

Draft - Terms of Reference

Indigenous Steering Group (ISG)

1.0 Background

In October 2022, Global Affairs Canada (GAC) issued a call for [concept notes for the Indigenous Peoples Partnering for Climate funding](#). This project is part of Canada's \$5.3 billion international climate finance commitment, from which \$315 million has been allocated for [Partnering for Climate](#). \$15 million has been earmarked over 5 years to fund projects that support climate action priorities of Indigenous Peoples in developing countries in partnership with Indigenous peoples in Canada.

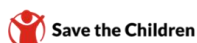
Through the implementation of nature-based solutions (NbS) for climate adaptation and knowledge sharing, this call emphasized the importance of Indigenous rights and self-determination, Indigenous climate leadership, aligning the Overarching Project with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and sought to foster international partnerships between Indigenous Peoples to build climate resilience.

Through the [Indigenous Peoples Partnering for Climate](#) call, Global Affairs Canada funded "[Building Climate Resilience from Indigenous Perspectives](#)" (BCRIP). BCRIP is a four-year (2024 – 2028) gender-responsive and Indigenous rights-based project led by the British Columbia Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) and the Continental Network of Indigenous Women of the Americas (ECMIA SUR), through the Organización Nacional de Mujeres Indígenas Andinas y Amazónicas del Perú (National Organization of Andean and Amazonian Indigenous Women in Peru, ONAMIAP) with the support of Save the Children (SC).

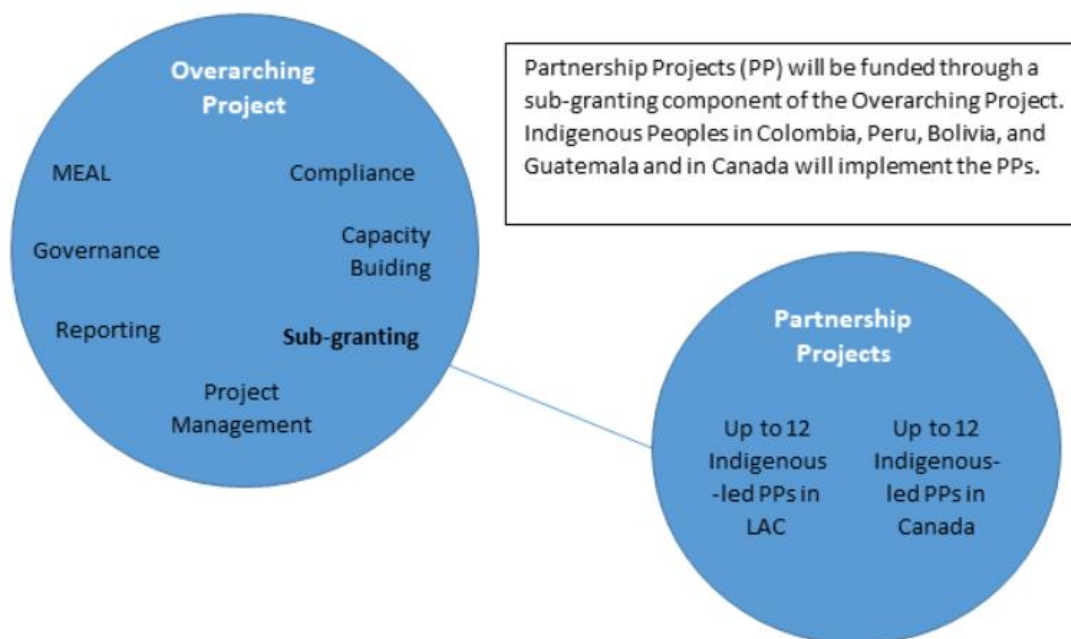
2.0 The BCRIP Project

BCAFN and SC Canada have partnered for this project. ECMIA Sur through ONAMIAP are an implementing partner, supported by Save the Children's Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office (SC LAC RO).

This project aims to build climate resilience and support Indigenous-led climate action through joint advocacy, strengthened climate governance, knowledge sharing and the implementation of self-determined Indigenous-led NbS via sub-granting projects in Bolivia, Colombia, Peru and Guatemala. These sub-granting projects will be co-designed and co-implemented in partnership with Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Gender equality and Indigenous rights are cross-cutting themes, and the project's desired outcomes and activities were designed to be gender-responsive from Indigenous perspectives. The BCRIP Project has two components: the Overarching Project (OP) and the sub-granting "Partnership Projects" (PPs). The OP will be responsible for various aspects, such as overseeing the sub-granting PPs, project management,



compliance, capacity-building, MEAL, and reporting. The ISG will guide the OP and the PPs to ensure they are governed in an Indigenous-led and good way.



The Indigenous-led PPs will implement NbS for climate adaptation in Bolivia, Colombia, Peru and Guatemala and will partner with Indigenous Peoples in Canada, based on a North-South project co-design process. The co-designing will entail a process of collaboration between subgrantees whereby they are co-designing mechanisms, tools, processes, and spaces for knowledge exchange, relationship building, and joint action. In the spirit of the core values and principles of the call and project, such as Indigenous rights, self-determination, governance, and sovereignty, co-design will not refer to Indigenous Peoples in the North exercising governance in the design of Nature-based Solutions in the South. The co-design and co-implementation aspect of this project will entail knowledge sharing, reciprocity, relationship building, and collaboration as defined by the sub-grantees. Through a fair, competitive, and transparent process, up to 24 sub-grantees will be selected – 12 in the North and 12 in the South. This number is subject to change pending discussions with governance bodies, which includes the ISG. PPs will be 12 to 24 months in duration and are projected to start in Y2 of the project¹. These PPs will be co-led by Indigenous Peoples in Canada and in LAC, as defined in the co-design process.

¹Y2 of the project will begin in April 2025 and will go on until the end of March 2026

3.0 Purpose, Scope and Responsibilities of the ISG

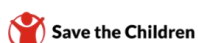
The Indigenous Steering Group (ISG) is an Indigenous-led body that is responsible for monitoring the governance and implementation of the Overarching Project and Partnership Projects. The co-signatories, BCAFN and SC Canada will work with the ISG to ensure that compliance requirements are being met such as validating that recommendations and decisions are acceptable within the parameters of GAC's General Terms and Conditions, as well as the Contribution Agreement. While SC Canada and BCAFN will align discussions with the project implementation and contractual obligations, the ISG will help ensure the fundamental parameters of BCRIP listed below are upheld:

1. Indigenous Self-Determination and Climate Leadership
2. Capacity Bridging and Co-Learning
3. Locally driven climate adaptation priorities
4. Integration and respect of Indigenous Peoples' knowledge systems and self-determination

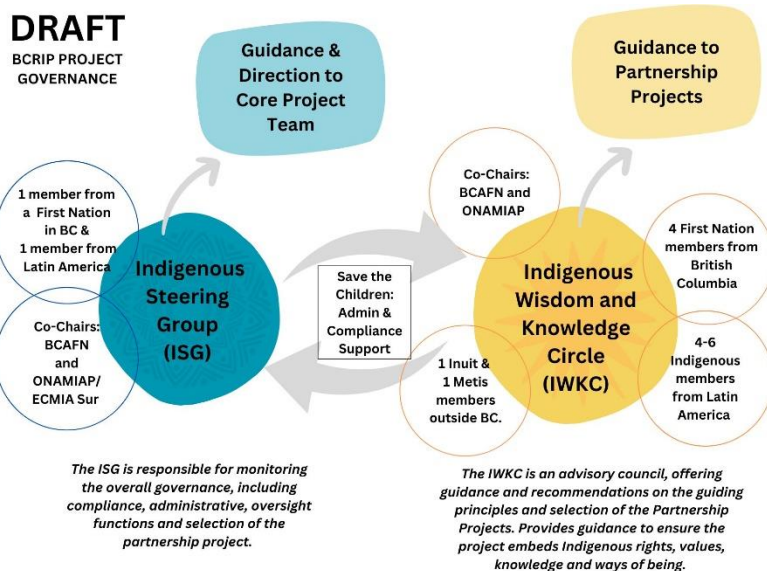
The ISG's role will also include reviewing and endorsing the Annual Work Plans (AWP) submitted to GAC every year, which are meant to outline and guide the implementation the upcoming year of the project. The most recent Annual Work Plan and other relevant documentation will be provided and will support the ISG's work.

The ISG will provide guidance over the BCRIP's governance including guiding and supporting the development and establishment of the Indigenous Wisdom and Knowledge Circle (IWKC). The IWKC is a governance body that will offer guidance and recommendations on the selection of the Partnership Projects and will ensure the project embeds Indigenous rights, values, knowledge systems and ways of being and respond to their priorities. This IWKC may consist of Indigenous Elders, land-based Knowledge Keepers, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, youth and women from a variety of Indigenous distinctions and Nations in Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Guatemala and Canada who have expertise or lived experience in Indigenous science, climate adaptation, nature-based solutions, ecology, Indigenous rights, and gender equality.

The ISG will make decisions on sub-grant recipients based on the IWKC's recommendations, The ISG will ensure that the Partnership Project selection process is transparent, competitive, and fair, with support from Save the Children to ensure compliance with GAC parameters and project administration.



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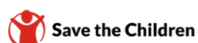


The ISG key responsibilities will include, but are not limited to:

- Reviewing the draft Terms of Reference for the Indigenous Wisdom and Knowledge Circle (IWKC) and other relevant materials, and supporting with the recruitment and selection of the members of the IWKC.
- Draft the Guiding Principles for the BCRIP project, and ensure these principles are consistently implemented throughout the OP and the PPs.
- Selecting sub-grantees for the PPs based on the recommendations of the IWKC;
- Ensuring a transparent, competitive, and fair selection process overall;
- Providing the OP team with general direction and guidance to ensure the implementation, including compliance, MEAL (Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning), Indigenous rights and self-determination, gender equality and other technical areas, reporting, are done in a good way;
- Supporting the development of partnerships between the North and the South.

Additionally, working closely with the IWKC, the ISG will collaborate on:

- Co-defining eligibility criteria for sub-grantees Partnership Projects (key criteria may include legal registration, association or affiliation with communities or Indigenous Nations holding territorial rights to land, preference for projects that clearly promote and uphold Indigenous rights and self-determination, defense of mother nature/earth and the use of Indigenous Knowledge, preference for



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women-Indigenous led projects in LAC², and other criteria as defined by the group;

- Ensuring all elements of the Overarching Project related to the sub-granting are Indigenous-led and respect the rights and self-determination of sub-grantees;
- Approving the sub-grant management model, which will include, but not limited to, the sub-granting application process, timelines, guidelines, review and approval of sub-grantees' Partnership Projects in line with the Donor's compliance requirements and the Project Principles.

4.0 Guiding Principles and Shared Values

The BCRIP project and the ISG will be rooted in principles to be refined as the ISG and IWKC are developed. The principles may include, but are not limited to:

- Indigenous self-determination and rights,
- Indigenous leadership,
- Collaboration and respect
- Two-eyed seeing
- Upholding and revitalizing Indigenous knowledge systems,
- Fostering respectful outcomes for rights- and titleholders, women, and girls.
- Upholding transparency and accountability

Furthermore, this work will be grounded in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and Free, Prior, and Informed Consent, and Indigenous data sovereignty.

In recognition of the key role that gender equality plays in climate adaptation and within Indigenous communities, the BCRIP project and ISG is guided by gender-responsive considerations and actions.

The Two-eyed seeing approach as a principle, recognizes and honours both ancestral, traditional and Western scientific perspectives, is also integral to the project's methodology. These commitments will ensure safe spaces and will also allow for cultural exchanges, understanding, and sharing as a means of accurately representing and including Indigenous Peoples in the global South and North.

The development of these principles will be built and/or strengthened together with the IWKC.

5.0 Composition and Operating Procedures

5.1 Composition of ISG and Governance

² Prioritizing Indigenous women-led projects in LAC will be an essential criteria for the PPs in order to address historical and systemic gender inequalities.



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The Selection Panel will select Indigenous candidates and will prioritize Indigenous women, youth, and 2SLGBTQQIA+.

The ISG will be made up of 4 members, 2 of whom will be appointed Co-Chairs by BCAFN and ECMIA Sur, through ONAMIAP. Specifically:

- One (1) Co-Chair from BCAFN and One (1) Co-Chair from ECMIA Sur, through ONAMIAP,
- One (1) member from a BC First Nation and One (1) member from LAC.

SC will serve in an administrative and coordination support capacity as well as advising and reviewing from a compliance perspective.

The ISG shall steer Technical Staff and the approach to project management in the Overarching Project and the Partnership Projects. The ISG shall be advised by the IWKC, in addition to providing them with reciprocal stewardship on pertinent matters, such as those outlined in 3.0's responsibilities. SC shall provide support and consultation to the ISG as it relates to administration, coordination, finance, and donor compliance. SC and BCAFN will ensure that Donor compliance is met and will review decisions to ensure this as necessary. SC and BCAFN will ensure that ISG decisions reach the donor and are respected.

5.2 Appointment of Steering Group Members

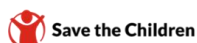
Members of the ISG will be appointed by a selection panel based on specific criteria in relation to the call for Expression of Interest. The selection panel will consist of a member of the BCAFN Board of Directors, a member of ONAMIAP leadership, a member from Save Canada and a member from Save the Children International LACRO.

We recommend that all ISG members commit to serving for the full duration of the project activities, until the end of March 2028, with the possibility of extension until July 2028. Members are expected to fully participate and provide meaningful and consistent contributions. Approximately 23 meetings are projected until the end of the term, but subject to change based on project needs.

5.3 Resignation and Vacancies

Where a vacancy occurs in the membership of the Steering Group, it may be filled by consensus from BCAFN, ONAMIAP, and Save the Children Canada. Resignation must be communicated to the ISG co-chairs in writing via email. For the assignment of a new member, this will be done under the same evaluation criteria, being communicated to all ISG members formally by BCAFN or ONAMIAP, as appropriate.

5.4 Steering Group Meetings



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The frequency of the Steering Group meetings will be decided through a discussion led by the co-chairs. ISG meetings will primarily be held virtually but may also be held in person or via a hybrid approach.

5.5 Notice of Meetings

Meetings will be scheduled in advance and will try to get a mutual agreement. Meeting schedule will be set each calendar year for meetings once a month mostly virtually. In case of any urgent or ad-hoc meeting members of ISG need to be informed minimum 1 week ahead if possible, in writing via email. In cases of extenuating circumstances or emergencies; these shall be called at the earliest available time to meet Quorum.

5.6 Attendance of Meetings and Quorum

A majority of ISG members (75%) will be present by video conference, telephone, in-person, or by a combination of the options; this shall constitute a quorum.

For members who are unable to fulfill their duties and/or attend regular meetings, the ISG members must immediately flag this to the Co-Chairs who will bring this to the wider BCRIP project team. The ISG members must be in attendance of at least 75% of the meetings; this threshold can be reviewed by the ISG with consensus. Furthermore, there will be a discussion between BCAFN, ONAMIAP, SC, and other ISG members to decide on the best course of action.

The ISG may, by prior consultation and consensus, and by specific invitation, have other persons or presenters in attendance of specific meetings, on an ad hoc basis.

As per the Contribution Agreement with Global Affairs Canada (GAC), GAC will be invited to observe and participate, when appropriate and requested, in select ISG meetings.

5.7 Minutes

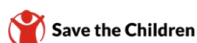
SC will send out the agenda and act as the minute-taker for each meeting.

Minutes of the ISG meetings must be circulated to all ISG members, BCAFN, ONAMIAP, SC, and relevant persons, as determined by the ISG, within two weeks of the meeting.

5.8 Translation and Languages

Relevant materials and communications should be provided in English and Spanish, with translation services made available, budget permitting. ISG members can engage in their own Indigenous language. The OP team will look into securing translation services, either through live closed captions or through a translation service, budget permitting.

5.9 Conflict of Interest



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All ISG members must ensure that they avoid any conflicts of interest that could undermine the integrity of the committee and its decisions, particularly concerning the selection of subgrantees. A conflict of interest may arise from personal relationships, financial interests, or any other situation that could influence a member's objectivity.

Members who identify a potential conflict of interest are required to disclose it in writing to the committee chair in advance of discussions and decisions. Upon disclosure, the member should recuse themselves from any related discussions and decisions to maintain the committee's integrity.

The committee will establish a process for reviewing disclosed conflicts and determining appropriate actions to manage them, ensuring transparency and accountability.

6.0 Travel

When travel is required for ISG members, travel costs (flights, accommodations, per diems) will be covered by BCAFN and ONAMIAP, budget permitting. SC will provide administrative and coordination support when necessary for such arrangements, also to ensure that GAC's compliance requirements are followed.

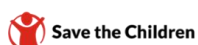
7.0 Honoraria

As per recommendations from the project's Indigenous partners on customs and ways of working, members from LAC will be volunteers. Members from Canada will be provided with honoraria for their participation in meetings based on time and level of effort. Honoraria will not be provided for trips or in-person knowledge exchange meetings, unless agreed upon in writing by BCAFN.

8.0 Management and Administration

To ensure Indigenous knowledge systems, perspectives, and approaches meaningfully guide the project, BCAFN in the North and ONAMIAP/ECMIA Sur in the South will be key partners; SC will provide administrative, compliance, and financial management supports. SC and BCAFN, as co-signatories, will ensure sound compliance. Administrative support from SC will include:

- Creating safe, supportive, and transparent virtual meeting spaces;
- Scheduling meetings and sending meeting invites, agendas, and supporting information circulation;
- Taking meeting minutes to be circulated to members within one week of the meeting;
- Conducting research or special engagement meetings to inform discussions and decisions;
- Maintaining regular and prompt correspondence with the members and co-chairs of the ISG;



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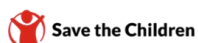
- Coordinating translations, when necessary and available.

The ISG, upon recruitment and onboarding, must determine and document their ways of working and conflict resolution mechanism(s) in a way that respects the diverse panel and achieves consensus. Consensus will be achieved when 100% of the ISG is in agreement.

This Terms of Reference is a living document and may be revised by BCAFN, ONAMIAP, SC (OP team), and members of the ISG in consultation with the OP team, in accordance with a process that is to be determined by them in consensus.

NAME

DATE



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