EU-NGOs Project: Strengthening Environmental Governance by Building the Capacity of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

Guidance Note

Background:

The EU-NGOs Project "*Strengthening Environmental Governance by Building the Capacity of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)*" is a global project funded by the European Union (EU), implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The project aims to promote sustainable development and improved environmental management in target countries from two neighbouring regions of the European Region through more effective civil society participation in environmental governance.

The EU-NGOs Project will focus primarily on strengthening the external and internal capacities of NGOs and developing professional skills for environmental governance. It will do so by providing small grants to several NGO-led projects per participating country. The EU-NGOs Project will improve NGOs' capacities to participate in an informed and skilled manner in environmental policy formulation and natural resource management, collaborate in decision-making on key issues, and represent the interests of citizens and communities in environment and sustainable development discussions and debates. By promoting coordination and knowledge exchange among NGOs and other partners the project aims to have a wider influence on civil society capacity to engage with governments in the tasks and activities of environmental governance.

Eligibility Criteria:

The project selection process for the EU-NGOs Project is a competitive process, open to all national NGOs. Consideration will be given to legally registered **national** NGOs which have an environmental track record or a strong interest in environmental policy in relation to their mission.

Budget:

The maximum amount for grant project should not exceed the limit of USD 31,500. The EU-NGOs project will sponsor one or several grant projects with the total amount not exceeding USD 31,539.50.

Duration:

The duration of each grant project should be 6 months or less, given the nature of capacity development projects.

Criteria for Grant-making and Typology of Potential EU-funded Projects:

Capacity is not developed in a vacuum, and needs to take into consideration the country's context. For projects to be effective, and aligned with broader development objectives at the national level. Proposals should be coherent and strategic, aligned with the concept of environmental governance and address key environmental problems in the participating country. In particular, <u>each grantee should select at least one important environmental</u>

priority at the national level, and clearly identify the specific Capacity Result Outcomes, indicated below, to which the project will contribute.

*Each proposed grantee on the stage of elaboration of the Project Proposal **will be asked to undertake the ex-ante NGO Self-Assessment Questionnaire**, included in Annex 1 of this guidance note, and submit it with the project proposal.*

It is recommended that each project select at least one, and no more than three, of the Capacity Results Outcomes described below. Relevant impact indicators corresponding to the selected Capacity Results Outcome(s) should be identified and monitored.

In line with UNDP's Capacity Development Approach and the Objectives of the Capacity Development Framework of the GEF for its 5th Operational Phase, each project supported by the EU-NGOs Project *should contribute to at least one* of the following Capacity Results Outcomes:

1) **Capacity Results Outcome 1: Capacities for Engagement**
- Projects should contribute to enhance the capacities of stakeholders to engage in national or sub-national policy analysis and dialogue processes related to environmental governance and management. This outcome should also contribute to strengthening the NGO's convening power.
    o Indicator 1: Number and type of platforms (e.g. seminars, consultations, dialogues, expert panels and roundtables) organized and successfully implemented to enable key stakeholders to participate in consultative and discussion processes related to environmental governance and management
    o Indicator 2: Number of people or groups, disaggregated by gender, actively participating in consultative mechanisms

Please note: projects supporting this outcome should enable the constructive participation of civil society in environmental governance at the national level facilitating the formation of civil society networks, multi-stakeholder roundtables and panels that enable civil society to provide inputs to government officials on agenda-setting and policy development processes. Civil society involvement in environmental governance could be strengthened by promoting a governance structure that acknowledges the role of NGOs and other members of civil society and devise formal channels for participation.

Examples of possible eligible projects supporting this outcome include: projects focused on developing multi-stakeholder governance frameworks and participatory planning processes. For example, in a country there may already be a consultation process on solid waste management strategy or a energy strategy, so projects supported by this EU initiative should focus on promoting the participation of civil society members and organizations in the consultation forums.

2) **Capacity Result Outcome 2: Capacities to Generate, Access, and Use Information and Knowledge**
- Projects should contribute to generate, access and use information and knowledge to address environmental problems and find adequate solutions. Activities under this outcome should contribute to improve and strengthen the NGO's role in

generating awareness and accessing and disseminating environmental information and knowledge.
- o Indicator 1: Public awareness raised through workshops and other activities (number of workshops, number of people participating in awareness raising activities)
- o Indicator 2: Type of information and knowledge developed regarding national environmental problems and trends
- o Indicator 3: Strategy implemented to share environmental information and knowledge with civil society and government

Examples of possible eligible projects supporting this outcome include: projects that contribute to the dissemination of information on the environmental consequences of economic activities in order to promote behavioral changes; projects that promote the collection, codification and dissemination of information and knowledge related to main national environmental problems; projects that create awareness on environmental problems and advocate changes. This can include also the development and dissemination and effective access of information on the state of the environment, but also on policies or measures taken, or on the state of human health and safety where this can be affected by the state of the environment, in line with the Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters.

3) **Capacity Result Outcome 3: Capacities for Strategy, Policy and Legislation Development**
- Projects should contribute to strengthen capacities for development of or influence on strategy, policy and legislative frameworks. Activities under this outcome should contribute to improve the capacity of the organization to participate in the development of policy and legislative frameworks for environmental governance and management.
  - o Indicator 1: National and subnational plans, policies and legal frameworks influenced (number and type)
  - o Indicator 2: Number of policy briefs, training workshops, media campaigns, etc., to influence policy and planning

Please note: Projects supporting this outcome should contribute to the integration of environmental concerns into sectoral policies at the national level. Project proponents should identify specific environmental problems and concerns (land degradation, water management, waste management etc.) and raise awareness and promote dialogue among government and civil society actors regarding policy change to mitigate them. Projects should be focused on assessing, revising or developing new policies, strategies and frameworks that are primarily informed by lessons learned from civil society actors. The proponent should suggest specific activities that will contribute to the involvement of civil society in policy making.

Examples of possible eligible projects supporting this outcome include: projects focused on assessing existing environmental policies at the national level and develop recommendations to strengthen the policy framework in order to promote, for example, agro-biodiversity conservation, sustainable land management, and forestry, water

management, waste management, etc. Civil society stakeholders will examine existing legislation and policy, such as agricultural and forestry policies, water policies etc., assess their effectiveness, propose modifications, identify strategies to strengthen appropriate policy implementation, etc. Please note that projects should be explicit to the target environmental policy and the environmental concern. For example, a proposal could be focused on advocating an official policy for the protection of forests, encouraging the participation of NGOs and members of civil society in policy discussions and consultations related to this policy.

4) **Capacity Result Outcome 4: Capacities for Management and Implementation**
- Projects should contribute to strengthen capacities to implement and manage environmental projects and programmes. Activities under this outcome should contribute to improve the organizations capacity to influence the implementation of environmental projects and programmes.
  - o Indicator 1: Number of people trained on necessary project management skills – to be specified according to type of training – including project development, resource mobilization, business planning and administrative capacity.

Please note that this outcome should not be the main focus of project proposals as the objective of the EU NGOs Project is not simply to strengthen the internal NGO's capacity to conduct fundraising and write project proposals, but rather to strengthen the external capacity of NGOs to participate in the policy making process by advocating policy changes at the national level.

Also, please note that project proposals should not be focused on on-the-ground activities at the community level that could be funded by GEF regular resources, but rather focused on strengthening the capacity of the NGO to participate and/or lead policy dialogues and reforms as well as to engage with governments in order to influence government policies. Activities suggested under this outcome should be designed to contribute to other selected capacity results outcomes.

Examples of possible eligible projects supporting this outcome include: technical training in a specific environmental concerns, specific leadership and advocacy skills required to ensure NGO capacity is adequate for environmental governance. Strengthening of NGO capacities for fundraising and proposal writing is not desirable in and of itself for funding with EU-NGO resources.

5) **Capacity Result Outcome 5: Capacities to Monitor and Evaluate**
- Projects should contribute to enhance capacities to monitor and evaluate environmental impacts and trends. Activities under this outcome should contribute to improve the organization's capacity to monitor and evaluate environmental problems and trends and inform planning and decision making processes.
  - o Indicator 1: Monitoring and evaluation systems established (number and type)
  - o Indicator 2: Capacities for monitoring projects and programmes established (number of people trained, disaggregated by gender)

Examples of possible eligible projects supporting this outcome include: activities aimed at increasing public sector accountability by building the capacities of NGOs to monitor problems and trends, raise awareness and advocate changes.

Examples of Project Activities:

To achieve the above outcomes, it is expected that grants will cover both external capacity building (improving advocacy, communications and outreach, technical/scientific skills, and networks and alliances with other civil society groups) and internal capacity building (strengthening organizational, financial, and technical skills and knowledge, and strategic planning capacities within the NGO itself) that will enable informed NGO participation in environmental governance processes, *inter alia*, policy analysis, dialogue, and negotiation; research, monitoring and assessment; and coalitions and campaigns.

In terms of *external capacities*, the grants will support conceptual and practical training in several vital areas related to environmental governance:

- ✓ Participating in environmental decision-making
- ✓ Advocating for environmental justice through access to law, the courts, and public opinion
- ✓ Using communications and media campaigns strategically to promote sound environmental governance
- ✓ Building alliances and networking with civil society organizations nationally and regionally
- ✓ Collecting, analyzing, and promoting access to environmental and sustainable development information
- ✓ Conducting policy analysis, participating in policy consultations and policy implementation
- ✓ Assessing environmental conditions and monitoring compliance with environmental laws and agreements (on the part of government, industry, communities, etc.)

NGOs may use small grants funding to access advisory services, contract national consultants to provide specific capacity building, and/or to support the organization and facilitation of training seminars and exchange workshops.

Through grants, NGOs will be able to access training to assess and build their *internal capacities* in six main areas:

- ✓ Assessment of internal capacities and elaboration of capacity development plans
- ✓ Strengthening of staff skills (technical, administrative, financial, etc.)
- ✓ Leadership preparation
- ✓ Guidance on resource mobilization
- ✓ Performance self-evaluation
- ✓ Strategic planning

Knowledge Management:

Please note that as indicated in the Branding Guidelines for the Project "Strengthening Environmental Governance by Building the Capacity Of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)" (see Annex 3), for all communication materials that mention this project, please make sure that the first reference is always as the Project "Strengthening Environmental Governance by Building the Capacity Of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), funded by the European Union, Implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).[1]

Each grantee is expected to allocate an amount from grant funds for knowledge management activities and produce <u>at least one detailed case study</u> for dissemination using a standard questionnaire that will be provided by the Project Manager. Case studies will describe the activities undertaken in order to build the capacity of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to strengthen environmental governance, and summarize the results, good practices and lessons learned from project activities.

Co-financing at the Project level:

Grant proponents should make cash and in-kind contributions to project budgets. The minimum obligatory level of co-financing is 15% from the requested grant (and minimum 10% should be in cash).

---

[1] Branding Guidelines for the Project *"Strengthening Environmental Governance by Building the Capacity Of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)"*.

Annex 1: Ex-ante and ex-post NGO Self-Assessment Questionnaire[2]

The ex-ante and ex post NGO self-assessment questionnaire is a pilot tool to monitor progress made to develop internal and external capacities of NGOs for environmental governance.

Objective of the questionnaire: to provide a framework for the use of capacity development indicators to establish baselines and monitor progress made in strengthening environmental governance capacities. The following questionnaire should be filled out, at a minimum, at the beginning of proposal development and at the end of project implementation. The questionnaire allows for assessment of the capacity development of selected NGOs towards a more effective civil society participation in environmental governance.

In line with objectives of the Capacity Development Framework of the GEF for its 5th Operational Phase, each project financed by the EU-financed *Strengthening Environmental Governance by Building the Capacity Of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) Project*, implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) should measure and develop the following types of environmental governance capacities:

1. **Capacities for Engagement:**
   ➢ **To enhance the capacities of stakeholders to engage throughout the consultative process.**

   1. Is your organization engaged in national or subnational policy analysis and dialogue processes related to environmental governance and management? If so, please describe them. What has been its role? For example, has it led or supported consultative processes, policy debates, expert panels and roundtables?
   2. Does your organization or any of its members participate in any multi-stakeholder decision making body related to environmental governance and management?
   3. Is the role of the organization recognized by peer organizations and other stakeholders including community and political leaders, public and private managers and experts?
   4. How could your organization improve its capacities to engage in environmental governance and management?

   Ex post questionnaire - *If this capacity results outcome was selected as part of the proposed project, then these questions should be answered at the end of the project*:

---

[2] This framework is based on a review of the most recent work on capacity and capacity development from UNDP, the GEF and the GEF Small Grants Programme. Sources: Capacity Development: A UNDP Primer (UNDP, 2009); Capacity Assessment: Practice Note (UNDP, 2008); Capacity Development: Practice Note (UNDP, 2008); Capacity Development: Measuring Capacity (UNDP, 2010); Frequently Asked Questions: The UNDP Capacity Assessment Methodology (UNDP, 2009). Monitoring Guidelines of Capacity Development in Global Environment Facility Projects; GEF-SGP Technical Guidance Note, Capacity Development.

Internal:
- How has this project contributed to improving the organization's capacities to engage in policy dialogue and analysis processes related to environmental governance and management?

External:
- How has the project strengthened participatory, consultative mechanisms related to environmental governance and management in your country?
- Has the project created more space for the active contribution of civil society in environmental governance and management?

2. **Capacities to Generate, Access, and Use Information and Knowledge:**
   - ➢ **To generate, access and use information and knowledge.**

   1. What is the status of environmental information in your country? Is environmental information readily available and shared among stakeholders? Is there an adequate environmental information management and dissemination infrastructure in country?
   2. What is the role of your organization in accessing and sharing environmental information at national and sub-national levels? Does your organization have the skills and knowledge to communicate and make use of pertinent information to diagnose and understand environmental problems and potential solutions? Please describe.
   3. Does the organization carry out awareness raising activities and formal and non-formal education programmes addressing environmental problems and potential solutions? If so, please describe.
   4. Is there sufficient environmental information to support environmental decision making?
   5. How could your organization improve its capacities to generate, access and use information and knowledge for environmental governance and management?

   Ex post questionnaire - *If this capacity results outcome was selected as part of the proposed project, then these questions should be answered <u>at the end of the project</u>:*

   Internal:
   - How has this project contributed to improving the organization's capacities to generate, access and use information and knowledge related to environmental governance and management?

   External:
   - How has the project strengthened national and sub-national awareness of environmental problems and solutions?
   - How has the project increased access and sharing of environmental information and research?

3. **Capacities for Strategy, Policy and Legislation Development:**
   - ➢ **To strengthen capacities to develop policy and legislative frameworks.**

1. What is the state of environmental policies, strategies and legislation in your country? Is this adequate to address environmental problems and promote solutions? Are the policies and legislation enforced and implemented?
2. Is your organization involved in developing effective environmental policy and legislation, strategies and plans at national and/or sub-national levels related to environmental governance and management?
3. Is the current level of research sufficient to respond to policy needs? Is your organization involved in developing and/or disseminating environmental research results to influence policy and planning?
4. What are the constraints on your organization that limit its ability to participate in effective development of environmental strategy, policy and legislation?
5. How could your organization improve its capacities to participate in the development of strategy, policy and legislative frameworks for environmental governance and management?

Ex post questionnaire - *If this capacity results outcome was selected as part of the proposed project, then these questions should be answered <u>at the end of the project</u>:*

Internal:
- How has this project contributed to improving the organization's capacities to participate in the development of environmental strategy, policy and legislation?

External:
- How has the project influenced national and sub-national strategy, policy and legislation?

4. **<u>Capacities for Management and Implementation:</u>**
   - ➤ **To strengthen capacities to implement and manage environmental projects and programmes.**

1. Does your organization have the capacity to execute projects and/or programmes aimed at implementing environmental strategies, policies and legislation?
2. What are the constraints? For example, is there a lack of necessary skills, resources, business planning capacities, access to funding and technologies, etc.?
3. How could your organization improve its capacities to manage and implement environmental projects and programmes?

Ex post questionnaire - *If this capacity results outcome was selected as part of the proposed project, then these questions should be answered <u>at the end of the project</u>:*

Internal:
- How has this project contributed to improving the organization's capacities to manage and execute environmental projects and programmes?

External:

- How has the project influenced the implementation of environmental projects and programmes?

5. **Capacities to Monitor and Evaluate**:
   - ➢ **To enhance capacities to monitor and evaluate environmental impacts and trends.**

   1. What is the status of the national environmental monitoring and evaluation system in your country? Does this system influence or inform the planning process, decision making or programme or policy implementation?
   2. Does the organization have a role in the effective monitoring and evaluation of environmental problems and trends?
   3. How could your organization improve its capacities to monitor and evaluate environmental impacts and trends?

   Ex post questionnaire - *If this capacity results outcome was selected as part of the proposed project, then these questions should be answered <u>at the end of the project</u>:*

   Internal:
   - How has this project contributed to improving the organization's capacities to monitor and evaluate environmental problems and trends?

   External:
   - How has the project influenced the national and sub-national capacities for monitoring and evaluation of environmental problems and trends?