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THE GEF SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME 2.0
OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR GEF-8

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PART I: INTRODUCTION

1. The GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP), as a GEF Corporate Program, has been a unique and essential element of the GEF's Partnership since its establishment in 1992. It has served as an important mechanism for the GEF to deliver community-based grantmaking and as an avenue to supporting Indigenous Peoples, civil society organizations (CSOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) to achieve GEF's mission and mandate to deliver Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs).
2. These Operational Guidelines have been developed by the GEF Secretariat to guide GEF SGP Implementing Agencies to operationalize SGP 2.0 Implementation Arrangements¹ in line with the GEF-8 Strategy and Programming Directions.² The Guidelines may also serve as general guidance, where relevant, for SGP Executing Agencies, GEF Operational Focal Points (OFPs) and other country level partners.
3. The principles and good practices outlined in these Guidelines build closely on the operational knowhow of UNDP which has successfully served as the GEF SGP Implementing Agency since its inception, as well as evaluative evidence from recent Joint Evaluations of the SGP³, and other lessons learned that have proved effective in implementing SGP across several operational phases.
4. The Guidelines set out the guiding principles and framework for the implementation of projects funded through GEF SGP Core resources in GEF-8, including the use in SGP activities of a country's System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR) resources. They include the expected governance modalities of SGP 2.0 at global and national levels, resource allocation and budget structure, including grant disbursement, the framework for monitoring, evaluation and reporting, communication, and knowledge management good practices.
5. GEF SGP Implementing Agencies may develop their own manuals, as needed, detailing their specific procurement, finance, and administrative requirements, complementary to these guidelines and in line with GEF Policies and Project and Program Cycle Guidelines⁴. These should be shared with the GEF Secretariat for information and to ensure alignment.
6. These Guidelines will be adjusted and updated by the GEF Secretariat as deemed necessary.

PART II: BACKGROUND

7. The GEF SGP has served as an essential element of the GEF's larger efforts to support inclusion and strong engagement of civil society stakeholders and partners, providing financing as

¹ GEF/C.63/06/Rev.01 (GEF Small Grants Programme 2.0 Implementation Arrangements)

² GEF/R.08/29/Rev.01, GEF-8 Programming Directions

³ GEF/E/C.60/01, Joint Evaluation of the GEF Small Grants Programme (2021)

⁴ GEF/C.59/Inf.03

well as technical and capacity building support to Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women and youth to achieve the GEF mandate and mission.

8. Since its inception in 1992, the GEF SGP has supported over 27,000 grants, administering over US\$750 million in direct financing to local communities and civil society organizations across 136 countries.⁵ The SGP embodies the very essence of sustainable development by "thinking globally, and acting locally" and serving, in the GEF partnership, a unique role supporting objectives of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

9. The GEF-8 Replenishment reiterated the centrality of local innovation and civil society actions and coalitions in achieving GEBs and reconfirmed the important role that the GEF SGP serves in support of civil society to all areas of sustainable development and in delivering GEBs. It reiterated that a renewed effort from the GEF to maximize engagement and support to non-state actors was needed to meet the ambition and "whole-of-society approach" set forth in the GEF-8 Strategy⁶.

10. The GEF-8 replenishment concluded with an approval of US\$ 155 million allocated to the GEF SGP Corporate Program, and agreement on the overarching objective of SGP 2.0 to:

"Catalyze and mobilize civil society actors and local actions needed to address major drivers of environmental degradation and help deliver multiple benefits across the GEF's mandated thematic dimensions, while promoting sustainable development and improved livelihoods".

11. The GEF Council at its 63rd Meeting in December 2022, subsequently, approved the GEF SPG 2.0 Implementation Arrangements for GEF-8⁷, affirming GEF's ambitious reform agenda around expansion, innovation, diversification, and optimization of the GEF SGP in GEF-8.

PART III: OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES

12. The GEF SGP 2.0 Implementation Arrangements⁸ elaborates on four pillars: expansion, innovation, diversification, and optimization.

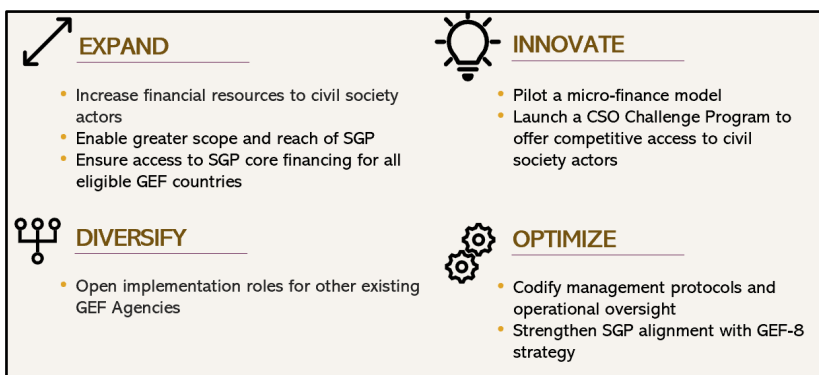
⁵ Small Grants Programme Results Report 2022. UNDP

⁶ GEF/R.08/29/Rev.01, GEF-8 Programming Directions

⁷ GEF/C.63/06/Rev.01

⁸ GEF/C.63/06/Rev.01 (GEF Small Grants Programme 2.0 Implementation Arrangements)

Figure 1: SGP 2.0 Pillars



13. In line with these pillars, the overarching principles for operationalizing SGP 2.0 in GEF-8, include:

- (i) Extend SGP implementation roles to other GEF Agencies and explore new partnerships and approaches.
- (ii) Strengthen alignment with the GEF-8 strategy and focal area priorities, as well as delivery of the GEF-8 Integrated Programs.
- (iii) Support the delivery of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA).
- (iv) Align SGP grantmaking at the national level⁹ around following five priorities and strategic approaches:
 - Community-based management of threatened ecosystems and species.
 - Sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and food security.
 - Low-carbon energy access and co-benefits.
 - Local to global coalitions for chemicals and waste management, and
 - Catalyzing sustainable urban solutions.
- (v) Promote social inclusion in SGP operations and grantmaking including: (i) ensuring Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities rights and opportunities to benefit from, engage in and lead SGP grant activities; (ii) supporting women, women’s groups and women led organizations as SGP grant beneficiaries and supporting their voice at all levels including in SGP project design and SGP national governance structures; (iii) promoting youth perspectives in community, national and international discourses and participation in the SGP project design and implementation, and targeting youth, youth groups and youth led organizations as SGP grant beneficiaries.
- (vi) Extend opportunities for local innovations and scaling up through: (i) facilitating broad-based engagement across partnerships and multistakeholder alliances to test new approaches through CSOs; and (ii) scaling up finance for community-based actors including

⁹ SGP Country Programs and any SGP grantmaking may focus on only one or a few of these areas.

micro and small businesses and enterprises to support local innovations and global environmental benefits.

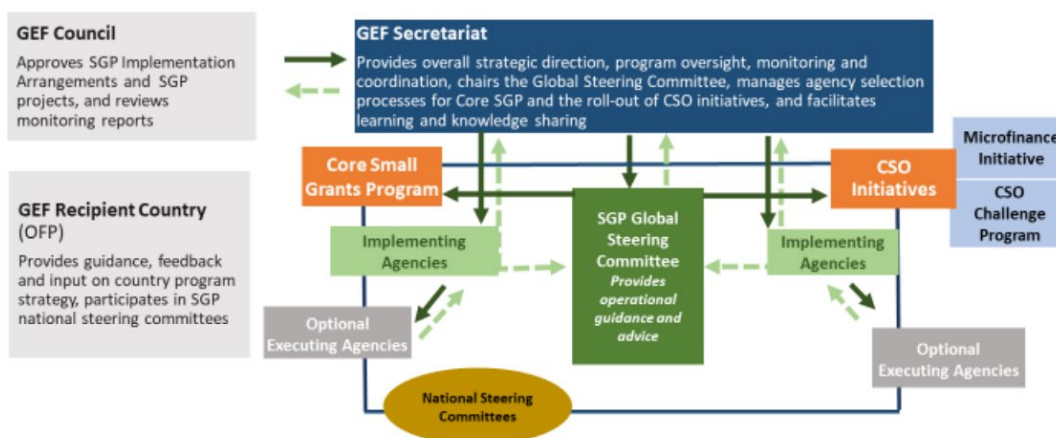
- (vii) Leverage private sector and business-oriented approaches¹⁰ and support multi-stakeholder platforms and dialogues to seek greater scale and impact as well as leveraging private sector entry points at local, national and global levels.
- (viii) Optimize use and impact of SGP resources by, among other things, maximizing the proportion of GEF SGP financing reaching CSOs and local communities.

PART IV: GLOBAL GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

14. In line with the GEF SGP 2.0 Implementation Arrangements, the global governance structure in GEF-8 responds to the new features of SGP 2.0, including the need for a renewed oversight function of the GEF Secretariat to coordinate the introduction of two new SGP Implementing Agencies in GEF-8, the launch of two SGP CSO initiatives, and to ensure program consistency.

15. The structure comprises the necessary renewed constitution and roles of the SGP Global Steering Committee and the important SGP principles around decentralized and country-driven decision making and ownership.

Figure 2: SGP 2.0 Global Governance Arrangements



16. The roles and responsibilities of each entity in the SGP 2.0 global governance arrangements are described below:

- i. GEF Council: Endorses SGP Implementation Arrangements, approves funding for projects covering multiple countries submitted by the SGP Implementing Agencies, receives reports and reviews implementation progress and results.

¹⁰ In alignment with the GEF's Private Sector Engagement Strategy (GEF/C.58/05).

- ii. GEF Secretariat: Provides strategic direction and manages the operationalization of the SGP 2.0 in line with the Implementation Arrangements per Council decisions. The Secretariat chairs the SGP Global Steering Committee, provides the program oversight and monitoring, leads the development of the operational guidelines of the program, and facilitates knowledge sharing and learning.
- iii. SGP Global Steering Committee: Serves as the GEF SGP 2.0 platform for coordination among SGP Implementing Agencies around SGP programming, knowledge sharing, and communication. It is composed of the GEF Secretariat as Chair, SGP Implementing Agencies, and representatives from civil society, indigenous peoples, and other interest groups as needed. It further serves to provide opportunities to discuss and resolve issues arising during SGP implementation, as well as advice on the longer-term vision and strategy of the SGP. Updated Terms of Reference for Global Steering Committee will be developed by the GEF Secretariat and finalized in partnership with Committee members.
- iv. SGP Implementing Agencies: Oversee and manage, at the global level, the implementation of SGP in line with GEF Project Cycle Policy¹¹, including the following:
 - Formulation of the global Project Identification Forms (PIFs) and Project Documents for CEO Endorsement).
 - Sound and effective implementation and oversight of SGP country programs.
 - Reporting, monitoring and evaluation exercises under the guidance of the GEF Secretariat¹².
 - Active participation in the SGP Global Steering Committee.
 - Resource mobilization and leverage of co-financing.
 - Contributing to SGP interagency collaboration coordination and global knowledge: information-sharing, communication and participation in events, activities, studies and other initiatives relevant to the SGP.

PART V: RESOURCES AND COUNTRY ALLOCATION

17. The overall program direction and core funding of the GEF SGP is agreed through the GEF Replenishment meetings for each GEF replenishment phase. In GEF-8, the SGP grantmaking component is financed from the following sources:

- (a) Proportion of the global resource allocation agreed by the participants to the Eighth Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund (“CORE funds”);

¹¹ Note that the SGP Implementing Agency remains fully accountable for the use of GEF resources, in accordance with GEF policies and its Financial Procedures Agreement with the Trustee. These include the Minimum Fiduciary Standards for GEF Agencies and the separation of implementing and executing functions (within GEF Agency or among GEF Agency and grantee).

¹² Including annual Project Implementation Reports (PIR), Mid-Term Reviews (MTRs) and Terminal Evaluations for each SGP project.

(b) countries' allocations under the System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR), and;

(c) co-financing from sources other than the GEF, consistent with the Co-Financing Policy¹³.

18. The GEF-8 replenishment concluded with US\$ 155 million allocated to the GEF SGP Corporate Program.¹⁴ Of these, US\$ 135 million was allocated to SGP Core and US\$ 20 million to the CSO Initiatives, being the CSO Challenge Program and the Microfinance Initiative (US\$ 10 million each, respectively).

19. The \$135M of allocated SGP Core resources are operationalized through two tranches of US\$ 67.5 million each. The first tranche was open to UNDP only, and a subsequent PIF was approved by the GEF Council in June 2023¹⁵. Tranche Two will be opened once the SGP Implementing Agency selection process is completed in line with council decision of the SGP 2.0 Implementation Arrangements.¹⁶ The specific details for the roll out of Tranche Two will be presented by the GEF Secretariat through the SGP Global Steering Committee.

20. Countries can access their Core resources (inclusive of non-grant activities and fees) by submitting a Letter of Interest (LOI), signed by the respective GEF OFP, specifying their selected SGP Implementing Agency¹⁷. The LOI must be included in the corresponding PIF.

21. Countries are encouraged to utilize resources from their country's allocation under the System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR) to top up their SGP grantmaking. SGP Implementing Agencies must provide Letter of Endorsements (LOEs) signed by the OFP in their respective PIF.

PART VI: GLOBAL PROJECT BUDGET STRUCTURE

22. SGP projects are expected to adhere to the SGP 2.0 financing target of allocating at least 72% of SGP funds directly to grantmaking to CSOs/CBOs¹⁸ and follow the non-grant budget items set for in the SGP 2.0 Implementation Arrangements for GEF-8¹⁹.

23. Any SGP project considered for Work Program entry and CEO Endorsement are required to submit a budget table that describes the budget allocation along the key categories of grants to CSOs/CBOs, capacity development and technical assistance, Monitoring and Evaluation, Knowledge Management, PMC, and Agency fees.

¹³ GEF/C.54/10/Rev.01 (Policy on Co-financing) and FI/PL/01 (Guidelines)

¹⁴ GEF/C.62/03 (Summary of Negotiations of the Eighth Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund)

¹⁵ GEF/C.64/04/Rev.01

¹⁶ GEF/C.63/06/Rev.01

¹⁷ Irrespective whether they participated with UNDP in Tranche One.

¹⁸ At the country level, flexibility in the grant ratio may be considered to account for specific country contexts, including SGP operations in countries characterized by fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV) and/or where target groups are accessing grants for the first time.

¹⁹ GEF/C.63/06/Rev.01 (para 20)

24. Details on grant allocation, commitment, and disbursement to CSOs/CBOs for each country are expected to be provided by SGP Implementation Agency at CEO Endorsement/ Approval and during project implementation.

PART VII: COUNTRY-LEVEL GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS AND STRUCTURES

Guiding Principles

25. While the detailed agreement between SGP Implementing Agencies and countries is not specified, at the country level, SGP Implementing Agencies and Executing Agencies are expected to adhere to the following overarching principles and features of the SGP 2.0 strategy and approach, to ensure that the GEF SGP continues to operate in a decentralized and country-driven manner, including:

- (i) Transparent, inclusive and participatory design, implementation, and evaluation of SGP Global Projects and operations at the national level.
- (ii) National ownership in setting SGP country priorities, strategic and programming decisions.
- (iii) Decentralized and independent civil society leadership and majority participation in country program governance mechanisms and SGP grantmaking processes and decision-making.
- (iv) Provision of inclusive and demand-driven grants to CSOs, CBOs, IPLCs, women groups and women led organizations as well as youth, youth groups and youth led organizations.
- (v) Willingness to initiate country programs when requested by countries without a previous SGP.

Country Participation

26. For a country to participate in the GEF SGP they must: i) be a GEF-eligible country, and ii) have ratified at least one of the global environmental conventions including the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC); the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants; and United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

27. The GEF Secretariat and the SGP Implementing Agencies are responsible for communicating information to GEF OFP on GEF SGP financing opportunities.

28. If the eligibility criteria to participate are deemed to have been met, the OFP should notify the corresponding SGP Implementing Agency or the GEF Secretariat on the respective country's interest in participating in the Program. For a country to access SGP core resources and to be officially considered for inclusion in Tranche Two, it should present LOIs as described under "Resources and Country allocation" (see para 20-21).

Country level implementation arrangements

29. The SGP Implementing Agency will decide on the most appropriate strategic, organizational and operational approach when designing and implementing their respective Global PIF, building on their experience, knowhow, managerial and budgetary requirements and capacities. At the country program level, each SGP Implementing Agency is responsible for:

- (i) Supporting SGP country programs to facilitate a demand-driven community-based grantmaking process and selection.
- (ii) Providing oversight and sound management of grants, monitoring and evaluation, knowledge management and sharing, communications and reporting.
- (iii) Designating an appropriate management structure through either/or: i) a dedicated in-country national project management team, where a SGP country program office may be physically located within or outside the SGP implementing agency's premises; ii) a regional office, where the implementing agency provides oversight and support to one or more countries; and/or through a iii) executing agency that may be a recognized national NGO, CSO, environmental trust fund, or academic institution or equivalent.
- (iv) Setting recruitment, contractual arrangements and definition of the roles and responsibilities of their dedicated SGP program's management team.
- (v) Acting as the key conduit of interaction with the host government, and in developing links with other in-country projects and programs and by supporting scaling up and resource mobilization efforts.
- (vi) In the event of a country choosing to work with two SGP implementing agencies in Tranche Two, both agencies will be expected to collaborate closely in the implementation of the SGP country program. This eventuality, should it occur, would be further discussed as part of the development of the PIFs for Tranche Two and in the Global Steering Committee.

Executing Agencies

30. SGP Implementing Agencies, where appropriate, are encouraged to work with national Executing Agencies, ideally to be identified among local NGOs and or CSOs. Where local capacity constraints do not allow for national executing agencies to be identified, the SGP Implementing Agencies can work with an international executing agency or consider other executing agency arrangements in line with GEF Project and Program Cycle Guidelines²⁰. Considerations for selection of a local Executing Agency include:

- a) National stature and credibility.
- b) Proven track record with working with other CSOs, including participation in environment/development networks.

²⁰ GEF/C.59/Inf.03

- c) Demonstrated compatibility with the SGP grant-making functions and principles and preferably experience with the GEF and SGP Implementing Agency's procedures.
- d) Significant experience in community-based, participatory environmental and developmental work.
- e) Substantial involvement and technical expertise in environmental issues related to the GEF and the Rio conventions.
- f) Proven program management and administrative capacity with systems in place.

SGP Country Program Planning and Strategy

31. SGP Implementing Agencies and Executing Agencies are expected, in close consultation with the GEF OFP and local partners to formulate an SGP country program strategy or equivalent landscape/seascape planning tool to operationalize SGP 2.0 in GEF-8. ²¹ The process for the identification and formulation of the country program strategy should be undertaken in an inclusive, transparent, and consultative manner, including with the proactive participation of local representatives of rights holders, indigenous peoples, local communities, civil society organizations and groups, women and youth leaders, groups and associations, as well as other marginalized or vulnerable groups and individuals. SGP Implementing Agencies should ensure:

- (i) Consistency of the SGP grant-making strategy with the GEF-8 Programming Directions, policy frameworks and specific focal area strategies.
- (ii) Congruency of grantmaking and other activities at the country level with the global SGP Project Document.
- (iii) Alignment with the strategic planning frameworks associated with the relevant MEAs and national policies, plans and strategies; environmental and social safeguards, risk management, as well as coordination with the GEF and other major partnerships and programs, where relevant.

Country-level governance structures

32. Building on past good practices, the SGP 2.0 country level governance structure should deliver demand-driven community-based grantmaking and adhere to principles of independent civil society leadership and independence in its grantmaking. As such, country-level governance structures, steering committees or equivalent mechanisms should, among other aspects:

- (i) Safeguard a non-governmental majority membership of ²² representatives from rights-holders, CSOs, CBOs, Indigenous Peoples, and Local Communities, Women and Youth groups and organizations, private sector and academia.

²¹ While it is expected that there may be some continuing overlaps in operational phases in a few SGP participating countries, it is encouraged that this planning process is aligned to the GEF replenishment phases moving forward.

²² These representatives should not have a direct vested interest in the proposed initiatives.

- (ii) Encourage GEF OFF (or their designated representatives) participation, and provisions for inclusion of GEF SGP Implementing Agencies and/or executing entities.
- (iii) Guide the definition of the SGP strategy, whilst ensuring an appropriate balance between civil society grantee needs, and the alignment with national environmental and development priorities and policies; and
- (iv) Ensure that the selection and approval of strategically targeted grants adhere to the principles of objectivity, transparency, responsiveness, and inclusivity.

33. In line the above, each SGP Implementing Agency is responsible for designing the most appropriate structure and organization for this purpose, including terms of references, membership criteria, gender and age balance, cultural and context specifications and periodicity.

PART VIII: GRANT ADMINISTRATION

34. The GEF SGP grants support community-based innovation, capacity development, and empowerment of indigenous peoples, women, and youth in support of the GEF’s mandate to deliver GEBs, supporting local actions and financing targeted grants conceived and executed by CSO, CBO and IPLCs critical to conserving and restoring the environment.

35. SGP community grantmaking should be demand-driven and awarded to eligible CSOs and CBOs, on a competitive basis, through a call for proposals or similar mechanism. Eligible grantees include national and local NGOs and CSO, CBOs and women, youth, Indigenous Peoples groups and associations, as well as primary producers’ organizations and associations. They might also include organizations such as not-for-profit unions and cooperatives.

Small Grants

36. Each agency is expected to establish their own process and guidelines with respect to grant administration, implementation, and duration, taking into consideration the following:

- i) Applying a pragmatic approach to defining feasible and operable lower thresholds for grants.
- ii) Adhering to a maximum grant amount of US\$75,000, while recognizing the spirit of GEF SGP to provide opportunities for smaller local associations and organizations with limited capacity and absorption ability.
- iii) Ensuring that any grantee does not concurrently implement more than one grant during a GEF Operational Phase.
- iv) Aligning grantmaking thematically with the GEF-8 Programming Directions and SGP 2.0’s five strategic priorities.

- v) Promoting SGP 2.0 cross-cutting strategic priorities in grant selection and dedicate a significant proportion to indigenous peoples and local communities, women and girls, youth and vulnerable or marginalized groups.
- vi) Setting time boundaries around the SGP grants, i.e., a duration of one to two years depending on their scope.
- vii) Supporting multi-stakeholder platforms and dialogues to generate greater scale and impact, through demonstration, capacity-building, network building, awareness raising, advocacy, public policy influence and the dissemination of lessons learned.
- viii) Leveraging, when possible, business-oriented approaches and strengthening dialogues and partnerships with the private sector and exploring potential opportunities for finance and technical support that can help scale up SGP innovations.

Larger Strategic Grants

37. Aside from regular small grants, under special circumstances, larger grants for scaling-up of country-level activities and results, and/or transboundary, regional or international activities may be considered as an option for financing CSO and CBO grantee initiatives. These will adhere to the same grant ratio and ceiling for non-grant activities (see para 20) and align with the same SGP 2.0 thematic and cross-cutting priorities.

38. These grants would allow a maximum grant amount of US\$150,000 per CSO or CBO. SGP Implementing Agencies are encouraged to limit grants awarded under this modality to 20% of the total grant portfolio amount per country, per operational phase.

39. Thematically, the larger strategic grant can be considered for:

- (i) Replication and scaling up of tested approaches and on-going successful projects, including innovative technological and technical results, capacity building, network building, south-south exchanges, awareness raising, advocacy and public policy influence at local, national and global levels.
- (ii) Consolidation of successful results and best practices across landscapes and seascapes involving several CSO/CBOs.

PART IX: MONITORING & EVALUATION AND REPORTING

40. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting of global SGP projects follow the GEF Monitoring Policy²³ which sets out the guiding principles and mandatory requirements for monitoring across the GEF Partnership and GEF financed projects and programs. This Policy aims to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency, accountability, and transparency of the GEF through the systematic collection, analysis, and application of data, information, and lessons learned on the GEF's Results

²³ Policy: GEF/ME/PL/03

and performance. It also complements the Evaluation Policy²⁴ prepared by the GEF Independent Evaluation Office. Consistent with the above, SGP Implementing Agencies should adhere to the following monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements:

Project Identification Forms (PIF)

41. Project Identification Forms should be submitted for global Work Program entry, in which SGP Implementing Agencies provide indicative expected results across applicable Core Indicators and Sub-Indicators.

CEO Endorsement/Approval

42. At the CEO Endorsement/Approval stage, SGP Implementing Agencies will provide the following:

- a) Expected Results across applicable Core Indicators and Sub-Indicators, as well as with the additional indicators as defined in the SGP 2.0 Results framework (see Annex 1) with any adjustments from Work Program entry of a Full-Sized Project.
- b) A Project Results Framework or equivalent, including Indicators, baselines, and targets.
- c) A Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, including a timeline of planned Monitoring and Evaluation Activities, expected dates of submission of Terminal Evaluations and Mid-Term Reviews, a budget, roles and responsibilities, as well as arrangements for Stakeholder Engagement and information disclosure consistent with the minimum requirements specified in the Evaluation Policy.

43. During implementation, SGP Implementing Agencies are expected to oversee the implementation of the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan presented at CEO Endorsement/Approval and report annually to the Secretariat on the status of the Project through the statutory Project Implementation Reports, described as following:

Project Implementation Reports (PIR)

44. During project implementation, SGP Implementing Agencies will submit to the Secretariat annual Project Implementation Reports for each global SGP project, including information on implementation and disbursement progress. The PIR will provide the list of organizations to which grants were awarded, grant amounts, as well as the geographic locations of grant activities. This will allow geo-mapping of SGP initiatives by country, and through which type of organizations.

45. From the onset of GEF-8, this reporting framework also applies to each SGP financing tranche (or projects) funded under resources from GEF cycles earlier than GEF-8, disaggregated by Core and STAR financing.

46. Agencies complete the first PIR no later than 75 calendar days after the end of the first full fiscal year (July 1–June 30) of implementation, and subsequent reports no later than 75 calendar days after the end of each fiscal year during which the SGP Project is under implementation.

²⁴ GEF/ME/C.56/02

Mid Term Reviews and Terminal Evaluations

47. Mid-Term reviews will be submitted for each SGP project at mid-term and Terminal Evaluations towards project closure. The SGP Implementing Agency ensures that the Small Grants Programme is independently evaluated in each operational phase. The Agency makes such Evaluations publicly available.

48. The Secretariat makes available on the GEF website all Project Implementation Reports, Mid-Term Reviews, and Terminal Evaluations that are not restricted from public access in accordance with the applicable policy on information disclosure. Each SGP Implementing Agency may develop its own Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting guidelines to be applied at the national country program level.

49. Consistent with the GEF Policy on Stakeholder Engagement, SGP Implementing Agencies are expected to engage civil society grantees in M&E and reporting activities.

Results Framework

50. A common SGP 2.0 results framework, built around the GEF-8 Results Measurement Framework (RMF) and the lessons learned from previous operational phases has been developed to strengthen reporting on results for the SGP 2.0 under GEF-8. This Framework has been designed to better capture and reflect the broad spectrum of environmental, social, and economic benefits that the program generates.

51. The standard GEF Core Indicators together with the additional SGP-specific Indicators developed for GEF-8 are presented in Annex 1. To facilitate the standardization and systemization of reporting on progress and results, all SGP Implementing Agencies are:

- i) Encouraged to report across the range of GEF RMF Core Indicators that are best aligned with and correspond to their global Project.
- ii) Required to report on, as a minimum, GEF-8 RMF Core Indicators numbers 3, 4 and 11. Indicator #5 “Area of marine habitat under improved practices to benefit biodiversity” is optional according to the scope of the project, but strongly encouraged where relevant.
- iii) Report on SGP additional indicators numbers 12, 13 and 14. Reporting on Indicator 15 is optional yet encouraged where relevant.

PART X: KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND LEARNING

52. Knowledge Sharing and Learning in SGP project are consistent with the GEF Strategy for Knowledge Management and Learning²⁵. SGP 2.0 will place continued emphasis on knowledge sharing and learning, as a dynamic and evolving process, and require all SGP Implementing Agencies to actively contribute to knowledge and learning activities, including aggregating lessons learned in reporting. In collaboration with the GEF Secretariat, the SGP Implementing Agencies are expected to contribute to enhancing the quality and impact of the GEF’s investments by identifying areas for increasing awareness, knowledge, capacity and collaboration among

²⁵ GEF/C64/07

grantees, decision makers and the further scaling-up of innovative solutions through funded initiatives. This will be achieved through, among others:

- i) Project and program monitoring, learning and adapting/adjusting projects during project implementation for higher results.
- ii) Multistakeholder platforms to exchange knowledge, understand incentives and pathways to behavioral change that will drive systems change, and facilitate collaboration and scale up.
- iii) Exchange, reflection and learning around challenges, limitations, and failures along with good practice, success stories, innovative approaches and opportunities through South-South Exchanges.
- iv) Capacity Building around key technical areas, including policy coherence and practical tools.
- v) Production of knowledge sharing and learning products, and facilitation of events and workshops, through CSO/CBO knowledge exchange fairs and grantee peer-to-peer learning opportunities at the country landscape and seascape level.

PART XI: COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

53. Ensuring that the full breadth and impact of GEF-funded SGP 2.0 activity is visible and understood is critically important to maintaining and accelerating international momentum in support of goals related to biodiversity loss, climate change, pollution, and strains on land and ocean health. It is equally important that all GEF-funded activities are understood as responses to multiple international agreements on resource mobilization in the context of the implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements. Therefore, effective communication on GEF SGP 2.0 priority areas and initiatives has an important role in both focusing attention on these issues and publicizing effective approaches for further development, replication and scaling up.

54. Communication and visibility will be guided by and be consistent with GEF's Communication and Visibility Policy²⁶ and applied in conjunction with the updated Brand Guidelines²⁷ accompanying the GEF's new logo, which covers how and when all recipients of GEF funding shall describe the GEF's role and contribution to project and program outcomes. This includes how the GEF logo shall be used in publications, documents, web pages, in social media, or in other public-facing media. Likewise, all communication and knowledge materials developed by the SGP, whether at the country program level or the global level, must adhere to the SGP's communication and visibility guidelines currently under development.

55. At the global level, the GEF Secretariat will provide oversight on communication and visibility issues to the SGP Implementing Agencies. At the country-level, communication about GEF SGP 2.0 funded grants should include information about results, impact, and contributions to

²⁶ GEF/C.64/11, Improving the Visibility of the GEF: New Communication and Visibility Policy

²⁷ <https://www.thegef.org/newsroom/publications/brand-guidelines>

return on investment, where possible, and human-centered storytelling is encouraged to show the impact of GEF SGP-funded activities at the individual level.

Annex 1: SGP 2.0 Results Framework

GEF-8 RESULTS INDICATORS FOR THE SGP 2.0

SGP implementing agencies are required to indicate the level of expected results for indicators, shaded in yellow, and related sub-indicators. These Indicators will track progress on: Land and ecosystems under restoration, landscapes under improved practices to benefit biodiversity, and direct beneficiaries. Indicators 5 (marine habitat²⁸), 6 and 15, marked in green, are encouraged yet considered to be optional.

1. Agencies may also choose to track any other GEF-8 RMF Indicators according to the thematic priorities presented in project documents. Please refer to the GEF-8 RMF Guidelines (GEF/C.62/Inf.12/Rev.01).
2. Additionally, new SGP specific Indicators have been included.

Indicator code	Data entry by SGP Implementing Agency	Indicator name	Correlation with SGP 2.0 Objective and Priorities
3		Area of land and ecosystems under restoration	SGP Thematic Priority 1: Community-based management of threatened ecosystems and species/ SGP Thematic Priority 2: Sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and food security/ (SGP Thematic Priority 5: Catalyzing sustainable urban solutions)
3.1		Area of degraded agricultural lands under restoration	SGP Thematic Priority 2: Sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and food security
3.2		Area of forest and forest land under restoration	SGP Thematic Priority 1: Community-based management of threatened ecosystems and species/ (SGP Thematic Priority 5: Catalyzing sustainable urban solutions)
3.3		Area of natural grass and woodlands under restoration	
3.4		Area of wetlands (including estuaries, mangroves) under restoration	

²⁸ Marine habitat under improved practices is optional according to the scope of the project, but strongly encouraged where relevant.

4		Area of landscapes under improved practices (excluding protected areas)	
4.1		Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity	
4.2		Area of landscapes under third-party certification incorporating biodiversity considerations	
4.3		Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems	SGP Thematic Priority 1: Community-based management of threatened ecosystems and species/ SGP Thematic Priority 2: Sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and food security
4.4		Area of High Conservation Value or other forest loss avoided	SGP Thematic Priority 1: Community-based management of threatened ecosystems and species
4.5		Terrestrial OECMs supported	
5		Area of marine habitat under improved practices to benefit biodiversity	
5.1		Fisheries under third-party certification incorporating biodiversity considerations	SGP Thematic Priority 1: Community-based management of threatened ecosystems and species/ SGP Thematic Priority 2: Sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and food security
5.2		Large Marine Ecosystems with reduced pollution and hypoxia	
6		Greenhouse gas emissions mitigated	
6.1		Greenhouse gas emissions mitigated in the AFOLU sector	
6.2		Greenhouse gas emissions mitigated outside of the AFOLU sector	SGP Priority Theme 3: Low-carbon energy access and co-benefits
6.5		Carbon sequestered or emissions avoided in the AFOLU sector (Direct)	
6.6		Carbon sequestered or emissions avoided in the AFOLU sector (Indirect)	
6.7		Emissions avoided outside AFOLU sector (Direct)	
6.8		Emissions avoided outside AFOLU sector (Indirect)	
11		People benefiting from GEF-financed investments	SGP 2.0 Objective: Catalyze and mobilize civil society actors and local actions needed to address major drivers
11.1		Female	

11.2		Male	of environmental degradation and help deliver multiple benefits across the GEF's mandated thematic dimensions, while promoting sustainable development and improved livelihoods
Indicator code	Data entry by SGP Implementing Agency	SGP 2.0 Indicator name	Correlation with SGP 2.0 Objective and Thematic and cross-cutting Priorities
12		Number of grants directly targeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> women's or women-led groups and/or organizations²⁹. youth or youth-led groups and/or organizations³⁰. indigenous peoples' and/or organizations³¹ 	
13		Amount of grant funding of total grant portfolio accessed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> women's or women-led groups and/or organizations. youth or youth-led groups and/or organizations. indigenous peoples' groups and/or organizations 	

²⁹ Women's or women-led groups and/or organizations are defined as organizations with a mandate and/or mission that is governed/directed by women or whose leadership is principally made up of women (demonstrated by 50 per cent or more occupying senior leadership positions). The same concept is adapted and applied to youth-led and indigenous peoples' groups and/or organizations. Organizations are considered to be formally constituted and registered, whereas groups are usually informal, often incipient by nature.

³⁰ For reporting purposes, 'youth' is defined as those persons between the ages of 15 and 35 years.

³¹ Please note that there may be some overlap between these groupings, for example, indigenous women's organizations.

14		Direct beneficiaries with diversified, strengthened livelihoods and/or sources of income ³² : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total • Men • Women 	Project objective/ capacity development/livelihoods
15		Number of grants with targeted support for urban solutions and outcomes.	

³² This indicator measures the number of men and women who have benefitted through improvements or enhancements to their livelihood options and/or income-generating activities, be they in the formal or informal sector, derived from the direct SGP project investment and as measured at the time of reporting. Direct beneficiaries are defined as all individuals receiving targeted support from a given project. Targeted support includes individuals who can be identified as receiving direct support or assistance, can be counted individually and are aware they are receiving support in some sort and/or use the specific resources. This implies a high degree of attribution to the project.