

# GEF Small Grants Program (SGP) Global Knowledge and Learning Platform

Review PIF and Make a recommendation

## Basic project information

**GEF ID**  
12287  
**Countries**  
Global  
**Project Name**  
GEF Small Grants Program (SGP) Global Knowledge and Learning Platform  
**Agencies**  
UNDP, FAO, CI  
**Date received by PM**  
2/26/2026  
**Review completed by PM**  
3/26/2026  
**Program Manager**  
Elsa Temm  
**Focal Area**  
Multi Focal Area  
**Project Type**  
MSP

## GEF-8 PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF) REVIEW SHEET

### 1. General Project Information / Eligibility

- a) Does the project meet the criteria for eligibility for GEF funding?
- b) Is the General Project Information table correctly populated?

Secretariat's Comments

GRT: 3/23/2026

Not yet. In the project title sgp is still spelled out as programme, similarly in the project summary and across the portal version of the PIF. Please can you revise.

GRT: 3/6/2026

a) Yes. The PIF meets the criteria for eligibility for GEF funding. It further responds to the SGP 2.0 Implementation Arrangements for GEF-8 and the Terms of Reference for the "Design, Development and Implementation of the GEF SGP Global Learning Platform" developed by the GEF secretariat to address the need to improve knowledge and learning systems in line with SGP 2.0 ambition to expand, diversify and optimize the program.

b) Yes, noting an Agency PPG fee also included.

Would appreciate, if you could change the spelling from programme to program in the project title.

Agency's Comments

UNDP, 18 March 2026

The spelling has been changed in the project title ? and throughout the document.

**2. Project Summary**

**Does the project summary concisely describe the problem to be addressed, the project objective and the strategies to deliver the GEBs or adaptation benefits and other key expected results?**

Secretariat's Comments

GRT: 3/6/2026

Yes. Under 250 words. The summary clearly and concisely describes the main strategy, project results and principal outputs designed to overcome the current fragmented knowledge and learning landscape through the proposed SGP Global Knowledge and Learning Platform (KLP), including the emphasis to be placed on harnessing and addressing local knowledge and capacity needs.

Agency's Comments

**3 Indicative Project Overview**

**3.1 a) Is the project objective presented as a concise statement and clear?**

**b) Are the components, outcomes and outputs sound, appropriate and sufficiently clear to achieve the project objective and the core indicators per the stated Theory of Change?**

Secretariat's Comments

GRT: 3/23/2026

Great - Cleared.

GRT: 3/6/2026

a) Not fully. The project objective is a mix of rationale, background and activities. Please revise to provide a shortened and more concise project objective that effusively captures the ambition and essence of SGP KLP

b) Yes. The Project Components, outcomes and outputs are clear and logically presented and structured in the Project Components table and fully aligned with the ToC and stated Core indicators. It is noted that the KLP, being a platform and as presented in this project is not designed to generate directly GEBs except in terms of beneficiaries.

#### Agency's Comments

UNDP, 18 March 2026

a). The objective statement has been changed to the following: ?To operationalize SGP knowledge and learning systems to enable more effective and scalable community-driven environmental action across the global SGP network.?

**3.2 Are gender dimensions, knowledge management, and monitoring and evaluation included within the project components and appropriately funded?**

#### Secretariat's Comments

GRT: 3/6/2026

Yes. Cleared.

The project is centered on building knowledge management and learning systems to harvest valuable data on gender, co-benefits, and community impact, among other aspects. The SGP KLP's design and development integrates considerations for gender, youth, and Indigenous peoples. All learning materials will be reviewed to ensure gender and inclusion standards are met, and regional adaptations will incorporate women, youth, and traditional knowledge throughout. The platform aims for at least half of its users and mentoring participants to be women. Indigenous and local community organizations will help create case studies and learning modules. For instance, the platform seeks to register 1,000 CSO/CBO users, with a target of 50% women and 20% youth among them. The project provides a budgeted M&E component to ensure that project monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems are established and implemented.

#### Agency's Comments

**3.3 a) Are the components adequately funded?**

**b) Are the GEF Project Financing and Co-Financing contributions to PMC proportional?**

**c) Is the PMC equal to or below 5% of the total GEF grant for FSPs or 10% for MSPs? If the requested PMC is above the caps, has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated?**

## Secretariat's Comments

GRT: 3/6/2026

Yes. Cleared.

- a) Yes, noting that 50% of the project costs are dedicated to Component 1 reflecting technical discussions with GEF Secretariat and agencies to allocate sufficient resources and time to this phase.
- b) Cofinancing set at 1:1
- c) PMC under 5%.

## Agency's Comments

### 4 Project Outline

#### A. Project Rationale

#### 4.1 SITUATION ANALYSIS

**a) is the current situation (including global environmental problems, key contextual drivers of environmental degradation, climate vulnerability) clearly and adequately described from a systems perspective?**

**b) Are the key barriers and enablers identified?**

## Secretariat's Comments

GRT: 3/6/2026

Yes. Cleared.

a) The project's contextual framework is thoroughly and logically articulated: It leverages the SGP's status as an established GEF flagship initiative, acknowledging that SGP 2.0's recent progress has resulted in program expansion outpacing existing knowledge systems and management tools. This evolution aligns with the GEF Knowledge Management and Learning Strategy (2022), which advocates for global-scale platforms that consolidate dispersed project experiences into collective intelligence. Within this context, the SGP KLP will operate as an effective mechanism for community capacity building and as a channel for field-tested solutions, thereby facilitating continuous feedback between national policy frameworks, international commitments, and local practices.

b) The SGP KLP incorporate considerations of several well-documented constraints and barriers, including fragmented knowledge systems, limited and unequal access to training, capacity limitations among CSOs and CBOs, challenges in cross-agency coordination, as well as technological and resource-related obstacles.

## Agency's Comments

### 4.2 JUSTIFICATION FOR PROJECT

**a) Is there an indication of why the project approach has been selected over other potential options?**

**b) Does it ensure resilience to future changes in the drivers?**

**c) Is there a description of how the GEF alternative will build on ongoing/previous investments (GEF and non-GEF), lessons and experiences in the country/region?**

**d) are the relevant stakeholders and their roles adequately described?**

Secretariat's Comments

GRT: 3/26/2026

Thank you: Cleared

GRT: 3/23/2026

Do not find a response to comment on engaging IUCN and WB in the design, development and implementation of the SGP KLP. Please clarify.

GRT: 3/6/2026

a), b), and c): Yes. The proposed KLP considers community input and experience from SGP and platforms like IW:LEARN to address expansion and long-term sustainability. It considers also advances in cloud technology and AI translation to enable affordable, multilingual, mobile learning and the need for systems that address digital accessibility and language barriers, particularly for indigenous peoples and women. Traditional and local knowledge has been integrated as a core element driving innovation, not just as documented content.

c) Almost. Please elaborate on the potential roles and engagement with the SGP's CSO initiative agencies, including IUCN and WB, as well as plans to engage these in the design, development and implementation of the SGP KLP.

Agency's Comments

UNDP, 18 March 2026

c). The following entry has been added following the table presenting coordination with complementary projects and initiatives:

?Beyond the formal institutional arrangements described above, the project will engage with a broader set of partners active in supporting civil society and community-based environmental action. In particular, IUCN and the World Bank, which play important roles in global and regional civil society support initiatives, will be engaged during the PPG phase to explore opportunities for (i) contributing relevant knowledge products and case studies to the Platform, (ii) supporting the testing and refinement of learning materials with civil society partners, and (iii) providing advisory inputs through the Technical Advisory Group. This engagement will ensure alignment with broader civil-society support mechanisms under SGP 2.0, while allowing roles to be defined in detail during project preparation.?

## **5 B. Project Description**

### **5.1 THEORY OF CHANGE**

**a) Is there a concise theory of change that describes the project logic, including how the project design elements will contribute to the objective, the expected causal pathways, and the key assumptions underlying these?**

**b) Are the key outputs of each component defined (where possible)?**

Secretariat's Comments

GRT: 3/6/2026

Yes. Cleared.

The theory of change outlines the project's underlying logic and causal pathways, detailing how its activities are designed to overcome barriers and contribute sequentially to three core components and their corresponding outputs. These components collectively support structural change by first establishing the institutional and digital foundation for interoperability, then enhancing human capacity through standardized training and mentorship, and finally ensuring ongoing dissemination of information and results via continuous communication and visibility.

Agency's Comments

#### **5.2 INCREMENTAL/ADDITIONAL COST REASONING**

**Is the incremental/additional cost reasoning properly described as per the Guidelines provided in GEF/C.31/12?**

Secretariat's Comments

GRT: 3/6/2026

Yes. Cleared.

The Business-as-Usual Scenario (Baseline) represents the current state; the With-Project Scenario (GEF Increment) transforms a robust yet fragmented knowledge base into a structured, continuously evolving system. This approach leads to increased Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs) through improved portfolio effectiveness, rather than isolated field investments. It is supported by an adaptive management strategy that addresses future variables, including sustained user engagement, reliable connectivity, consistent inter-agency coordination, and stable financing.

Agency's Comments

#### **5.3 IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK**

**a) Is the institutional setting, including potential executing partners, outlined and a rationale provided?**

**b) Comments to proposed agency execution support (if agency expects to request exception).**

**c) Is there a description of potential coordination and cooperation with ongoing GEF-financed projects/programs and other bilateral/multilateral initiatives in the project area**

**d) Are the proposed elements to capture and disseminate knowledge and learning outputs and strategic communication adequately described?**

Secretariat's Comments

GRT: 3/26/2026

Thank you: Cleared

GRT: 3/6/2026

a + b. Almost. UNDP will serve as Lead Implementing Agency for the project and have overall accountability and responsibility to report to the GEF on the delivery of results. FAO and Conservation International (CI) will serve as co-Implementing Agencies. Each agency will be responsible for the delivery of project outputs as identified in the agreed workplan. Noting in the financing table, however, that the budget has been assigned to each agency, please broadly outline each agency's corresponding responsibilities in terms of execution of different components/activities (to be developed further in the CEO Approval). It is well noted that the proposed project Steering Committee (PSC), composed of representatives from the GEF Secretariat, UNDP, FAO, and CI is expected to provide project oversight, and that a broader technical advisory group (TAG) with wider representation will be formed. Please consider ways to engage and consult IUCN and WB as the leads of the SGP CSO initiatives the design, implementation project's institutional arrangements, including PSC or TAG level. In addition, please consider ways and opportunities to include representatives of civil society, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, you and women groups/organizations in the project's institutional arrangement and decision-making process.

c. Almost. The project identifies several opportunities for synergies, complementarity with ongoing initiatives, e.g. UNDP's Accelerator Labs and lessons learned from lessons from IW:LEARN, Evidensia and Panorama Solutions, for example. Although mentioned, further alignment with GEF's KM strategy should be explored during project development, prior CEO Approval stage.

d. yes.

## Agency's Comments

UNDP, 18 March 2026

a+b). The narrative description on institutional arrangements has been amended, to clarify the high-level division of responsibilities among Implementing Agencies, reflecting the allocation of resources in the financing table. UNDP will lead overall platform architecture, coordination, and reporting. Preliminarily, FAO is envisaged to contribute technical leadership on knowledge systems related to sustainable agriculture and field-based learning, and Conservation International will support knowledge curation, innovation, and biodiversity-related content and partnerships. Further details on roles and institutional arrangements will be refined during the PPG phase.

The PIF has also been updated to reflect broader engagement in institutional arrangements. Opportunities to engage IUCN and the World Bank in advisory and knowledge-contribution roles will be explored during the PPG phase. In addition, the composition of the Technical Advisory Group will seek to include representatives from civil society, Indigenous Peoples and

local communities, and women's and youth organizations to ensure inclusive participation in platform design and implementation.

c). The following entry has been made to section A.6 (Project Design Rationale: Why a Digital Platform):

?Further alignment with the GEF Knowledge Management Strategy will be refined during the PPG phase as part of detailed system design and consultation.?

**5.4 a) Are the identified core indicators calculated using the methodology included in the corresponding Guidelines (GEF/C.54/11/Rev.01)?**

**b) Are the project's indicative targeted contributions to GEBs (measured through core indicators)/adaptation benefits reasonable and achievable?**

Secretariat's Comments

GRT: 3/6/2026

Yes. As expected, the project does not identify Core indicators as the KLP will not contribute directly to the generation of GEBs. The project, however, directly contributes to Core Indicator 11 through its capacity-building and governance outcomes, reaching approximately 10,000 people, with explicit gender/youth targets (50% women, 20% youth) reflected in the design of training and mentoring systems.

Agency's Comments

**5.5 NGI Only: Is there a justification of financial structure and use of financial instrument with concessionality levels?**

Secretariat's Commentsn/a

Agency's Comments

**5.6 RISKS**

**a) Is there a well-articulated assessment of risk and identification of mitigation measures under each relevant risk category?**

**b) Is the rating provided reflecting the residual risk to the likely achievement of intended outcomes after accounting for the expected implementation of mitigation measures?**

**c) Are environmental and social risks, impacts and management measures adequately screened and rated at this stage and consistent with requirements set out in SD/PL/03?**

Secretariat's Comments

GRT: 3/26/2026

Thank you for providing the additional justification: Cleared

GRT: 3/6/2026

Almost. The overall risk rating is moderate. The main risks involve coordinating across multiple agencies, ensuring stakeholders participate, achieving long-term sustainability, and integrating technical elements. These challenges are addressed with specific governance frameworks, a modular platform design, organized mentoring and feedback systems, and yearly reviews to aid adaptive management.

1. Under key risk table, please provide explanation of risk and mitigation measures for climate and environmental and social.
2. Please provide Overall Project/Program Risk Classification under the Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) Risks. Please note, the rating under the Environmental and Social risk category (currently unavailable) should be the same as the rating under the key risk table, Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) risk (currently unavailable), as per the GEF risk appetite GEF/C.66/13.

### Agency's Comments

UNDP, 18 March 2026

1. The project meets the social and environmental screening procedure (SESP) exemption criteria under UNDP policy [Social and Environmental Standards | United Nations Development Programme](#)). As per UNDP Social and Environmental Standards (SES) Guidance Note ([UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure\\_JULY2022\\_ENGLISH.pdf](#)) the project meets the SESP exemption criteria: *Projects that consist solely of any of the following functions or activities will be exempt from the screening requirement: a. UNDP serves as Administrative Agent; b. **Preparation and dissemination of reports, documents and communication materials**; c. **Organization of an event, workshop, training**; d. **Strengthening capacities of partners to participate in international negotiations and conferences**; e. **Partnership coordination (including UN coordination) and management of networks**; and/or f. **Global/regional projects with no country-level activities (e.g. activities such as knowledge management, inter-governmental processes)**; g. **Development Effectiveness projects and Institutional Effectiveness projects. The exemption criteria apply when they comprise the entire scope of the project, not just one component.***

2. As outlined in the justification provided above, UNDP policy does not require environmental and social risk screening of the project.

### 5.7 Qualitative assessment

- a) Does the project intend to be well integrated, durable, and transformative?
- b) Is there potential for innovation and scaling-up?
- c) Will the project contribute to an improved alignment of national policies (policy coherence)?

### Secretariat's Comments

GRT: 3/6/2026

a+b+c) Yes. Cleared

- The Knowledge and Learning Platform (KLP) ensures sustainability through institutional commitment. Drawing from IW:LEARN's experience, KLP embeds operations in agency budgets and workplans instead of relying on grant cycles.
- All three Implementing Agencies have formally agreed to include platform hosting, maintenance, and updates in their regular budgets after GEF funding ends. The KLP will be designed to be scalable due to its modular design and open standards, making it easy to add new languages, partners, and functions. Its approach to capturing and sharing community-based knowledge can be applied to other GEF programs and agencies. Scaling will occur as more Country Programs in the SGP network adopt project tools, as Implementing Agencies integrate the Platform's standards and training into their portfolios, and as global initiatives like UNDP's Accelerator Labs, FAO's digital agriculture, and CI's innovation hubs use and contribute to the Platform's content.
- The KLP helps deliver national priorities by increasing small grant funding and providing training, while also promoting fair participation in environmental governance and strengthening countries' capacity to report on progress for MEAs and SDGs.

#### Agency's Comments

### 6 C. Alignment with GEF-8 Programming Strategies and Country/Regional Priorities

**6.1 Is the project adequately aligned with focal area and integrated program strategies and objectives, and/or adaptation priorities?**

#### Secretariat's Comments

GRT: 3/6/2026

Yes. Cleared

#### Agency's Comments

**6.2 Is the project alignment/coherent with country and regional priorities, policies, strategies and plans (including those related to the MEAs and to relevant sectors)**

#### Secretariat's Comments

GRT: 3/6/2026

Yes. Cleared

#### Agency's Comments

**6.3 For projects aiming to generate biodiversity benefits (regardless of what the source of the resources is - i.e. BD, CC or LD), does the project clearly identify which of the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework the project contributes to and how it contributes to the identified target(s)?**

#### Secretariat's Comments

n/a

#### Agency's Comments

### 7 D. Policy Requirements

**7.1 Is the Policy Requirements section completed?**

Secretariat's Comments

GRT: 3/6/2026

Yes. Cleared

Agency's Comments

**7.2 Is a list of stakeholders consulted during PIF development, including dates of these consultations, provided?**

Secretariat's Comments

GRT: 3/26/2026

Thank you: Cleared

GRT: 3/6/2026

Almost. Please provide a detailed list of who was consulted in project design.

Agency's Comments

**UNDP, 18 March 2026**

Stakeholder consultations at the PIF stage were limited and primarily involved internal technical inputs from the Implementing Agencies (UNDP, FAO, CI). A comprehensive stakeholder consultation process, including civil society organizations, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and other relevant stakeholders, will be undertaken during the PPG phase. A detailed list of stakeholders and consultation records will be provided at CEO Endorsement.

**8 Annexes**

**Annex A: Financing Tables**

**8.1 Is the proposed GEF financing (including the Agency fee) in line with GEF policies and guidelines? Are they within the resources available from (mark all that apply):**

**STAR allocation?**

Secretariat's Comments

GRT: 3/6/2026

Yes. The budget amount is in line with TOR for the platform developed by the GEF Secretariat.

Agency's Comments

**Focal Area allocation?**

Secretariat's Commentsn/a

Agency's Comments

**LDCF under the principle of equitable access?**

Secretariat's Commentsn/a

Agency's Comments

**SCCF A (SIDS)?**

Secretariat's Commentsn/a

Agency's Comments

**SCCF B (Tech Transfer, Innovation, Private Sector)?**

Secretariat's Commentsn/a

Agency's Comments

**Focal Area Set Aside?**

Secretariat's Commentsn/a

Agency's Comments

**8.2 Is the PPG requested within the allowable cap (per size of project)? If requested, has an exception (e.g. for regional projects) been sufficiently substantiated?**

Secretariat's Comments

GRT: 3/6/2026

Yes. Cleared

Agency's Comments

**8.3 Are the indicative expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines?**

Secretariat's Comments

GRT: 3/6/2026

Yes. Cofinancing is proportional and to be mobilized primarily through the three GEF Agencies, reflecting their ongoing and planned investments in complementary projects, programs, and institutional support mechanisms. Please provide co-financing letters at CEO Approval stage.

Agency's Comments

**Annex B: Endorsements**

**8.4 Has the project been endorsed by the country? (ies) GEF OFP and has the OFP at the time of PIF submission name and position been checked against the GEF database?**

Secretariat's Commentsn/a

Agency's Comments

**Are the OFP endorsement letters uploaded to the GEF Portal (compiled as a single document, if applicable)?**

Secretariat's Commentsn/a

Agency's Comments

**Do the letters follow the correct format and are the endorsed amounts consistent with the amounts included in the Portal?**

Secretariat's Commentsn/a

Agency's Comments

**8.5 For NGI projects (which may not require LoEs), has the Agency informed the OFP(s) of the project to be submitted?**

Secretariat's Commentsn/a

Agency's Comments

**Annex C: Project Location**

**8.6 Is there preliminary georeferenced information and a map of the project?s intended location?**

Secretariat's Commentsn/a

Agency's Comments

**Annex D: Safeguards Screen and Rating**

**8.7 If there are safeguard screening documents or other ESS documents prepared, have these been uploaded to the GEF Portal?**

Secretariat's Comments

GRT: 4/1/2026

ESS comments at PIF stage are addressed and cleared. Please note, however, that an environmental and social risk rating and environmental and social screening document need to be prepared during the PPG prior to CEO approval.

GRT: 3/26/2026

Cleared

GRT: 3/6/2026

Almost. It is noted an overall ESS risk is classified as not available at this stage.

1. Please provide the Environmental and Social Safeguard Screening document based on the PIF at this stage. Or if UNDP's policy does not require environmental and social risk screening of the project, please provide justification document.
2. Please also provide environmental and social risk in the Key risk table (PIF, page 32) based on the screening document
3. Please also clarify how the project concept (PIF) was consulted with Indigenous Peoples and local communities? groups and CSOs, and how the results of the consultations with them were integrated into the project concept (PIF).

Agency's Comments

UNDP, 18 March 2026

1. The project meets the social and environmental screening procedure (SESP) exemption criteria under UNDP policy [Social and Environmental Standards | United Nations Development Programme](#)). As per UNDP Social and Environmental Standards (SES) Guidance Note ([UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure JULY2022\\_ENGLISH.pdf](#)) the project meets the SESP exemption criteria: *Projects that consist solely of any of the following functions or activities will be exempt from the screening requirement: a. UNDP serves as Administrative Agent; b. **Preparation and dissemination of reports, documents and communication materials**; c. **Organization of an event, workshop, training**; d. **Strengthening capacities of partners to participate in international negotiations and conferences**; e. **Partnership coordination (including UN coordination) and management of networks**; and/or f. **Global/regional projects with no country-level activities (e.g. activities such as knowledge management, inter-governmental processes)**; g. **Development Effectiveness projects and Institutional Effectiveness projects. The exemption criteria apply when they comprise the entire scope of the project, not just one component***

2. Considering that environmental and social risk screening is not required in accordance with UNDP policy, the rating is indicated as "Not rated".

3. At the PIF stage, stakeholder inputs were primarily informed by the collective experience of the Implementing Agencies. A comprehensive stakeholder consultation process, including Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and civil society organizations, will be undertaken during the PPG phase, and the results will be integrated into project design and documented at CEO Endorsement.

#### Annex E: Rio Markers

8.8 Are the Rio Markers for CCM, CCA, BD and LD correctly selected, if applicable?

Secretariat's Comments n/a

Agency's Comments

#### Annex F: Taxonomy Worksheet

8.9 Is the project properly tagged with the appropriate keywords?

Secretariat's Comments yes

Agency's Comments

#### Annex G: NGI Relevant Annexes

8.10 Does the project provide sufficient detail (indicative term sheet) to take a decision on the following selection criteria: co-financing ratios, financial terms and conditions, and financial additionality? If not, please provide comments. Does the project provide a detailed reflow table to assess the project capacity of generating reflows? If not, please provide comments. Is the Partner Agency eligible to administer concessional finance? If not, please provide comments.

Secretariat's Commentsn/a

Agency's Comments

**9 GEFSEC Decision**

**9.1 Is the PIF and PPG (if requested) recommended for technical clearance?**

Secretariat's Comments

GRT: 3/6/2026

Yes.

Agency's Comments

**9.2 Additional Comments to be considered by the Agency at the time of CEO Endorsement/ Approval**

Secretariat's Comments

4/1/2026

While comments on stakeholder engagement and ESS have been addressed at this stage. Please note that we expect that inclusive stakeholder consultations and environmental and social risk rating and environmental and social screening document need to be prepared during the PPG prior to CEO approval.

Agency's Comments

**Review Dates**

**First Review**

**Additional Review (as necessary)**

**Additional Review (as necessary)**

**Additional Review (as necessary)**

**Additional Review (as necessary)**

**PIF Review**

**3/6/2026**

**3/26/2026**

**4/1/2026**

**Agency Response**