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GEF SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME 2.0
POSITION PAPER ON IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS FOR GEF-8

ACRONYMS

CBO	Community-based Organization
CSO	Civil Society Organization
GEB	Global Environmental Benefits
IPLC	Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MFI	Micro Finance Institutions
MSME	Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises
PIR	Project Implementation Report
PMC	Project Management Cost
SGP	Small Grants Programme
STAR	System for Transparent Allocation of Resources

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I. PURPOSE

1. This document sets out a draft framework of implementation arrangements for the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) in GEF-8, in line with the renewed ambition, size and objectives for SGP endorsed by GEF-8 Replenishment Participants and as informed by evaluative evidence and lessons learned¹. Further to the SGP Strategy of the GEF-8 Programming Directions,² this paper outlines further prospective details on the renewed financing model, governance and operational structure of the Program as well as other cost efficiency and reporting measures. It also provides a suggested framework on the implementation arrangements for the two new and complementary CSO Initiatives: the Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprise Pilot and the CSO Challenge Program.

2. As the key decision points and features of the Small Grants Program are still under consideration and subject to further consultation with key stakeholders, additional and more definitive details will be outlined in a decision paper to the 63rd Council in December 2022. This forthcoming paper is under development by the GEF Secretariat in close consultation with the SGP Implementing Agencies and other relevant stakeholders. The development of an SGP Long-Term Vision that is currently underway is also expected to inform and enrich the implementation of SGP 2.0, helping both to shape the role of small grants in GEF-9 and to further deepen the GEF's engagement with civil society in its core programming in the future.

II. INTRODUCTION

3. The GEF-8 Replenishment strategies highlight the centrality of local innovation and civil society actions and coalitions in meeting global environmental goals. The GEF has been an active supporter of civil society through its core programs and projects implemented by GEF Agencies since its inception. In addition to these core investments, a dedicated GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) provides specific targeted support.

4. The SGP is the GEF Corporate Program providing financial, technical and capacity building support to civil society organizations (CSOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs), complementing other core investments to CSOs and CBOs made in the course of GEF investments across the GEF project and program portfolio. The SGP is the only GEF-wide, dedicated, demand-driven grant mechanism for local actions and support to CSO, CBOs, indigenous peoples and local communities, and marginalized groups.

5. Participants in the GEF-8 Replenishment confirmed that civil society makes a vital contribution to all areas of sustainable development, that an important characteristic of a well-functioning state is synergy between government, civil society and the private sector, and that local actions conceived and executed by civil society organizations (CSOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) provide bottom-up approaches critical to conserving and restoring the environment. Delivering on the GEF ambition to contribute to a green and blue recovery and a healthier, more productive and resilient planet necessitates a groundbreaking effort from

¹ GEF/E/C.60/01, Joint Evaluation of the GEF Small Grants Programme (2021).

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

the GEF to maximize engagement of non-state actors and strategically engage new organizations and partners at the global and local levels.

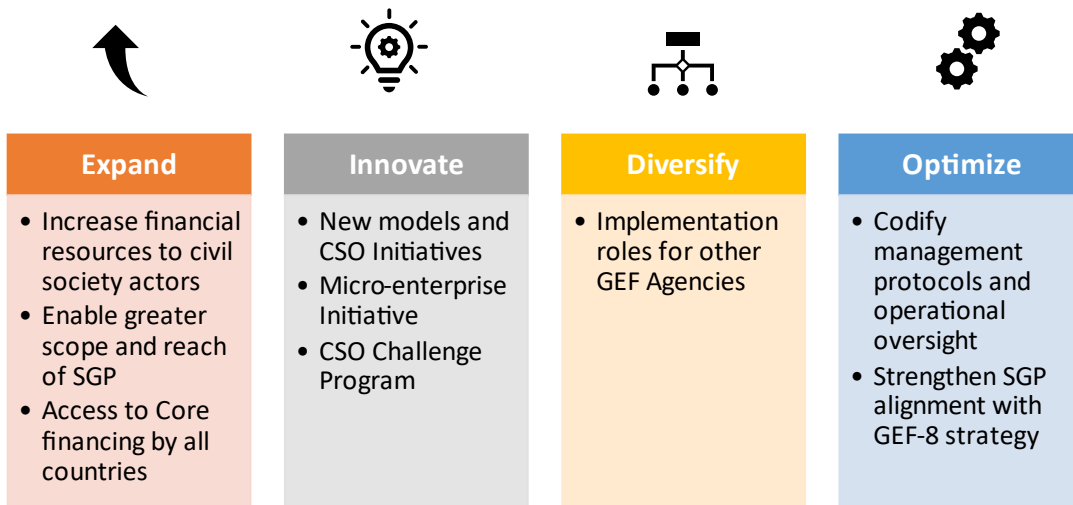
6. SGP 2.0 responds to this new context of civil society roles and the renewed opportunities for the GEF to engage with civil society to support the delivery of the GEF-8 Strategy. The GEF-8 Replenishment confirmed the objective for SGP 2.0 to: *“Catalyze and mobilize civil society actors and local actions 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”*.

7. The GEF-8 Replenishment process concluded that SGP should strengthen its alignment with the GEF-8 strategy and focal area priorities, support delivery of the Integrated Programs, enhance its already important role in supporting and delivering on Multilateral Environmental Agreement (MEA) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) commitments, extend SGP implementation roles to other GEF Agencies, and explore new partnerships. The GEF-8 Replenishment supported the strategic priorities to be strengthened and further developed under SGP 2.0: i) community-based management of threatened ecosystems and species, ii) sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and food security, iii) low-carbon energy access and co-benefits, iv) local to global coalitions for chemicals and waste management, and v) catalyzing sustainable urban solutions. The SGP further enhances approaches to strengthen social inclusion and support decision-making of women, youth and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLC).

KEY FEATURES OF THE SGP 2.0 MODEL

8. The SGP 2.0 builds on the solid foundation already established by UNDP, and acts on IEO recommendations for further enhancement. It incorporates the longstanding history of successful community-based grant-making and capitalizes on the products and lessons learned developed over 30 years of SGP implementation. SGP 2.0 also takes into account the changing socio-political context for civil society organizations and actors, recognizing their increasing ability to drive the conversation, set higher environmental goals, hold public and private institutions accountable, and deliver local solutions to global issues. Finally, SGP 2.0 reflects that Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) are placing renewed importance on the needed roles of civil society in delivering national environmental goals and MEA objectives.

Figure 1: The 4 pillars of SGP 2.0



9. The key features of SGP 2.0 reflect the 4 pillars of expansion, innovation, diversification, and optimization by:

- Using up to 3 GEF Agencies to implement (i.e., supervise, oversee) SGP financing
- Eliminating the SGP Upgrading Policy and expand the use of SGP Core resources to all GEF eligible countries
- Establishing 2 new competitive CSO Initiatives: a Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise Pilot and a CSO Challenge Program to provide complementary models and broaden engagement with micro-enterprises, youth and women-led civil society organizations. It is expected the MSME Pilot will focus support to micro-enterprises, through the provision of microfinance.
- Maximizing the amount of SGP financing flowing to CSOs and CBOs, either as executing entities or recipients/beneficiaries.
- Encouraging recipient countries to allocate STAR resources to SGP activities, either as stand-alone programs or to complement other GEF projects and programs.
- Enhanced monitoring and financial reporting.
- Increased role of the GEF Secretariat in strategic directions and reporting.

10. The activities of SGP along these 4 pillars in GEF-8 serve to increase *opportunities for local innovations and scaling up* through: (i) facilitating broad-based engagement across partnerships and multi-stakeholder alliances to test new approaches through CSOs; (ii) scaling up finance for community-based actors including micro and small businesses and enterprises to

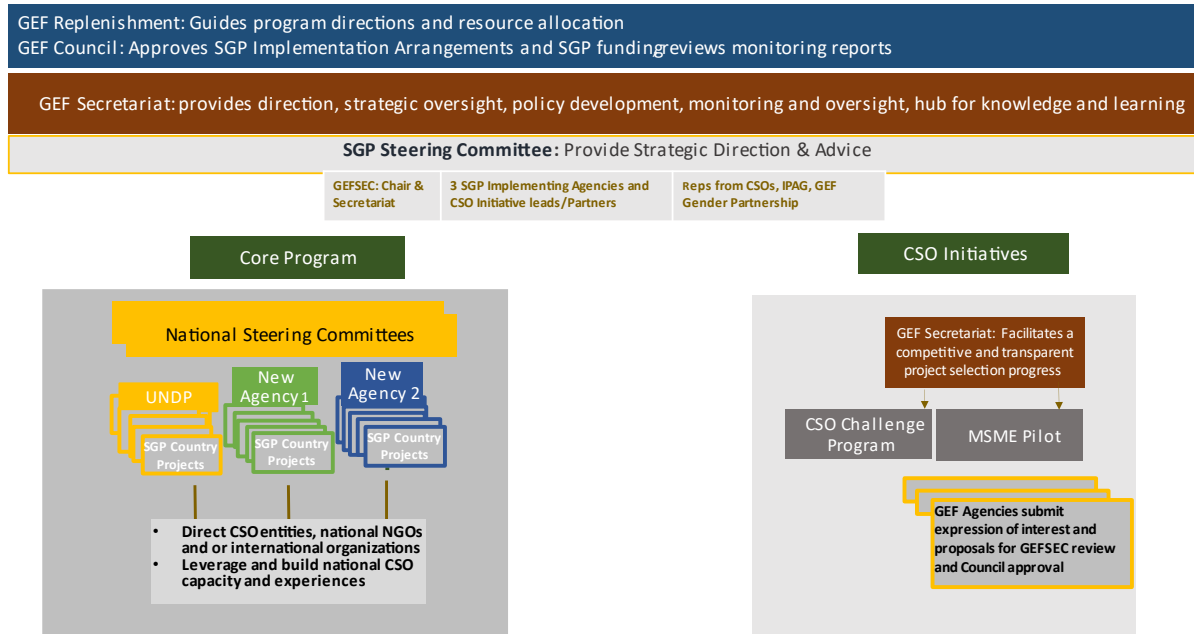
support local innovations and global environmental benefits; and (iii) identifying and leveraging previous successful SGP grants to be scaled up in GEF-8 to support the delivery of the GEF-8 Strategy, Programming Directions and or Integrated Programs.

11. The roll-out of new SPG features will build on existing, established SGP governance and operational structures. These changes will be gradually introduced, by employing adaptive management during GEF-8, in close consultation and collaboration with key partners and stakeholders. Implementation of these features will be carefully managed by the GEF Secretariat and SGP Implementing Agencies to avoid major disruptions to the ongoing GEF-7 SGP operation, and avoid gaps in SGP operation between GEF-7 and GEF-8.

IV. GOVERNANCE MODEL

12. The SGP 2.0 governance structure comprises the SGP Steering Committee, GEF Secretariat, SGP Implementing Agencies, SGP Executing Entities, National Steering Committees, Recipient Governments and the CSO Initiative Leads/Partners as outlined in Figure 2, with the GEF Council in an oversight role. This is similar to the governance of SGP prior to GEF-8 and incorporates two new developments: i) elements relating to additional SGP Implementing Agencies, and ii) an increased role of the GEF Secretariat in the Steering Committee and overall coordination and reporting.

Figure 2: SGP 2.0- Governance Model



13. The prospective roles and responsibilities of each entity in the SGP 2.0 governance structure are described below:

GEF Council: Defines the framework for resource use, endorses Implementation Arrangements, approves funding for projects covering multiple countries submitted by GEF Agencies and exerts oversight on implementation progress and results.

SGP Steering Committee: The principal function of the SGP Steering Committee is to provide periodic strategic guidance for SGP within the parameters established by the GEF Council³. The Committee develops and approves its Terms of Reference, with support from the GEF Secretariat. Members of the SGP Steering Committee include: the GEF Secretariat, SGP Implementing Agencies and CSO representatives. The GEF Secretariat chairs the SGP Steering Committee.

GEF Secretariat: The GEF Secretariat ensures an effective roll-out of SGP activities along these Implementation Arrangements and as per Council decisions, and prepares corresponding Guidelines with additional detail as needed. The Secretariat manages calls for expression of interest among GEF Agencies to serve as an SGP Implementing Agency and for the CSO Initiatives. It also engages with countries to facilitate countries' access to SGP resources and selection of Implementing Agencies, and coordinates production of a yearly progress report on SGP 2.0 for Council.

SGP Implementing Agencies: UNDP and up to 2 additional GEF Agencies are selected to implement and supervise the SGP Core Program. SGP Implementing Agencies coordinate and develop program framework and project proposals in line with the GEF-8 Programming Directions, guidance from the Steering Committee, and these Implementation Arrangements. They assume fiduciary responsibility⁴ and oversee the delivery of SGP operations. They are responsible for regular reporting on operational and financial issues. SGP Implementing Agencies participate in the SGP Steering Committee and contribute to SGP knowledge and learning activities. SGP Implementing Agencies coordinate among themselves and develop projects and programs in accordance with National Steering Committee guidance. They also contribute to SGP global knowledge and coordination to support information sharing, communication, program reporting coherence as well as technical assistance as needed, building on lessons learned under the previous phases of SGP. They provide inputs to the long-term SGP visioning exercise.

SGP Executing Entities: SGP Implementing Agencies may use SGP Executing Entities, but it is not a requirement. SGP Executing Entities receive funds from SGP Implementing Agencies and execute SGP projects and programs in accordance with respective SGP Implementing Agency policy and procedure and the terms of financing and other agreements among them. They are accountable to SGP Implementing Agencies and manage project budgets in accordance with SGP Implementing Agency

³ Including guidance from GEF-8 Replenishment

⁴ Minimum Fiduciary Standards for GEF Agencies

requirements. In cases where SGP Executing Entities are used, engaging national SGP Executing Entities is strongly encouraged, including civil society organizations, , insofar as the entity meets the SGP Implementing Agencies' fiduciary and other standards. Entities that are CSOs/CBOs/NGOs can be awarded grant resources and assume SGP Executing Entity responsibilities. SGP Implementing Agencies choose Executing Entities in accordance with their requirements, policies and procedures.

National Steering Committees: A National Steering Committee provides overall guidance for the use of SGP resources in the country, makes recommendations to the Recipient Country Government with respect to the SGP Implementing Agency in the country, and approves SGP grants to CSOs and CBOs along GEF and country priorities. Non-government members comprise the majority of its decision-making membership; it is composed of individual members from CSOs, CBOs, academia, private sector, government, and the SGP Implementing Agency(ies). In instances where a National Steering Committee already exists and the SGP Implementing Agency from previous SGP phases continues to implement ongoing projects, it continues to be a member of the Committee until such projects are financially closed.

Recipient Country Governments: SGP implementation is a multi-stakeholder country-driven process, where the National Steering Committee selects the SGP Implementing Agency with endorsement by the Recipient Country Government, i.e. GEF Political or Operational Focal Point. The Government may be represented in the National Steering Committee, provide guidance on the use of SGP grants consistent with GEF and country priorities, and endorse the use of additional STAR resources.

V. OPERATIONAL STRUCTURE

14. The operational framework to engage countries in the SGP 2.0 and implement projects follows each SGP Implementing Agency's respective established approaches, policies and procedures for work with CSOs and CBOs within the context of civil society capacity building, network formation and empowerment. SGP Implementing Agencies will collaborate with each other and may choose to adapt existing good practices, processes and procedures. SGP will be implemented such as to ensure effective implementation of SGP resources in a way that promotes country ownership. The form of agreement between SGP Implementing Entities and countries is not prescribed, however the following overarching principles apply to the operational structure and arrangement at the country level:

Transparency. Processes and procedures allowing SGP Implementing Agencies to operate in countries are clearly and transparently described.

Competition. Countries can access SGP core resources from one of three SGP Implementing Agencies, as recommended by the National Steering Committee, which has full freedom in selecting the relevant SGP Implementing Agency they deem as best able to support their ambitions for SGP.

Inclusiveness. A wide range of stakeholders participates in SGP and the allocation of resources, including through the National Steering Committee.

Arm’s length. As a mechanism to provide grants to CSOs and CBOs, SGP operates at the country level through a multi-stakeholder SGP National Steering Committee, which includes the GEF Operational Focal Point (OFP), or other representative chosen by the government. The representative acts at arm’s length, respecting the consensual nature of the Steering Committee decisions, including with respect to the utilization of additional STAR resources.

Figure 3: Traditional SGP Operational Structure (to end-of-GEF-7 Phase)

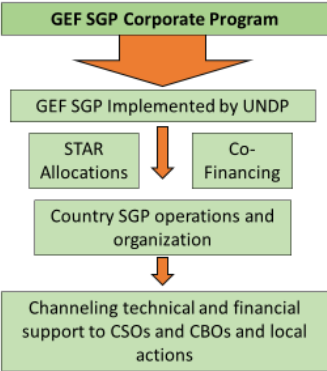
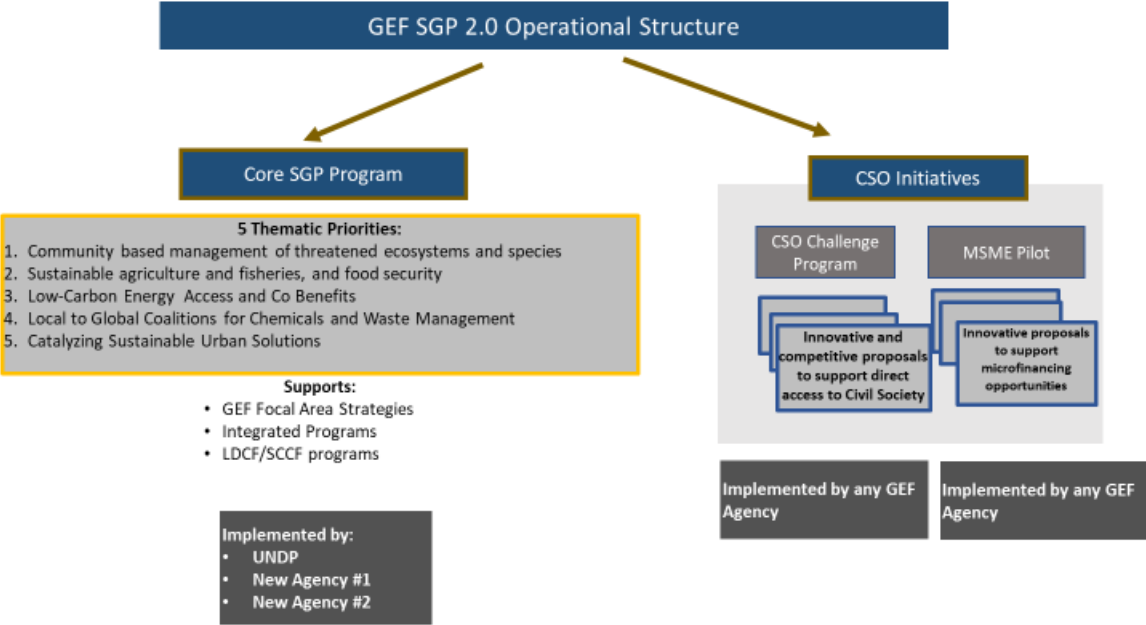


Figure 4: New GEF-8 SGP 2.0 Operational Structure



VI. AGENCY SELECTION

15. Selection of the SGP Implementing Agencies will be led by the GEF Secretariat and will follow the below steps:

- (i) The GEF Secretariat selects through a call of expressions of interest up to two new Agencies from the existing cohort of 18 GEF Agencies to serve as SGP Implementing Agencies based on the following criteria to be defined further:
 - Demonstrated commitment and experience to supporting CSOs, through community-based grantmaking and capacity-building initiatives
 - Proven experience working with civil society organizations, such as community groups, women-led organizations, youth groups, non-governmental organizations, Indigenous Peoples' groups, charitable organizations and faith-based organizations.
 - Established policy and programming expertise and experiences to promote social inclusion including on gender equality, youth engagement and or support to Indigenous Peoples
 - Ability to operate in multiple countries
- (ii) All 18 GEF Agencies are invited to express interest in one of the additional 2 SGP Implementing Agency roles, demonstrating their capability to carry out the responsibilities.⁵

16. Following the conclusion of the SGP Implementing Agency selection process facilitated by the Secretariat, the selected SGP Implementing Agencies will coordinate and engage with countries to develop the GEF funding proposals. SGP Implementing Agencies process SGP projects covering multiple countries for core financing and committed STAR funding. Coordination among the three SGP Implemented Agencies is important in developing the program framework and needed coordination mechanism.

17. Agency selection and funding for the CSO Initiatives (Challenge Program, Micro-enterprise Program) is processed separately, as described below.

VII. RESOURCE ALLOCATION

18. 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");
- (b) countries' allocations under the System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR); and

⁵ It is expected that new Agencies will be in place by early 2023, i.e. it is expected to take approximately four to six months to select two new Agencies among the current cohort of GEF Agencies.

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

19. In GEF-8, SGP resources cover both SGP grantmaking and the two new CSO Initiatives. A Project Preparation Grant may be requested by each SGP Implementing Agency, in respect of the aggregate SGP portfolio of each Agency.

20. SGP Core country allocations are communicated to countries at the onset of GEF-8 and derived along the following parameters, to be further elaborated as needed in the forthcoming decision paper:

- (i) Each country eligible for GEF resources can access SGP Core resources.
- (ii) SGP Core resources are allocated equally, to promote equity. This may also take into consideration opportunities to incentivize countries to allocate STAR resources.
- (iii) In instances where a country may not have committed the allocated Core SGP resources near the end of the GEF-8 cycle, the GEF Secretariat may explore the possibility of reallocating resources for SGP programming in other countries.
- (iv) GEF countries are encouraged to utilize resources from their country's allocation under the System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR) to allocate additional resources to SGP in their countries.⁶
- (v) Project Identification Forms submitted for Council approval and covering multiple countries should be inclusive of both Core and STAR resources, with financing amounts listed, by country, in the documents.

VII. COST EFFICIENCY MEASURES AND FINANCIAL REPORTING

21. Key elements of the regular financing structure of GEF-financed Projects apply to SGP resources (Core, plus any added STAR allocation). The following breakdown indicates a proposed target to allocate at least 72 percent of SGP funding directly to grantmaking to CSOs/CBOs. This target has been identified by applying the following proposed ceilings to non-grant activities:

The SGP Implementing Agency fee is 9 percent for GEF-8 SGP projects, reflecting the level of transaction costs inherent to setting up SGP in countries. This is consistent with

⁶ In GEF 6 and GEF 7, countries that received SGP core funds could top up their SGP grantmaking with 10 percent of their STAR country allocations or up to \$2M if their allocations exceeded \$15M. Meanwhile, upgraded countries could use up to US\$5 million from their STAR country allocations to participate in SGP. In GEF-7, 57 countries (out of 113 that received SGP core funds) added STAR resources (averaging \$800,000 per country). The average for the 16 upgraded countries was \$3.14M per country. Considering the amount of resources allocated to SGP in GEF-8, STAR resources will remain critically important to support community-based initiatives and actors.

the current fee structure for GEF project/program financing above USD 10 million and for Agencies accredited through the Pilot Program on Accrediting GEF Agencies⁷.

Project Management Costs (PMC), which finances the costs associated with the executing function of the project, are capped at 10 percent⁸ of the total project cost (net of Agency fee).

Resources for Monitoring and Evaluation should not exceed 3 percent, reflecting experiences observed in GEF-financed projects and taking into account needs to monitor a large number of small grants⁹.

Resources for Knowledge Management should not exceed 3 percent, within the range of the share of resources use for knowledge management in Full-sized projects financed with GEF-6 and GEF-7 resources.

Resources for Capacity development and technical assistance in addition to activities funded by grants provided directly to CSOs/CBOs are capped at 3 percent, following the average share of resources observed in Full-sized projects financed with GEF-6 and GEF-7 resources.

22. A budget table is provided by Implementing Agencies to the GEF Secretariat for SGP projects for Work Program entry and CEO Endorsement/Approval. It includes the PMC, Monitoring & Evaluation, Knowledge Management and Capacity Building and Technical Assistance categories. During implementation, annual reporting on the use of resources is provided at country level along the key categories of grants to CSOs/CBOs, capacity development and technical assistance, PMC, Monitoring and Evaluation, Knowledge Management, and Agency fee. Reporting is required on both commitment and disbursement, and is disaggregated by Core and STAR financing.

23. During project implementation, SGP Implementing Agencies submit to the Secretariat annual Project Implementation Reports for each SGP project, including information on implementation and disbursement progress. Disbursement values are provided by country along the categories listed in the above paragraph. 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.

24. The above measures and benchmarks have considered the agreed resource envelope for SGP and reflect resources needed for important functions of SGP such as capacity building, technical assistance, knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation. These numbers may be further refined during the consultation processes with key stakeholders that are

⁷ GEF/C.59/Inf.03, Guidelines on the Project and Program Cycle Policy (2020 Update).

⁸ Consistent with GEF Project and Program Cycle policy and related Council decisions.

⁹ GEF/C.59/Inf.03, Annex 3, Guidelines on the Project and Program Cycle Policy (2020 Update).

currently taking place, and final numbers will come in the forthcoming paper for Council discussion at the 63rd Council in December 2022.

VIII. CSO INITIATIVES

25. The two new CSO Initiatives, strongly endorsed by the GEF-8 replenishment, build on the need to further support civil society actors and local environmental solutions to generate global environmental benefits.

26. The CSO Initiatives provide a complementary financing window for the GEF to support and catalyze additional engagement, actions, and sustainable innovations of civil society actors, with the view to enhance their contribution to delivering MEA decisions and the GEF-8 strategy. The initiative incorporates two distinct and complementary components: (i) a CSO Challenge Program, and (ii) an MSME Pilot, with an emphasis on finance for micro-enterprises.

27. **The total SGP allocation for each CSO Initiative is US\$ 10 million¹⁰.** All 18 GEF Agencies are eligible to submit proposals to implement these initiatives, in response to calls for proposals issued by the GEF Secretariat. The Agency(ies) selected under such calls for proposals develops individual project/program proposals to be processed as MSPs or FSPs, per GEF Project Cycle Policy and guidelines. Proposals are required to demonstrate consistency with the GEF's mandate, GEF-8 priorities, and GEF policies.

28. The CSO Initiatives follow the same fee structure as described above for the use of SGP Core financing.

29. It is anticipated that one call for proposals for each CSO initiative will be launched. Each call for proposal will include additional details on reporting and other elements.

i. CSO Challenge Program (US\$ 10 million)

30. The CSO Challenge program will identify, support and catalyze innovations and environmental solutions of civil society actors. It will provide a competitive mechanism for local civil society actors to access financial and technical resources to support scale up of their innovative environmental solutions. The program prioritizes youth and youth-led civil society organizations, women and women groups as well as Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs). It builds on the experience and lessons learned from the LDCF/SCCF Challenge Program.

31. The GEF Secretariat facilitates a process in which all 18 GEF Agencies may express interest to develop a proposal for the GEF CSO Challenge Program.¹¹ Interested GEF Agencies submit a concept to the Secretariat for review based on the following criteria:

- Credible track record and proven capacity to engage youth and women and reach civil society actors at global, regional and national level

¹⁰ Maximum amount in GEF-8

¹¹ i.e. not limited to SGP Implementing Agencies

- Capability of engaging and partnering with relevant partners and leveraging own resources
- Degree of novelty of competitive approach to identify and support local level community-based innovations
- Opportunity and approach to align project concept with GEF-8 Programming Directions, including one or several of GEF-8 Integrated Programs
- Approach to knowledge and learning to inform GEF's future engagement and approach to support CSO environmental actions and solutions

32. The GEF Secretariat engages GEF CSO representatives in the selection process and selects one or more concepts for further development.

ii. MSME Pilot focused on finance for micro-enterprises (US\$ 10 million)

33. The MSME Pilot aims to promote financing of micro-enterprises, with a particular focus on incorporating conservation practices¹². It is designed to create additional opportunities for the GEF to strategically leverage GEF Agencies' existing partnerships and projects with local financial intermediaries, foundations and micro financing institutions (MFIs) that provide technical assistance and financing to micro-enterprises. It has a special focus on women, youth and IPLC entrepreneurs to support their important role contributing to climate and conservation outcomes. The projects to be funded within this window are also expected to align with the overall GEF-8 programming strategy on MSMEs.

34. The window supports financial solutions, including both technical assistance and financial products, for microenterprises in support of GEF focal areas and/or relevant GEF Integrated Programs. It may also be used to support blended finance structures that could attract additional private sector investment. The window seeks to support micro-enterprises at any stage in their business life cycle and other innovative solutions to assist micro-enterprise development. This includes support for incubators or accelerators.

35. MSME Pilot funding is implemented by the selected GEF Agency(ies).¹³ Proposals must demonstrate consistency with the GEF's mandate and the GEF-8 strategy and be in compliance with GEF policies and operational policies. GEF Agencies respond to a call for Expressions of Interest to implement this Program.

36. The concepts are reviewed by the Secretariat based on the following criteria:

- Credible track record and proven capacity to engage with financial intermediaries and micro financing institutions in order to develop sustainable financial products

¹² The focus on MSMEs across GEF projects has been highlighted in a recent evaluation. GEF/E/C.60/05, GEF Engagement with MSMEs.

¹³ i.e. not limited to the (up to 3) SGP Implementing Agencies

- Degree of innovations and design of sustainable financial products for microenterprises - specifically for women, youth and IPLC.
- Capability of engaging and partnering with relevant partners and leveraging own resources
- Demonstrated capability in designing programs that can reach women, youth and IPLC entrepreneurs
- Project quality, degree of innovation, potential to catalyze private sector financing mechanisms to support the delivery of global environmental benefits

IX. RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

37. The use of relevant GEF Core Indicators under SGP will continue to guide the focus on delivering tangible Global Environmental Benefits in GEF-8, with higher ambition informed by recent experience.

38. A comprehensive results framework will steer positive environmental outcomes. SGP Implementing Agencies will be expected to coordinate and develop a common results and Monitoring and Evaluation framework collecting quantitative and qualitative data on outputs and outcomes. This includes socioeconomic co-benefits and gender-sensitive indicators where appropriate. Qualitative narrative will highlight how GEF-financed grants to CSOs and CBOs contribute to outcomes aligned to SGP 2.0 objectives, GEF-8 Programming Directions and SGP's long-term vision.

39. Higher accountability on implementation progress will highlight the specific contribution of civil society and community-based organizations in countries. Every year SGP Implementing Agencies will provide in Project Implementation Reports (PIRs) the list of organizations awarded with grants, as well as the geographic locations of grant activities. This will allow to map out where SGP grants are having impact, with what amounts, when resources reach grantees by country and through which type of organization.

40. Similar to regular GEF projects, annual reporting on implementation progress to the GEF Secretariat on SGP 2.0 will take place through a dedicated report that consolidates inputs from each approved project. This yearly report highlights implementation progress and challenges and captures disbursement progress, among other data points, while customizing reporting requirements to the specificities of the SGP, such as on results. Overall, reporting by specific SGP project is requested during implementation which will allow to better track progress.

41. The GEF Secretariat undertakes annual reporting to the GEF Council, across all SGP projects, highlighting their contribution to GEF objectives and priorities.

X. LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

42. Knowledge, learning and communication has been a critical ingredient of the success of SGP. Investments in these areas have played an important role in project and grantee sustainability, as well as for the broader adoption of efforts through scaling up and replication. All SGP Implementing Agencies actively contribute to knowledge and learning activities, including aggregating lessons learned in reporting.

43. To facilitate knowledge and learning coherent results management as well as needed coordination among the projects under the SGP, a dedicated global project will be developed by one of the SGP Implementing Agencies, to be selected in consultation with the Secretariat, in accordance with guidelines to be developed, and approved under normal Project Cycle procedures.

44. As projects financed under SGP 2.0 start reaching implementation, the GEF Secretariat collects a yearly report from SGP Implementing Agencies and collates findings from these reports and additional analysis into an SGP-wide annual monitoring report.¹⁴ These reports and any additional activities will help assess results from the new approaches and develop new models for knowledge management and learning. Activities are expected to feature interaction on good practices and lessons learned, South-to-South learning, demonstration and uptake of good practices through events and exchanges with direct stakeholders and others.

45. SGP Implementing Agencies identify areas for further scaling-up of funded activities and engage in GEF corporate activities including, among others, Art of Knowledge Exchange for CSOs organized by the Knowledge and Learning and the Country Support Program teams, and the GEF-wide Knowledge and Learning Strategy, currently under development.

¹⁴ Prior to GEF-8 reporting has been prepared uniquely by UNDP. With additional Agencies and addition of the CSO Initiatives, consolidation of multiple reports will be required.