TWG meetings (face-to-face, or virtual) to share the collected information and contribute as per the plan and need.
- Support the Lead and Co-Lead to keep track of their working groups, and compile the group progress updates and presentations.
- Participate and contribute to the periodic regional UIBN, UIBN-AC and TWG meetings as and when invited.

Consolidation and Dissemination of Knowledge

Technical Working Group Reporting Mechanism

Members of the TWGs will coordinate with each other to share knowledge, understanding, issues, and possible solutions. It is important to ensure close coordination and cooperation within and among the TWGs for better results. The TWG Leads and Co-Leads will prepare the TWG progress update following the simple reporting template (provided below) and share it with the UIBN-AC Secretariat twice a year, ahead of the SC biannual meetings. The Leads and Co-Leads will also discuss and present the progress update in the UIBN-AC and regional meetings.

Upper Indus Basin Network

Technical Working Group (TWG) Reporting Template

Reporting Period: From _____ To _____ Country: _____

Name of Technical Working Group: _____ Co-Lead: _____

| | | | |
|--|-----------|--|--|
| Activity 1.1 | Activity: | | |
| Activity update; (what, when, where and why) | | Partners and their role (who and how) | |
| Further Opportunities / Upcoming events (what next) | | Challenges | |
| Activity 1.2 | Activity: | | |
| Activity update (what, when, where and why) | | Partners and their role (who and how) | |
| Further Opportunities / Upcoming events (what next) | | Challenges | |

Knowledge Management and Communication

Knowledge management and communication will be a cross-cutting issue for the UIBN and an integral part of all the TWGs and SC. A knowledge management and communication strategy will be developed in the future.

The regional UIBN Secretariat is creating a web portal to share the relevant knowledge and available information related to the UIB among the UIBN members, and to hold discussions on different critical topics. The Afghanistan chapter is a part of the web portal and will receive posts through email. The members can comment on the posts to provide their views and critical feedback. They are encouraged to use the platform to actively participate in the discussions as well as to share new knowledge and information with other members. It is expected that at some point in time the knowledge shared through the web portal will be consolidated, leading to the creation of synthesized knowledge products.

And in order to add a gender perspective to the relevant knowledge, information and policies, the regional UIBN website will host a gender portal. This portal will be focused on the Indus Basin and will shed light on gender realities, build downstream–upstream synergies and promote dialogue to ensure women’s agency in food-water-energy governance.

The UIBN members are expected to build on their shared knowledge and adopt a transboundary approach to deal with the effects of climate change on the Upper Indus Basin.

Resource Allocation

- ICIMOD will partially support the UIBN-AC meetings.
- The UIBN-AC members will cover their own expenses to attend the Afghanistan chapter meetings.
- The TWG members will cover their own expenses to coordinate, organize and attend any TWG meetings.
- ICIMOD country offices in Afghanistan will provide secretarial support to the UIBN-AC.
- It is envisaged that the UIBN-AC will develop financial plans for sustainability and the independent functioning of the network. During the regional SC, annual and country chapter meetings, it is imperative to discuss in detail how to mobilize resources to sustainably run the network in the long run.

Conflict of Interest

The UIBN-AC members agree to act in the best interest of the network, together with other members. Individual members shall notify in writing if any actual or potential conflict of interest exists or arises during the course of the coordination and networking for knowledge-sharing.



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