



Umbrella Programme for Preparation of Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs) and National Communications (NCs) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

Part I: Project Information

GEF ID

10781

Project Type

EA

Type of Trust Fund

GET

CBIT

CBIT No

Project Title

Umbrella Programme for Preparation of Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs) and National Communications (NCs) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

Countries

Global, Antigua and Barbuda, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Liberia, Malawi, Maldives, Mauritania, Zambia

Agency(ies)

UNEP

Other Executing Partner(s)

Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment-Antigua and Barbuda; Ministry of Environment-Cambodia; Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment-Lao PDR; Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-Liberia; Ministry of Forestry and Natural Resources- Malawi; Ministry of Environment-Maldives; Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development-Mauritania and Ministry of Water Development, Sanitation and Environmental Protection- Zambia

Executing Partner Type

Government

GEF Focal Area

Climate Change

Taxonomy

Climate Change, Focal Areas, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Influencing models, Type of Engagement, Stakeholders, Partnership, Information Dissemination, Gender Equality, Gender results areas, Capacity Development, Awareness Raising, Knowledge Generation and Exchange, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Enabling Activities

Rio Markers**Climate Change Mitigation**

Climate Change Mitigation 2

Climate Change Adaptation

Climate Change Adaptation 1

Type of Reports	Submission Date	Expected Implementation Start	Expected Completion Date	Expected Report Submission to Convention
UNFCCC Biennial Transparency Report (BTR)	9/22/2021	12/1/2021	10/1/2025	12/31/2024
UNFCCC Biennial Transparency Report/ National Communication (BTR/NC)	9/22/2021	12/1/2021	10/1/2025	12/31/2024

Duration

46In Months

Agency Fee(\$)

388,562.00

A. FOCAL/NON-FOCAL AREA ELEMENTS

Objectives/Programs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
CCM-EA	GET	4,090,130.00	15,000.00
Total Project Cost(\$)		4,090,130.00	15,000.00

B. Project description summary

Project Objective

To support Eight (8) developing countries prepare and submit Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs) and National Communications (NCs) that comply with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Paris Agreement reporting requirements; and respond to their national development goals

Project Component	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
1.0 Preparation of Project Implementation Plans (PIPs) for BTRs and NCs	1.1 Increased human and institutional capacity for preparing BTR and/or NC	1.1.1 Project Implementation Plans for BTR and NC including stocktaking, institutional arrangements, stakeholders? plans, work plans and budget are completed	160,000.00	
		1.1.2 Eight (8) countries receive enhanced execution support services from UNEP	119,130.00	

Project Component	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Confirmed Co-Financing(\$)
2.0 Preparation of BTRs and NCs	2.1 Countries meet their BTR and/or NC reporting requirements under the UNFCCC.	2.1.1 Five (5) BTRs prepared and submitted to the UNFCCC by December 2024 2.1.2 Three (3) BTR/NCs prepared and submitted to the UNFCCC by December 2024	3,370,000.00	
3.0 National stakeholders? involvement and institutional arrangements for preparation of subsequent BTR and NC	3.1 Human and institutional capacities for preparation of subsequent BTRs and NCs sustained	3.1.1 Stocktaking assessment and institutional arrangements for preparation of subsequent BTRs and NCs developed.	80,000.00	
		Sub Total (\$)	3,729,130.00	0.00
Project Management Cost (PMC)				
			361,000.00	15,000.00
		Sub Total(\$)	361,000.00	15,000.00
		Total Project Cost(\$)	4,090,130.00	15,000.00

Please provide justification

The PMC indicated reflects the aggregate amount from each BTR and combined BTR/NC project as per the GEF costing table totaling to US\$ 361,000- being the PMC for the 8 separate projects.

C. Source of Co-Financing for the Project by Name and by Type

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount(\$)
GEF Agency	UNEP	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	15,000.00
			Total Co-Financing(\$)	15,000.00

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

Not Applicable

D. GEF Financing Resources Requested by Agency, Country and Programming of Funds

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)
UNEP	GET	Antigua and Barbuda	Climate Change	CC Set-Aside	484,000	45,980
UNEP	GET	Cambodia	Climate Change	CC Set-Aside	484,000	45,980
UNEP	GET	Lao PDR	Climate Change	CC Set-Aside	484,000	45,980
UNEP	GET	Maldives	Climate Change	CC Set-Aside	484,000	45,980
UNEP	GET	Mauritania	Climate Change	CC Set-Aside	484,000	45,980
UNEP	GET	Liberia	Climate Change	CC Set-Aside	517,000	49,115
UNEP	GET	Malawi	Climate Change	CC Set-Aside	517,000	49,115
UNEP	GET	Zambia	Climate Change	CC Set-Aside	517,000	49,115
UNEP	GET	Global	Climate Change	CC Set-Aside	119,130	11,317
Total Gef Resources(\$)					4,090,130.00	388,562.00

Part II. Enabling Activity Justification

A. ENABLING ACTIVITY BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Provide brief information about projects implemented since a country became party to the convention and results achieved

The global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed.

The average temperature of the Earth's atmosphere and oceans has been rising over the past 150 years, and the pace of this change in our climate system appears to be accelerating. After decades of research and hundreds of studies, an overwhelming majority of scientists have come to believe that human activities are a major cause of this worrying trend. Some proposed climate change response strategies include (a) limiting greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to slow the rate and limit the extent of climate change, (b) taking adaptation actions to reduce potential damages from climate change impacts, (c) expanding research and development to provide better low-carbon options for the national and global economy, and (d) improving scientific understanding about climate change and its impacts to enable better informed decision making. The international community and national governments have over the years committed to implementing these strategies to mitigate global greenhouse gas emissions, while simultaneously galvanizing innovative solutions to adapt to a changing world.

In 1992, countries joined an international treaty, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to cooperatively consider what they could do to limit average global temperature increases and the resulting climate change, and to cope with whatever impacts were, by then, inevitable. Since 1994, governments have invested significant time and resources in the preparation, collection and validation of data on greenhouse gas emissions and the COP has made determined efforts to improve the quality and consistency of the data, by establishing improved guidelines for reporting. The reporting requirements under the UNFCCC have evolved over time, into a more comprehensive measurement, reporting and verification framework, starting with the adoption of the revised guidelines for preparation of national communications (NC) at COP 8. Additional measures seeking to significantly enhance transparency of action and support under the Convention were adopted as part of the Bali Action Plan at COP 13 and elaborated in decisions adopted at subsequent COPs. Parties at COP 16 decided to enhance the reporting in national communications, through preparation and submission of Biennial Update Reports (BURs). The 17th session of the COP adopted the guidelines on the preparation of biennial reports by developed country Parties (the "UNFCCC biennial reporting guidelines for developed country Parties?"); and those contained in annex III, for the preparation of Biennial Update Reports (BURs) by developing countries.

Aiming to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change, Parties adopted the Paris Agreement in 2015, and through it, established an Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF) under Article 13. Countries are now actively engaged in establishing modalities, procedures and guidelines (MPGs) to operationalize the ETF as contained in decision 18 of the Conference of the Parties serving

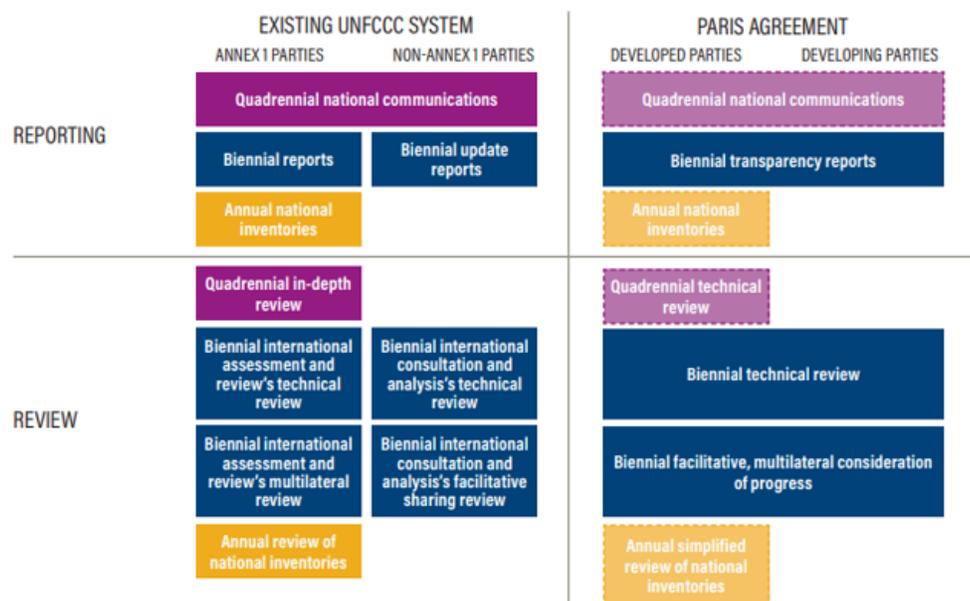
as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement: -i.e. Decision18/CMA.1 The following section briefly describes the linkages & differences between the MPGs and current UNFCCC reporting processes.

The following elements will continue to be reported under the Convention and are not superseded by the MPGs:

- National Communications (NCs) must continue to be submitted by developed and developing countries.
- Annual GHG inventory must continue to be submitted by developed countries. In the years in which a BTR is due, the GHG inventory can be submitted as a stand-alone report or as a section of the BTR (18/CMA.1, para. 3). If submitted as a stand-alone report, a summary of the Party's GHG emissions/removals must be included in the BTR (18/CMA.1, annex, para. 91).
- The proposed REDD+ forest reference emission level and/or forest reference level by developing country Parties which may be submitted on a voluntary basis in accordance with decision 12/CP.17 (para. 13) and will be subject to a technical assessment per decision 13/CP.19.
- The technical annex on REDD+ (to be reported in BURs per decision 14/CP.19 (para. 7) for those Parties seeking results-based payments) is to be reported as an annex to the BTR and is technically analyzed during the review of the BTR (paras. 45-46 of 1/CP.24).

The MPGs will, however, supersede reporting of Biennial Reports (BRs) and Biennial Update Reports (BURs) and the International Assessment and Review (IAR) and International Consultation and Analysis (ICA) processes for PA Parties (see decision 1/CP.24, para. 39):

- Reporting of the BR/BUR under the Convention will be superseded by reporting of the Biennial Transparency Report (BTR) for PA Parties.
- Review of the biennial reports and technical analysis (TA) of the BUR under the Convention will be superseded by technical expert review for PA Parties.
- Multilateral Assessment (MA) and facilitative sharing of views (FSV) under the Convention will be superseded by the facilitative multilateral consideration of progress (FMCP) for PA Parties.
- Parties to the Convention that are not Parties to the PA will continue with the current annual GHG inventory, IAR and ICA processes, as appropriate (see decision 1/CP.24, para. 44).



Source¹: Working paper. Washington, DC: Project for Advancing Climate Transparency (PACT)

Figure 1: The existing UNFCCC MRV System and the Paris Agreement's Enhanced Transparency Framework

The ETF also ensures a link between the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) under Article 4 of the Paris Agreement. An NDC under Article 4 is communicated by Parties every five years and is not subject to review under the ETF. Parties need to provide a description of their NDC in their BTR against which progress made will be tracked (18/CMA.1, para. 64). Although the adequacy and appropriateness of the Party's NDC (including the adequacy and appropriateness of the description of that NDC in the BTR) and the indicators chosen to track progress made in implementing the NDC are not subject to review under the ETF (18/CMA.1, para.149(b)), the Party's tracking of progress made in implementing its NDC, including the description of its NDC, and information provided for each selected indicator used for tracking progress is subject to review in accordance with the MPGs (18/CMA.1, paras. 146(a) and 150(b)). The progress a Party has made in implementing and / or achieving the NDC is summarized in the 'structured summary' of the BTR and reviewed by a technical expert review team.

These reports are the main mechanism countries have in place to bring climate change related information to the attention of national policy makers, relevant institutions, the wider national audience as well as to multilateral and bilateral development partners. Report preparations present unique opportunities for countries to integrate climate change into national development priorities, through establishment of national institutional frameworks and coordination mechanisms. A robust national climate reporting and self-sustained MRV system can bring a number of benefits, at the national level, including but not limited to;

- supporting the tracking of sustainable development goals (SDGs)
- paving the way for accession to economic and political communities and organizations.
- contributing to national reporting on environmental, climate and policy questions and communicating these to different target audiences, including the general public,

- providing coherent data for informed national policy- and decision-making - on climate issues and other related matters, making it possible to analyze the efficiency and effectiveness of policy implementation, which is an element of good governance.
- increasing the political buy-in for climate issues at the national level.
- enhancing national capacities by involving many stakeholders from a variety of national institutions in the operationalization of the MRV system.
- increasing the involvement of the private sector in climate actions; and
- improving access to funding.

Currently, there are 154 non-Annex I Parties to the Convention, out of which 49 are classified as Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and are given special consideration under the Convention because of their limited capacity to respond to climate change and adapt to its adverse effects. The latest information provided by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) on its activities relating to the preparation of national communications and biennial update reports show that most non-Annex I Parties are finalizing the preparation of their Third National Communications (NC3) and Initial Biennial Reports (BUR1). The following presents the status of submission of NCs, BURs and NIRs to the UNFCCC by non-Annex I Parties as of 30th June 2021.

Table 1: Number of National Communications and Biennial Update Reports Submitted to the UNFCCC by Developing Country Parties (as at June 30th, 2021)

National Communications						Biennial Update Reports				National Inventory Reports
NC1	NC2	NC3	NC4	NC5	NC6	BUR1	BUR2	BUR3	BUR4	NIR
154	144	85	13	2	1	65	34	16	5	39

Key: - NC1 – Initial National Communication NC2 – Second National Communication NC3 – Third National Communication NC4 – Fourth National Communication NC5 – Fifth National Communication	NC6 – Sixth National Communication BUR1 – Initial Biennial Update Report BUR2 – Second Biennial Update Report BUR3 –Third Biennial Update Report BUR4 –Fourth Biennial Update Report NIR—National Inventory Report
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Based on UN-OHRLLS[1]¹ December 2018 classification, there are 47 LDCs & 38 SIDS considered UN Members ? with some overlaps on LDCs and SIDS. Even though the reporting requirements under the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement provides for greater flexibility on reporting timelines for Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), most of these Countries have shown sustained interest in not only meeting the UNFCCC reporting requirement but also transition to the biennial transparency report sooner rather than later, to be able to track their NDC targets. The following presents a summary of submissions to the UNFCCC from LDCs and SIDS to date: -

- ? 49 Countries have submitted Initial National Communication
- ? 44 Countries have submitted Second National Communication
- ? 19 have submitted Third National Communication
- ? 1 has submitted Fourth National Communication
- ? 4 have submitted the Initial Biennial Update Report.

[1] UN-OHRLLS - The United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States

UNEP has continued to play an important role in supporting developing countries to meet their reporting obligations under the UNFCCC. The recent GEF report show that UNEP is currently supporting over eighty (80) developing countries to prepare their NCs and BURs. Over this time, UNEP has noted that these reports have not only assisted countries to meet their reporting requirements under the UNFCCC but have also helped countries to (i) establish subcommittees and sectoral working groups responsible for preparation of specific chapters of national reports as well as (ii) climate data generated to inform their national policies. The theory of change (Annex 1) for the umbrella project reflects a rationale that is consistent with the approaches of previous and ongoing UNEP-GEF climate change enabling activities. As national teams get better in applying the recommended NC and BUR guidelines, human and national institutional capacities become strengthened over time.

Besides, UNEP also recognizes that there are prevailing capacity challenges associated with the preparation of these reports in many developing countries, especially in the least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS). Many countries report persisting capacity gaps of government staff and insufficient institutional capacities, including gaps related to inter-agency and cross-sectorial coordination. Furthermore, countries report capacity needs related to mainstreaming climate considerations into their national planning and budgeting. These challenges have also been reported in the UNFCCC synthesis reports and area currently being addressed through different donors and initiatives at national, regional and global levels. In addition to supporting the Convention reporting obligations, UNEP is actively involved in the Transparency Framework on 'Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency' framework which aims to strengthen institutional and technical capacities of non-Annex I countries to meet the enhanced transparency requirements defined in Article 13 of the Paris Agreement.

Proposal scope: - UNEP has to date received expression of interests from LDCs and SIDS wishing to initiate the Biennial Transparency Report and/or National Communication as guided by the existing UNFCCC framework and the Paris Agreement; and the GEF information note[1] on financing of biennial transparency reports. This umbrella programme is designed to support Eight (8) LDCs and SIDS to prepare and submit Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs) and National Communications (NCs). The countries are: - Antigua and Barbuda, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Liberia, Malawi, Maldives,

Mauritania and Zambia. These countries have expressed their interest in joining the umbrella programme, as indicated in their letters of endorsement, for the following reasons:

[1] GEF/C.59/Inf.19 November 23, 2020

? They have completed and submitted their last GEF ? supported National Communication.

? Malawi is requesting for support for first BTR combined with the Fourth National Communication. While its initial biennial update report is still under preparation, the country has assured UNEP that this report will be submitted to the UNFCCC by **November 2021**.

? Besides, following existing practices, the GEF will provide support for the first BTR upon submission of a country?s last GEF-supported BUR to the UNFCCC. Support for the first BTR combined with a NC will be made available upon submission of a country?s last GEF-supported National Communication.

? Acknowledging their different circumstances, each country knows that they will get the opportunity to design a country-specific implementation strategy that will inform the approach they adopt during BTRs and NCs preparation under Component 1 of the Umbrella Programme

Table 2: Status of National Communications and Biennial Update Reports Preparation in Countries

PARTY	NCs & BUR Status						Proposed Project	
	NC1	NC2	NC3	NC4	BUR	BTR1	Project	Amount
1. Antigua & Barbuda	√	√	√	Under preparation	√		BTR1	484,000
2. Cambodia	√	√	Under preparation		√		BTR1	484,000
3. Lao PDR	√	√	Under preparation		√		BTR1	484,000
4. Liberia	√	√			√		NC3/BTR1	517,000
5. Malawi	√	√	√		BUR 1		NC4/BTR1	517,000
6. Maldives	√	√	Under preparation		√		BTR1	484,000
7. Mauritania	√	√	√	Under preparation	√		BTR1	484,000
8. Zambia	√	√	√		√		NC4/BTR1	517,000
NCs & BTRs			1	2	0	8	5BTRs; 3BTR/NCs	

Key:

√	Reports completed and available on the UNFCCC website
	Technical reports undergoing final reviews, national validation processes before submission to the UNFCCC.
	GEF-7 funds requested to support preparation of these reports

In addition to assessing status of the UNFCCC reporting, an assessment was conducted on status of ratification of Countries to the Paris Agreement and NDC submission. All countries have ratified the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement and submitted their initial NDCs. Six (6) out of the total eight countries have managed to submit their revised NDCs to the UNFCCC through the UNDP's Climate Promise partnership: - i.e. Cambodia, Lao PDR Liberia, Malawi, Maldives and Zambia. Antigua and Barbuda? & Mauritania are still updating their NDC report and are expected to complete this process soon.

Table 3: Countries Status on Transitioning towards the Paris Agreement

COUNTRY	PARIS AGREEMENT RATIFICATION	DATE OF NDC SUBMISSION	REVISED NDC	DATE OF SUBMISSION
1. Antigua and Barbuda	21 Sep 2016	21/09/2016	-	Under preparation
2. Cambodia	6 Feb 2017	06/02/2017	√	31/12/2020
3. Lao PDR	7 Sep 2016	07/09/2016	√	11/05/2021
4. Liberia	27 Aug 2018	27/08/2018	√	04/08/2021
5. Malawi	29 Jun 2017	29/06/2017	√	30/07/2021
6. Maldives	22 April 2016	22/04/2016	√	28/12/2020
7. Mauritania	27 Feb 2017	27/02/2017	-	Under preparation
8. Zambia	9 Dec 2016	09/12/2016	√	30/12/2020

This proposal seeks to support eight national governments fulfill essential communication requirements to the Climate Convention and the Paris Agreement, while building on existing portfolio of projects (e.g. National Communications / Biennial Update Reports, Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency, or National Adaptation Plans). The costing for the different reports is guided by the COP guidance on Convection reporting; and GEF information note^[1] on the financing of BTRs. The GEF information note on BTRs presents the different components of the reports, indicative costing as shown in **Table 4**.

Table 4: Indicative Cost Table for a Combined BTR/NC project and BTR

BTR+NC Components	Cost (US\$)	BTR Components	Cost (US\$)
i. National inventory report of anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of greenhouse gases	160,000	i. National inventory report of anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of greenhouse gases	160,000
ii. Information necessary to track progress made in implementing and achieving nationally determined contributions under Article 4 of the Paris Agreement	120,000	ii. Information necessary to track progress made in implementing and achieving nationally determined contributions under Article 4 of the Paris Agreement	120,000
iii. Information related to climate change impacts and adaptation under Article 7 of the Paris Agreement	100,000	iii. Information related to climate change impacts and adaptation under Article 7 of the Paris Agreement	100,000
iv. Information on financial, technology development and transfer and capacity-building support needed and received under Articles 9–11 of the Paris Agreement	20,000	iv. Information on financial, technology development and transfer and capacity-building support needed and received under Articles 9–11 of the Paris Agreement	20,000
v. Other relevant information (including supplemental NC chapters (research and systemic observation; and education, training and public awareness))	40,000	v. Other relevant information (e.g. gender awareness)	10,000
vi. Publication and submission of report, and project execution support	30,000	vi. Publication and submission of report, and other project execution support	30,000
Subtotal	470,000	Subtotal	440,000
Project management cost	47,000	Project management cost	44,000
Total	517,000	Total	484,000

[1] GEF/C.59/Inf.19 November 23, 2020. https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/EN_GEF_C.59_Inf.19_Information%20Note%20on%20the%20Financing%20of%20the%20Biennial%20Transparency%20Reports%20for%20Developing%20Country%20Parties%20to%20the%20Paris%20Agreement.pdf

Each of the countries included in this proposal had the opportunity to identify the GEF funding modality options that will suit their national planning towards transitioning to the PA reports. Therefore, the requested GEF funds will support a total of 5BTRS and 3 NCs/BTRs as follows: -

? Five (5) countries each requesting US\$ 484,000 for Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs) preparation, i.e. Antigua and Barbuda, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Maldives and Mauritania. These countries have completed and submitted their BURs to the UNFCCC.

? Three (3) countries requesting GEF funds of US\$ 517,000 for a combined BTR and NC. Liberia, Malawi and Zambia. These countries have submitted their NC; and Malawi is soon expected to submit its BUR to the UNFCCC.

During the CEO endorsement development phase, UNEP administered a simple set of questions to all the eight (8) participating countries, that sought to get additional information on: -

? how stakeholders will be consulted in project execution to ensure proper and meaningful stakeholder engagement

? the role civil society will take-up in the project.

? proposed institutional arrangement that will be established to support the NC and BTR projects

? how the project will be coordinated with relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives

? which specific capacity building areas that the BTR and NC project will seek to address during its implementation

The information obtained from countries have been included in different sections & Annexes of the **Prodoc uploaded as a separate supporting document** to the CEO endorsement request.

This project will be implemented on an agreed full cost basis. However, the eight national governments plan to contribute with leverage resources up to USD 393,000 which will be captured, when realized, through annual reporting. UNEP will provide co-financing of US\$ 15,000 in form of travel, staff and personnel time of the chief branch, the senior programme officer based in Copenhagen, as well as support from the Branch staff in the regional offices in West Asia, Africa and Asia - UNEP Cofinance letter is attached in **Annex L**

Considering that most of these countries have prepared their Initial and Second National Communications, country teams will be encouraged use the teams/structures established in previous projects to continue strengthening the existing information/database and human/institutional capacities. This approach will provide an opportunity for EA teams to build on lessons learnt and good practices from previous NCs and BURs. Teams will also be encouraged to make use of the methodologies recommended by the UNFCCC, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the Conference of Parties (COP), and the Consultative Group of Experts (CGE) in preparation of these reports. Training materials developed by the CGE to facilitate the preparation of NCs (decision 17/CP.8) and Decision 18/CMA.1 under MPGs, 8 are available at the UNFCCC website.[1]

[1] <https://unfccc.int/process/transparency-and-reporting/reporting-and-review-under-the-convention/support-for-developing-countries/training-opportunities/training-materials-for-the-preparation-of-national-communications-from-non-annex-i-parties> Accessed 4th March 2021. and https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/CMA2018_03a02E.pdf Accessed 4th March, 2021

In the absence of the project, once countries complete their current NC and BTR preparation, the teams and structures created based on the project may be lost. The timely availability of funds through this project will contribute to enhancing and maintaining the capacity of national experts in the preparation of subsequent national reports. As national teams get better in applying the recommended NC and BTR

guidelines, human and national institutional capacities become strengthened in due course. Continuous preparation of these reports using established institutions, pools of experts and stakeholders that are actively involved at all levels will increase country ownership and the uptake of project findings at all levels. Results obtained from various studies conducted under these projects will not only result in preparation of reports that inform national climate policy formulation but will also support the alignment with priority actions in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement. Better reports and enhanced capacities of Non-Annex 1 countries lead to more robust implementation the UNFCCC and its associated agreements.

Consistency with National Priorities:

BTR and NC reports will be prepared in close coordination with ongoing projects on Measuring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) of climate action, funded by the GEF and/or other donors. Some details on measures to be undertaken to enhance coordination with other projects have been provided by each country in **Annex I** and will be further elaborated in the Project Implementation Plans (PIP) under Component 1.

The project is consistent with national strategies, plans, reports and assessments under the UNFCCC and other Conventions. National teams will therefore be guided to link their reporting to these processes, and where appropriate, strengthen linkages with other equally relevant initiatives, such as:

? *The Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT)*: Projects designed to strengthen the institutional and technical capacities of Non-Annex I countries to meet the enhanced transparency requirements defined in Article 13 of the Paris Agreement. For the countries in the project that are developing CBIT concepts or implementing CBIT projects, this project will ensure that the Project Implementation Plans (PIPs) produced under Component 1 works closely with the planned CBIT projects, once approved by the GEF. It is notable that seven (7) out of the total 8 countries have requested for CBIT funding to further strengthen their institutional and technical capacities to meet the enhanced transparency requirements defined in Article 13 of the Paris Agreement. UNEP will therefore continue supporting these countries to ensure that the systems and capacities built under CBIT makes reporting processes more sustainable

? *Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs)*: These reports outline the post-2020 voluntary national climate targets, including mitigation and adaptation, which countries committed to, and which become a binding Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) when a country ratifies the Paris Agreement. NDCs are at the heart of the Paris Agreement and the achievement of these long-term goals. The Agreement sets a 'formal' starting date of the NDC Cycle (2020); and requests Parties to submit their NDC for each cycle at least 9 to 12 months in advance. Most of the participating countries have completed updating their 1st INDCs. Information generated from the studies and assessments carried out under the BTR/NC processes will be used by the participating countries to track the implementation of their 1st INDC targets, as well as refine targets to be included in their subsequent updated NDCs, as guided by the Global Stock take process.

? *Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs)*, which outline a set of policies and actions to be undertaken by a country as part of a commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The following countries have submitted NAMAs and are seeking further support for NAMA preparation i.e. Lao PDR and Zambia. The proposed NAMAs, which are at the conceptual phase describe the activities,

estimates cost, identifies support needs, assesses potential GHG emission reductions, and provides a time frame for the actions. Parties will be requested to make use of information obtained through the NAMA process, if funded, to complement and enrich data & information presented in the BTR and NC and vice versa. In addition, these countries will coordinate with the following processes as outlined in **Table 5**.

v *UNFCCC Technology Needs Assessment (TNA)* project assists developing country Parties to the UNFCCC determine their technology priorities for the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation to climate change.

v *National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA)*: Teams will be encouraged to address the identified capacity gaps in the NCSA to strengthen the capacity of stakeholders at all levels

v Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs)

v National Implementation Plans under the Stockholm Convention (NIPs)

v Regional and national programmes strategies aimed at addressing climate change

v National Adaptation programmes of Action (NAPAs)

v **National Adaptation Plan (NAPs)- the development of NAPs helps establish and strengthen national capacities to implement climate change and development actions. Based on progress made by countries through the GCF support, 24 developing countries including Cambodia have submitted its NAP to the UNFCCC NAP Central[1]. The NAP readiness proposals for Antigua and Barbuda, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritania and Zambia were approved by the GCF[2] and the preparation of respective NAPs is ongoing.**

[1] UNFCCC NAP Central

[2] GCF approved readiness proposals under this umbrella

Table 5: Summary of reports prepared (?) by the countries that are relevant to the BTR and NC processes

COUNTRIES	NCSAs	PRSPs	NIPs	NAPAs	NAPs	NAMA	TNAs
1. Antigua and Barbuda	-	-	√	-	-	-	-
2. Cambodia	-	√	√	√	√	-	Round 1
3. Lao PDR	√	√	√	√	-	√	-
4. Liberia	√	√	√	√	-	-	-
5. Malawi	-	√	√	√	-	-	-
6. Maldives	√	√	√	√	-	-	-
7. Mauritania	-	√	√	√	-	-	Round 2
8. Zambia	√	√	√	√	-	√	Round 1

The participating countries highlighted, in their survey responses, the following initiatives that will be coordinated with the newly proposed NC/BTR project. Additional information on the objectives and duration of these initiatives are available in **Annex I**:

Table 6: Proposed Coordination with Climate Change Projects/Initiatives

Country	Proposed coordination with Climate Change projects/initiatives
1. Antigua and Barbuda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of the Fourth National Communication under UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Monitoring and assessment of MEA implementation and environmental trends in Antigua and Barbuda –Cross Cutting Capacity Development (CCCD) Improved access and transparency to environmental information through the operationalization of the Environment Registry –Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT)
2. Cambodia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building climate resilience of urban systems through Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) in the Asia-Pacific region Reducing the vulnerability of Cambodian rural livelihoods through enhanced sub-national climate change planning and execution of priority actions (SRL)" Enabling Activities for the Preparation of Third National Communications under the United National Framework Convention on Climate Change Cambodia's Initial Biennial Update Report Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT)
3. Lao PDR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Third National Communication First Biennial Update Report Strengthening Lao PDR's institutional capacity to comply with the Enhanced Transparency Framework under the Paris Agreement
4. Liberia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Second National Communication Liberia's First Biennial Update Report
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT)
5. Malawi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT) Malawi's 2015 NDC revision and update
6. Maldives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity Strengthening for Improved Transparency of Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Actions in the Maldives Strengthening Low Carbon Energy Island Strategies (LCEI) Maldives 3rd National Communication Initiative for Climate Action Transparency
7. Mauritania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT) Fifth National communication (NC5)
8. Zambia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zambia Integrated Forest Land Project (ZIFLP) Preparation of Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) to the 2015 Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Promoting Climate Resilient Community-based Regeneration of Indigenous Forests in Zambia's Central Province Climate Resilient Livestock Management Project Strengthening Management Effectiveness and Generating Multiple Environmental Benefits within and around the Greater Kafue National Park in Zambia

Project Coordination at Regional and Global Level

At the regional level, participating countries will be guided to join regional Measurement Reporting and Verification (MRV) networks currently being created under the Global Support Programme (GSP) for experience sharing; continuous capacity building and technical backstopping which will enhance quality, efficiency and transparency of national climate change reports to UNFCCC. The operations of this network will be continued under the new global cooperation with CBIT 2 to maintain and continue the operation of the platform.

The established sub-regional networks will be supported in collaboration with UNFCCC-Regional Collaboration Centers (RCCs) as part of the collaboration Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between UNEP and the UNFCCC.

At the global level, the project will work closely with the UNEP/UNDP managed CBIT 2 platform to seek closer collaboration with initiatives such as Low Emissions Development Strategies (LEDS) and Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs); ICAT, NDC Partnership etc which seek to help countries build on and strengthen the transformational potential of BTRs and NCs

The Initiative for Climate Action Transparency (ICAT), which is supporting in-country capacity development programmes through training modules on Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) of policies and actions, and knowledge sharing of good practice and lessons learned. Countries that have joined or will join the initiative will be encouraged to coordinate MRV related activities in the BTR/NC projects with the capacity building activities in ICAT.

NDC Partnership: Launched at COP22 in Marrakesh, the NDC Partnership aims to enhance cooperation so that countries have access to the technical knowledge and financial support they need to achieve large-scale climate and sustainable development targets as quickly and effectively as possible. Countries in the NDC Partnership will be encouraged to map out areas of NDC partnership support and identify complementary areas with the BTR/NC project during the PIP preparation (component 1).

UNDP's Climate Promise: UNDP launched the Climate Promise at the UN Climate Action Summit in September 2019. The Climate Promise provides five key technical areas of support to help countries take bold action to reduce their emissions, increase their resilience to climate impacts and support sustainable development priorities. It's the world's largest offer of support to countries on NDC enhancement, currently assisting 119 countries in collaboration with 35 partners, with Angola as the country that has joined most recently. The Climate Promise leverages the NDC Partnership's coordination to strengthen the implementation of climate action. All the participating countries under this umbrella are beneficiaries in this partnership and will be encouraged to ensure complementarity in updating their climate data, building capacities of experts and enhancing ownership in NCs, BTRs and NDC processes.

Under the Climate Promise, there is strong collaboration between UNDP and UNEP at the global level to align strategy for support to countries on NDCs, including delivery of webinars to share information on various initiatives, as well as the regional level (particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean and Asia and the Pacific). National-level collaboration has also been successfully delivered, based on the specific demand of countries through their workplans. To date, over 20 countries have defined some level of coordination or joint support between the partner organizations being delivered on NDC enhancement under the umbrella of the Climate Promise. In some cases, this leverages the NDCP CAEP mechanisms, while in others it builds on existing portfolio of projects (e.g. National Communications / Biennial Update Reports, Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency, or National Adaptation Plans)

Developing GHG inventories is an essential first step towards managing emissions. *LEDS Global Partnership (LEDS GP)* is hosting two complementary tools to help design, plan, assess, and operationalize more sustainable national greenhouse gas inventory systems: Developing a National

Greenhouse Gas Inventory System Template Workbook; and the Greenhouse Gas Inventory Toolkit. This series of templates provides a comprehensive base for preparing a National Inventory System Report used for national greenhouse gas inventory development processes. A major component of the LEDS GP approach to building sustainable national greenhouse gas inventory management systems is starting with the pre-defined National Greenhouse Gas Inventory System Templates developed by the [United States Environmental Protection Agency](#) and [USAID](#). These tools are consistent with IPCC and UNFCCC guidelines for national greenhouse gas inventory development.

In the context of the Information Matters project, the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH* provides capacity-building and technical support to partner countries on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) under its International Climate Initiative (IKI)/ Zukunft ? Umwelt ? Gesellschaft (ZUG) gGmbH. The Information Matters project aims at strengthening the partner countries' in-country capacities for enhanced reporting under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The Information Matters project has a special focus on the preparation of Biennial Update Reports (BURs), Biennial Transparency Report (BTR) and the development and implementation of sustainable systems for Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV). There are templates and guidance documents that countries will be encouraged to make use of.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): The 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement put forth an innovative and complementary framework for accelerating action and achieving ambitious sustainable development objectives . Under the 2030 Agenda, a series of 17 global Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) have been agreed that are to be universally achieved. Although SDGs are not legally binding, governments are expected to establish national frameworks to achieve the goals. The SDGs are integrated and indivisible, balancing economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, while the Paris Agreement aligns with the 2030 Agenda and demands urgent climate action.

The global stock take of the Paris Agreement (GST) is a process for taking stock of the implementation of the Paris Agreement with the aim to assess the world's collective progress towards achieving the purpose of the agreement and its long-term goals. The first GST will take place from 2021 to 2023 and the process will be repeated every 5 years thereafter. Under the Paris Agreement countries are expected to submit a Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) which outlines their national priorities and action plans as informed by the studies and outcomes of the national communications and transparency reports. Given that NDCs are countries' climate action plans formulated considering their national circumstances, the timing of the GST will allow countries including those under this newly proposed NC/BTR project to take into consideration the outputs of the collective assessment that will be undertaken under the GST when formulating and submitting subsequent NDCs.

Through the one UN process, the programme will encourage participating countries to link the project results to priorities set in the *UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)* and the Strategic Partnership Cooperation Frameworks outlined **Table 7**. These priority ranges from climate change and disaster risk management; pollution, biodiversity & nature conservation, improving performance and responsiveness of targeted national and sub-national institutions; gender equality and addressing acute vulnerability and participation gaps. UNEP staff will be involved in the review of the various

components of the BTRs & NCs to enable them to contribute effectively to the process of including the outputs of the BTRs and NCs into the UNDAF process and SDG Target 13; of Strengthening the resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries; Integrating climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning and Improving education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning. PIPs will be developed with a view to alignment with ongoing country-level development priorities as reflected in United Nations country programming documents. The table below lists the relevant programming documents for each participating county.

Table 7: programming strategies by participating countries

Country	Programming Document
1. Antigua and Barbuda	United Nations Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework (UN MSDF) 2017-2023
2. Cambodia	UNDAF 2019-2023
3. Lao PDR	United Nations Partnership Framework for Sustainable Development (2017-2021)
4. Liberia	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF 2020-2024)
5. Malawi	UNDAF 2019-2023
6. Maldives	UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2021-2025
7. Mauritania	Partnership Framework for Sustainable Development (CPDD) 2018-2022,
8. Zambia	Sustainable Development Partnership Framework (2016-2021)

B. ENABLING ACTIVITY GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTIVITIES

The proposal should briefly justify and describe the project framework. Identify also key stakeholders involved in the project including the private sector, civil society organizations, local and indigenous communities, and their respective roles, as applicable. Describe also how the gender equality and women's empowerment are considered in project design and implementation

This proposal aims to support eight national governments fulfill essential communication requirements to the Climate Convention and the Paris Agreement; and is in conformity with Objective 3 of the GEF-7 Climate Change Focal Area, which focuses on fostering enabling conditions for mainstreaming mitigation concerns into sustainable development strategies. The project has the following three components:

1. Preparation of Project Implementation Plans (PIPs) for BTRs and NCs
2. Preparation of BTRs and NCs
3. National stakeholder involvement and institutional arrangement for subsequent BTRs and NCs

This section provides a detailed description of the three components and UNEP's enhanced execution support services. Each component description includes a set of measures and strategies that will be implemented to address some challenges reported by countries, ensuring that lessons learnt over the period that UNEP has been supporting countries to prepare NCs and BURs are put in place.

Component 1: Preparation of Project Implementation Plans (PIPs) for BTRs and NCs: -

This Phase of the project (maximum 4 months) will involve signing of Project Cooperation Agreements (PCA) between UNEP and each of the 8 executing agencies and will signify the commencement of project activities. The PCA outlines roles and responsibilities of the Executing Agency (EAs) and Implementing Agency (IAs) in the project. In addition to signing the PCA, the EAs are expected to provide banking details, or indicate their preferred mode of funds transfer to allow UNEP to disburse funds from its Headquarters in Nairobi to each of the 8 EAs.

Once the PCA has been signed, participating countries will prepare project implementation plans that will seek to present country-specific needs and inform the approach that each country will adopt during BTR/NC preparation. For instance, the SIDS are more likely to focus on the adaptation as priority sectors, whereas other countries will focus on improving their domestic MRV systems for GHG/Mitigation. The PIP document will be reviewed and approved by UNEP before the start of Component 2 and 3. In addition to the PIP preparation; the following project inception phase activities will also be undertaken:

- ? Support establishment of project teams within the EA to provide technical and programmatic support in PIP preparation, institutional arrangement and capacity building for national experts.
- ? Undertake training workshops among the national experts & service providers on tools and methodologies/procedures to be used in preparation of different sectoral reports.
- ? Support in the development of reporting templates.
- ? Assess the potential use and data requirement of GIZ/other recommended BTR template and data archival processes and systems

Countries will also undertake a qualitative assessment of their institutional capacity for preparation of Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs) and National Communications (NCs) on a scale of 1-4 rating as follows:

1. No designated institution to support and coordinate, planning and implementation of the UN Framework Convention on climate change reporting processes
2. Designated institution exists, but with limited staff and capacity to support and coordinate implementation of the Convention reporting requirements. Institution lacks authority or mandate to coordinate Convention reporting.
3. Designated institution has an organizational unit with standing staff with some capacity to coordinate and implement Convention reporting requirements. Institution has authority or mandate to coordinate Convention reporting. Activities are not integrated into national planning or budgeting activities.
4. Designated institution(s) has an organizational unit with standing staff with some capacity to coordinate and implement Convention reporting requirements. Institution(s) has clear mandate or authority to coordinate activities under Convention reporting, and activities are integrated into national planning and budgeting activities

The allocated ranking will be included in the PIP document for benchmarking purposes, and the rating exercise will be repeated under Component 3 to evaluate progress in institutional capacity at the end of the project. The information generated in these assessments will be shared with the GEF-supported project that targets to merge the Global Support Programme/CBIT Global Coordination Programme GSP-CBIT Project, currently under development; Availing this information in this platform, will ensure that donors and other relevant institutions & initiatives who are supporting reporting under the Convention and the Paris Agreement have access to this information.

Strategies for Avoiding Delays under Component 1: Based on lessons learnt from previous EAs, UNEP has identified three key areas where projects may experience delays in completing PIPs.

? Delays in clearance and signing of project agreements: Some countries experience challenges at this phase due to prolonged review and approval processes necessary for new agreements by the Cabinet and/or Attorney General. While recognizing the importance of this approval processes, and the need to expedite the national project approval processes, UNEP has ensured that the clauses/paragraphs of the project agreements have remained unchanged, so that country legal teams are familiar with all of the clauses in the Agreements, which can reduce time for approval significantly.

? Delays in opening a bank account for the project: Where government entities have lengthy procedures for opening a new project account, UNEP will approve the use of previous NC/BUR bank accounts for the follow-up projects upon the EA's request

? Limited expertise at national level to prepare PIPs: Preparation of a PIP entails the following steps:

- Hiring national expert(s) to draft the project implementation plan.
- Organizing workshops to obtain input from relevant stakeholders.
- Reviewing the project plans to ensure that it meets UNEP, GEF and UNFCCC standards, before its approval.

UNEP will provide the following execution support services to expedite PIP preparation:

? Support EA teams to draft terms of references for consultants to be engaged in preparing the project implementation plans;

? Assist national governments to identify qualified experts to undertake stocktaking exercise, stakeholder consultations and PIP preparation;

? Review the document prepared by the consultant to ensure compliance with GEF and UNEP financial guidelines and alignment with UN country programming and other ongoing initiatives;

? To fast track the preparation of the Project Implementation Plans, UNEP is encouraging countries to start preparing their project implementation plans in parallel to the CEO endorsement preparation process. For those countries that would have completed their BTR/NC/ PIPs by the time of signing of the project agreements, the initial cash advance will not only include funds for the project inception phase but will also include a reimbursement of the funds used for BTR and/or NC PIPs.

Project outputs under this component will be two types of PIPs and enhanced execution support provided to 8 countries:

- Three (3) project implementation plans (PIPs) and execution strategies for a combined BTR + NC by Liberia, Malawi and Zambia.
- Five (5) project implementation plans and execution strategies for BTR by Antigua & Barbuda, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Maldives and Mauritania
- Enhanced execution support provided to the 8 countries in preparation of project implementation plans and review of ToRs for recruitment of experts to support the BTR and NC preparation process

Each PIP will have a qualitative rating, done on a scale of 1-4, of institutional capacity for preparation of Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs) and National Communications (NCs)

Component 2: Preparation of Biennial Transparency Reports and National Communications:

The second phase of the project will be initiated once the PIPs prepared under component 1 have been approved and signed by the Executing Agency (EA) and UNEP. The goal of this component is not only to support countries to compile the BTR & NC reports, but to also build their capacities to generate these reliable and timely climate reports.

The National team, with guidance from UNEP will organize a Project Inception Workshop (PIW) not later than two months after the PIPs have been approved and project management teams set up. Different stakeholders will be invited to participate in the workshop, such as representatives of the civil society organizations, academia, private sector, NGOs as well as indigenous people. The objectives of the inception workshop will be to launch the project and finalize the institutional arrangements for carrying out the enabling activity project. The inception workshop will address several key issues including:

- ? Presentation of the project's objectives and linkages/synergies to other ongoing or planned projects, activities and initiatives, and national/sectoral development strategies
- ? Identification of stakeholders to be involved in the preparation of the BTR and/or NC, e.g. Governmental, private sector, donors, NGOs, academia and further assisting them to fully understand and take ownership of the project.
- ? Discussing and clarifying the implementation modalities of the project. This will entail outlining in detail the roles, support services and complementary responsibilities of UNEP staff vis-?-vis the project team; discuss the roles, functions, and responsibilities within the project's decision-making structures, including reporting and communication lines, and conflict resolution mechanisms.
- ? National teams may wish to consider elaborating on the Theory of Change to fit its national circumstances during inception. This might help to identify the drivers and assumptions needed for the changes to happen.
- ? Based on the project results framework, finalize the first-year annual work plan. Review and agree on the indicators, targets and their means of verification, and recheck assumptions and risks.

The Executing Agency will engage services of qualified national experts from relevant line Ministries, academia and private sectors to draft various reports and offer relevant training on the UNFCCC and PA reporting processes. In addition to engaging individual experts/consultants, the project presents an opportunity for the Executing Agency to sub-contract other institutions to prepare chapters/sections of reports aligned to their mandate. This arrangement requires signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) or legal Agreements between the Executing Agency and the selected lead institutions. The process of engaging national/regional/international experts and/or sub-contracting other institutions in the BTR/NC work will be guided by the procurement rules and regulations of participating countries.

The scope of work and timelines of the selected experts and institutions will be guided by the documents and discussions under component 1, to ensure that the BTRs & NCs are responsive to national circumstances and capacity needs. This umbrella programme comprises the 1st group of LDCs and SIDS transitioning to the Biennial Transparency Reporting process. It seeks to provide sufficient lead time to these countries to explore this new reporting modality and submit their initial BTRs on time (December 2024), while recognizing that LDCs/ SIDS are offered discretion in reporting and can choose to submit the information in their BTR at their discretion (*i.e. it may be less frequently than biennial*) (1/CP.21, para. 90 and 18/CMA.1 para. 4). Selected experts and institutions will therefore be guided by will be guided by the UNFCCC guidelines for Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs) and National Communications (NCs) for Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (Decision 17/CP.8) and guidance provided pursuant to Article 13, paragraph 7(b), of the Paris Agreement (Decision 4/CMA.1,17) respectively. EAs will also refer to the detailed MPGs for each of the BTR sections, for further description in chapters II to VI in the annex to Decision 18/CMA.1.

The Executing Agency in consultation with stakeholders, will identify thematic study/research areas to be conducted by national experts and those that will require assistance from regional and/or international experts. Training plans to refine the skills of national experts in data collection, analysis and reporting will be developed by EAs.

In addition to the existing guidelines; the participating countries have listed the following specific needs that they will seek to address during the implementation of the second component:

TABLE 8: Country-Specific Capacity Needs to be Addressed Under the Project

Country	Key Capacity Needs to Be Addressed Under the Project
Antigua and Barbuda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Building capacity to prepare national GHG Inventories; monitoring NDC targets and establishing Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) systems
Cambodia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ BTR preparation methodology/guideline training/workshop ▪ GHG inventory and mitigation action training ▪ Stakeholder engagement training
Lao PDR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strengthening national expertise in the reporting of Greenhouse Gas Inventory; mitigation analysis and the implementation framework of the Paris Agreement
Liberia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strengthening national expertise in the reporting of Greenhouse Gas Inventory; mitigation analysis and the implementation framework of the Paris Agreement
Malawi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GHG Inventory compilation and use of IPCC software ▪ Data and knowledge management ▪ Measurement, Reporting and Verification of implementation progress
Maldives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Based on the methodologies devised and the capacity built through the CBIT project, operationalize the climate finance tracking system in Maldives ▪ Capacity building would be needed in switching to the new requirements and guidelines under the ETF. This would specially involve on the use of the CRF tables and any related software to compile the inventory since the inventory now is compiled with the IPCC software. ▪ Specific capacity building would be needed in areas of data analysis and statistical processes related to data analysis. Namely on use of and methodologies, uncertainty assessments, and capacity building on methodologies to track adaptation measures.
Mauritania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support the Sectoral focal points in conducting their respective sector greenhouse gas inventory operations and mitigation of emissions reporting ▪ Sectoral focal points and associated data providers on transparency and to move up to developing emission factor in energy and livestock enteric fermentation ▪ Reinforce capacity data quality providers and control and archiving database operator.
Zambia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strengthening the domestic MRV system in view of the ETF through in-country training of experts on conducting sectoral data collection and analysis and facility-level measuring, reporting and verification (MRV) and its integration into the domestic MRV system. ▪ Strengthening the capacity of national experts on mitigation scenario development, including the selection and use of suitable modeling tools, development of scenario assumptions, and assessment of adaptation co-benefits. ▪ Developing the capacity of national experts on the development of scenarios related to adaptation including the development of national climate models and related climate change impacts and applicable adaptation measures.

Participating countries will be informed of and encouraged to participate in hands-on training workshops on the IPCC latest guidelines, organized by the UNFCCC, or other donors. UNEP will review and consider requests from executing agencies, for additional participants to be funded through the GEF project funds to participate in these workshops and increase the number of national experts who benefit from these training. Experts will not only be trained at the national level but will be supported through project funds, to participate in relevant regional training workshops and peer review meetings to improve the quality of their reports. At the global level, and in recognition of the continuing intergovernmental climate change negotiations and the Paris Agreement, UNEP will communicate any new BTR or NC reporting requirement that may be agreed upon by the COP to countries. It will also advise participating countries on potential adjustments to the project design and implementation as appropriate.

Strategies for Avoiding Delays under Component 2: Over time, UNEP has observed that some countries experience challenges during the preparation of reports, which include, but are not limited to, limited technical expertise at national level to prepare these reports and unreliable or missing sectoral data for the compilation of the report. UNEP will therefore put in place the following measures to address these concerns:

? Participating countries will be encouraged to participate in hands-on training workshops related to BTR/NC preparation processes and the latest IPCC guidelines that are organized by the UNFCCC or other donors.

? UNEP will favorably review requests from EAs asking for additional participants to benefit from these training. Experts will not only be trained at the national level but will also be supported through project funds to participate in relevant regional training workshops and peer review meetings to improve the quality of their reports.

? Peer to peer exchange and matchmaking of countries through regional MRV networks/hubs created under the Global Support Programme for continuous capacity building.

? Provide closer support to projects that experience delays and have limited capacity. The umbrella programme will engage the services of consultants/experts to support projects in different regions.

? Awareness creation and involvement of experts from different sectors, including the private sector, for improved ownership of the process, through Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs,) annual performance targets for different sectors, etc.

? Support in establishing collaboration with regional research centers and institutes for data provision in cases where data are unavailable at the country level

? A long-term strategy to support countries in establishing a centralized data management system and institutional coordination through accessing funds through GEF's CBIT initiative.

Expected outputs under the 2nd component: -will be the following two types of reports prepared and submitted to the UNFCCC are: -

Combined BTR+NC with information on: -

? National inventory report of anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of greenhouse gases

? Information necessary to track progress made in implementing and achieving nationally determined contributions under Article 4 of the Paris Agreement

? Information related to climate change impacts and adaptation under Article 7 of the Paris Agreement

? Information on financial, technology development and transfer and capacity-building support needed and received under Articles 9-11 of the Paris Agreement

? Other relevant information (including supplemental NC chapters (research and systemic observation; and education, training and public awareness))

A BTR with information on: -

- ? National inventory report of anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of greenhouse gases
- ? Information necessary to track progress made in implementing and achieving nationally determined contributions under Article 4 of the Paris Agreement
- ? Information related to climate change impacts and adaptation under Article 7 of the Paris Agreement
- ? Information on financial, technology development and transfer and capacity-building support needed and received under Articles 9?11 of the Paris Agreement
- ? Other relevant information (e.g. gender) awareness)

There will be three (3) combined BTR + NC prepared by Liberia, Malawi and Zambia; and five (5) BTR1 prepared by Antigua & Barbuda, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Maldives and Mauritania.

The BTRs and NCs are expected to be submitted to the UNFCCC by December 2024. Afterwards, the project will continue to support dissemination/uptake of report findings at national level, as well as conduct an assessment and stocktaking exercise (i.e. component 3) until the end of 2025.

Component 3: National stakeholder involvement and institutional arrangement for subsequent BTRs and NCs

To address concerns over funding gap highlighted by countries in preparing these reports, UNEP introduced the 3rd component to sustain continuous engagement of climate change structures/units in EAs and support the EAs to initiate GEF funding proposal development for subsequent BTRs and NCs preparation, in parallel to the final BTR/NC reports submission, under component 2.

The component will support the assessment will support countries to take stock and assess: -

- ? Work carried out under previous climate change enabling activities, to ensure that Parties build upon their achievements as they prepare the PIPs and GEF proposals for the subsequent BTRs and NCs
- ? Identify synergies with related programmes and institutions, where applicable, e.g. relevant regional projects, and national activities under other relevant international conventions (e.g. biodiversity, land degradation).
- ? Lessons learned during previous BTR & NC processes: This may include technical issues but also experiences of process management /institutional arrangements adopted that could provide lessons or best practices for the preparation of the BTR.
- ? Identify major challenges especially as they range from cross sectoral assessments to mainstreaming climate change into National Development Planning frameworks and processes.

? Develop a preliminary list of stakeholders and their potential roles in the BTR & NC process and propose a strategy to involve all relevant stakeholders.

? A final rating of qualitative assessment of institutional capacity for preparation of Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs) and National Communications (NCs)

The **expected output** under this component will be to support Executing Partners to initiate the request for GEF funding for subsequent BTRs and NCs and ensure a seamless transition without extended funding-gaps in the enabling activities (EAs) projects. This continuity will safeguard continued interest and institutional mechanisms necessary for preparation of BTR and NCs, and/or any other reports under the enhanced framework for transparency under the Paris Agreement.

STAKEHOLDERS AND CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT: ?

The following are some of the key stakeholders that will be engaged in these projects at national level; line government ministries, Civil Society organizations and NGOs, Private Sector representatives, Academia and Research Institutions and Non-State Development Partners. Each executing agency will hold a project inception workshop where the roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders in the project will be mapped out. Each of the participating countries have provided the following brief description of stakeholders?, and this will be further elaborated during the project implementation planning stage (Component 1)

1. Antigua and Barbuda: - A list of stakeholders will be developed by the project team to include government, non-government organizations, private sector, community-based organizations, civil society organizations and academia. The representatives of the Technical Advisory Committee will make up the majority of these stakeholders. A Project Inception Workshop will be held within the first 2 months of project to build ownership for the project amongst all stakeholders and to finalize the work plan for the first year. Several meetings, workshops and consultations will be held during the life of the project. The stakeholders identified from the inception workshop will actively participate in these activities and reports will be prepared. Gender participation at these activities will also be tracked and reported on in all reports

2. Cambodia: - The project execution will be conducted with cooperation and consultation with the Climate Change Technical Working Group (CCTWG), considered stakeholders from of line ministries. Additionally, the academia, research institutes, and private sectors will be invited. Gender will be encouraged for the stakeholder engagement. The stakeholder engagement will be conducted via workshop, training, consultative meeting, etc. Financial support is required for stakeholder engagement process. The required amount is subject to the proposed engagement plans.

3. Lao PDR: - Technical working groups (TWGs); comprised of various stakeholders and specialized technical personnel will be established by MONRE to coordinate the BTR activities, especially GHG inventory, mitigation and assessment of constraints and support needs. Their tasks, apart from data provision, will be to assist in reviewing of the report including results.

4. Liberia: - The Environmental Protection Agency of Liberia (EPA) is the designated National Authority (DNA) and the climate change focal point to the UFCCC. It is responsible for the implementation of international environment treaties. Within the EPA, the Climate Change Enabling Unit (CCEU) is responsible for preparing National Communications, Biennial Update Reports; and National Inventory Reports to the UNFCCC. The CCEU is also responsible for monitoring climate change-related activities/projects and their execution across the country. The project management team and the reconstituted technical expert groups will consult with other stakeholders including the government ministries, agencies, academia, national experts and civil society organizations in the implementation of this project.

5. Malawi: - To arrive at the list of stakeholders to be involved in implementation, a consultative process will be launched. Some possible stakeholders will include government bodies, policy makers, academia, NGOs, Private sector etc. The engagement process will encourage gender inclusivity, through the participation of women during all stakeholder consultations. Most of the consultations will be carried out virtually, roundtable discussions, workshops or meetings. Continuous stakeholder engagement will be critical to the success of the project.

6. Maldives: - Given the wide range of stakeholders that would be needed, thematic working groups established under the BUR process will be engaged with necessary update of the stakeholders and members. These working groups will be coordinated and led by the respective thematic coordinators and would include all stakeholders required for the successful implementation of the project. In addition to the working groups established for the BUR process, thematic working groups under adaptation will be formed for the BTR process. These stakeholders will act as focal points from each of these offices and will work in close collaboration with the respective technical coordinator in providing the necessary data and in ensuring the quality of the data provided. They will also be involved in the final compilation of the report, to ensure the data reported is accurate. Regular working group meetings will be held through the project implementation phase to ensure timely implementation and bridge any challenges faced.

7. Mauritania; - Stakeholders will be consulted at the project inception workshop to be made aware of the project objective, expected outcomes and outputs. They will also share their views and comments on output and report validation. Stakeholders will also participate in project capacity building and sensitization activities convened by the Ministry. Information dissemination to stakeholders. As regard to information dissemination to ensure proper and meaningful stakeholder engagement, stakeholders benefit from two to three dissemination routes:

(i) either via hard material and/or electronic mailing; or via

(ii) CCPNCC Web sites and platforms.

(iii) Sometimes through both ways.

8. Zambia: - Various stakeholders have been identified and their role in the preparation of the NC and BTR. These include the following; Line Ministries and departments, Sectoral leads (Energy, AFOLU, IPPU and Waste) Research Institutions and/Academia, Civil Society who have representatives in the technical Committee will also be engaged through the process of project execution and more

specifically during the preparation of the mitigation and adaptation components of the reports. In order to further enhance stakeholder engagement and preparation of quality reports (NC and BTR), technical working groups will be formulated, namely; technical working group on GHG emissions, technical working group on mitigation, technical working group on adaptation.

CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT? ?

Indigenous people, private sector representatives, and civil society organizations will also be among those invited to participate in the BTR and NC project inception workshop. They will be actively involved in contributing to the project outputs as well as in providing comments on the preparation of the Project Implementation Plans. In addition, they will provide their feedback during the assessment of the BTR and NC processes as they move forward (Component 3). The participating countries have outlined the various roles of civil society engagement in **Table 9**. The most common proposed role for civil society in the BTR/NC projects was as a member of the Project Steering Committee or other management body (7 countries), followed by engagement in project-related consultations (4 countries). Other anticipated roles included members of advisory bodies / contractors (4 countries) and project execution or co-execution (1 country).

Table 9: Proposed Role of the Civil Society in the Project

Country	<i>Consulted only;</i>	<i>Member of Advisory Body; contractor;</i>	<i>Member of project steering committee or a decision-making body;</i>	<i>Executor or co-executor;</i>	<i>Other (Please explain):</i>
1. Antigua and Barbuda					Participate in project meetings, workshops and consultations. Civil society will be involved in project implementation and contribute information to inform the BTR.
2. Cambodia	√				
3. Lao PDR		√	√	√	Technical working group on climate change
4. Liberia			√		
5. Malawi	√	√	√		
6. Maldives			√		
7. Mauritania	√	√	√		
8. Zambia	√	√	√		Participate in project meetings, workshops; preparation of mitigation and adaptation components of the report; awareness raising campaigns.

Private Sector Engagement

Collaborative partnerships between the public and private sectors will be promoted throughout the project implementation period. Engaging the private sector in these reporting processes has the potential to mobilize financial resources and technical capabilities, leverage the efforts of governments, engage civil society and community efforts, and develop innovative climate services and technologies.

The private sector will benefit from various training and awareness creation activities which will seek to enhance their understanding of the importance and role in climate action reporting; while enhancing environmental sustainability in their operations. In return, the private sector will be expected to follow up on opportunities and needs identified in the report, especially in terms of finance and technology.

Representatives of the private sector will be invited to project inception workshops to provide their comments their potential role in the relevant priority sectors of the project. Some of the potential areas of private sector engagement in NCs/BTRs which will be further elaborated by each country under output 1 are: -

? Knowledge and Information Sharing: The private sector may have the opportunity to develop and scale solutions by sharing new tools, methods, technologies and innovation to achieve global environmental benefits. They may also be a source of data, in their relevant filed, e.g. Industrial Processes and Product Use (IPPU)

? Capacity Development: The private sector may improve the capacity of value chain actors, especially small, medium enterprises and smallholders, to support global environmental benefits; and encourage internal changes within business operations to improve environmental outcomes

? Policy Development: -The private sector is being actively consulted and included in policy dialogues and frameworks at the global, national and regional levels - e.g. in developments of standards and protocols in corporate and business practices

? Industry Leadership through supporting all actors in an industry or value chain raise the bar of environmental performance

Gender

This project has been designed to conform to 2018 guidance from the GEF on gender equality^[1] and UNEP's Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment. It will aim to support the Gender Action Plan of the UNFCCC^[2] in the following ways:

Guided by their national policies and strategies, as listed in **Table 10**, efforts will be made to have acceptable gender representation in project management structures as well as in capacity building activities, and women's participation in the project. The executing agencies, in consultation with relevant entities, will identify a gender focal point in their working groups to track and itemize issues linked to their respective reporting sections - adaptation, mitigation and greenhouse gases, gender financing, capacity, technology needs, public awareness, education, constraints and gaps. A short summary or section under the itemized issues will be prepared and linked to the BTRs and NCs. Institutions to be consulted on gender issues at national level will include, but not limited to: Ministries

in charge of gender, the gender focal point for the convention on climate change, civil society organizations working in the fields of gender and climate change as well as research institutions and development partners working on gender issues. Participating countries will also be encouraged to actively participate in the development of a synthesis report on the implementation of the gender action plan as adopted by COP 23.

[1] GEF (2018). *GEF Policy on Gender Equality*.

[2] Decision 3/CP.23 <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2017/cop23/eng/11a01.pdf#page=13> Accessed October 30, 2019.

Table 10: Gender related policies in the participating Countries

Country	Gender Ministry/Department	Existing National/Sectoral Gender policy/Strategy
1. Antigua and Barbuda	Directorate of Gender Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National Strategic Action Plan on Gender Based Violence (2011-2015)
2. Cambodia	Ministry of Women's Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gender mainstreaming strategic plan into Environment Sector (2016-2020)
3. Lao PDR	National Commission for the Advancement of Women and Mother-Child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ LAO PDR's Constitution (2003) ▪ The National Strategy for the Advancement of Women (2016-2025) ▪ Gender Action Plan (2017-2021)
4. Liberia	Ministry of Gender and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Climate Change Gender Action Plan ▪ Liberia National Gender Policy (2009) ▪ Gender and Development Act (2001)
5. Malawi	Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National Gender Policy (2015) ▪ Gender Equality Act (2013)
6. Maldives	Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Constitution of the Maldives (2008) ▪ National Gender Equality Policy (2009)
7. Mauritania	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National Strategy against Female Genital Mutilation in (2008)
8. Zambia	Ministry of Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National Gender Policy (2014) ▪ The Gender Equity and Equality Bill (2015) ▪ The Anti-Gender Based Violence Act No. 1 (2011)

The PIP templates that will be provided to the EAs (Component 1) will include a budget line to support a gender specific activity to aid linkages between gender and climate change priorities. This is aligned to the GEF guidelines on BTR/NC and BTR components, as shown in **Table 4**. Gender specific activity will be included under *Other relevant information (including supplemental NC chapters?* and *Other relevant information e.g. gender?* in the combined BTR/NC & standalone BTR projects respectively. National teams will be encouraged to refer to the *Gender Responsive National Communications Toolkit*, which was developed through the GEF-funded Global Support Programme (GSP). This toolkit is accessible at the GSP website[1]. Countries will also receive information on updated guidance on the integration of gender into national reporting as this guidance becomes available under the CBIT Phase IIA project.

[1] <http://www.un-gsp.org/news/gender-responsive-national-communications-toolkit> Accessed October 30, 2019.

RISKS: -

Considering that majority of countries participating in the project have either completed their Third NC or have advanced in preparation of the Third NC and Initial BURs, the risk of countries not delivering the project outputs can be considered minimal. This is because most countries have already established a reasonable technical and institutional basis to prepare their subsequent reports. The main project risk, however, is related to (i) the existence of weak institutional arrangements, and (ii) poor stakeholder consultation processes; (iii) possibility of most countries producing reports that lack adequate depth and quality, (iv) delays in report completion by countries. UNEP will assist country teams to work towards mitigating the anticipated risks, as follows

Table 11: Project Risks and proposed measures to mitigate the risks during project implementation

Risk	Level of Risk	Commentary and Mitigating Strategies and Actions
<p>1. <i>Organizational risk (participating countries):</i> Limited consultations and weak participation process amongst stakeholders due to institutional rivalries or rigidities which hamper responsiveness of project outputs to national development needs as well as effective work delivery and quality of the outputs.</p>	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Component I - i.e. the project implementation plan (PIPs) will outline roles and responsibilities of different institutions and stakeholders during BTR & BTR/NC implementation - Teams will also refer to the various toolkits for assisting non-Annex I Parties in establishing and maintaining the most suitable national institutional arrangements to meet the enhanced reporting requirements for BTRs and NCs. e.g. a toolkit developed by the UNFCCC Secretariat - UNEP will encourage peer support by linking-up country teams to exchange data and information, tools and methodologies, lessons learnt and good practices to enhance the quality and utility of national reports.
<p>2. <i>Organizational risk (participating countries):</i> Weak institutional arrangement structures and inexperienced staff. Inadequate incentives and difficulties in retaining staff involved in the preparation of previous or current national communications. This has resulted in high staff turnover in many countries and tend to affect not only the quality of the studies but also the timeliness of delivery of project outputs.</p>	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Due to recent increased interest in climate change issues by national governments, countries will be encouraged to set up permanent and adequately staffed climate change offices to ensure sustainability of BTRs and NCs processes including easy access to information, data and tools used for climate change studies. - Executing Agencies will be encouraged to actively involve other institutions in national reporting, through various channels – e.g. establishing robust institutional arrangements and constituting technical working groups with agreed terms of reference, contracts and memorandum of understanding - Continuous training of climate change project staff on both administrative and technical aspects of the project, to ensure that the unit retains a good institutional memory in case of staff movement
<p>3. <i>Operational risk (Implementing Agency):</i> Superficial and/or delayed reporting/no cost extension</p>	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UNEP will provide enhanced execution support to countries experiencing difficulties in drafting terms of references and identifying regional/international experts to facilitate training of local experts to understand the UNFCCC reporting guidelines and ensure effective and timely work delivery - In cases where there are challenges in project, the UNEP team will undertake country missions (after COVID-19 restriction measures are lifted) to discuss financial and technical matters, and any other factors that may be hindering project delivery.

<p>4. <i>Operational risk (Implementing Agency):</i> The possibility of most countries producing reports that lack adequate depth and quality</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UNEP will advise on access to methodologies and guidance notes for BTR and NC preparation, and recommend participation in capacity building initiative workshops, webinars organized by the CGE, IPCC, UNFCCC, CBIT and other organizations - UNEP will raise the level of project supervision and work closely with the new global cooperation with CBIT 2 to help countries identify regional centers of excellence in both Annex I and non-Annex I countries to help countries access climate relevant data, information and appropriate analytical tools particularly in the areas of vulnerability and adaptation. These centers of excellence will provide technical assistance to country teams to enhance overall quality of the National Communication reports - UNEP will also encourage south-south cooperation and peer support by linking up country teams to exchange data and information, tools and methodologies, lessons learnt and good practices
<p>5. <i>Political risks:</i> It is expected that political unrest/ instability in any of the Countries, will impede implementation of project activities and completion of the project within the stipulated time frame.</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UNEP will make use of its Regional Offices and/or other UN Offices to liaise with the national government to assess the situation and put measures in place to ensure that the project incurs minimum losses and that project activities resume once the national situation is favorable - The institutional arrangements of these projects are designed to include a broad cross section of ministries/experts involved in addressing climate change and as such aim to maintain some continuity of personnel between administrations. - National projects usually interact with technical staff at government level - who are most likely to remain after elections as civil servants serving politically elected officials. As such, projects usually receive continued support from these technical staff between elections and advocate for the project under new political administrations.
<p>6. <i>Environmental risks/hazards:</i> Occurrences of extreme weather events – floods, hurricane, droughts etc. will slow/stop implementation of project activities and completion of the project within the stipulated time frame.</p>	<p>Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National teams will be encouraged to create more awareness on climate change related hazards/disasters; enhance coordination of efforts between institutions for risk assessment, improve early warning systems to mitigate impacts and increase resilience to extreme events - National teams will be encouraged to prioritize data storage and archiving processes, to prevent loss of data /information which would impact the timely completion of the project

Covid 19-related issues; -

? National teams will be encouraged to consider virtual/alternative means of consultation, training, reviews and allocate budgets to support this functionality accordingly

? Teams will also be requested to conduct training that address gender differentiated impacts of COVID 19 during report preparation

Knowledge Management

At national level, BTR/NC preparation process is designed to enhance public participation and create awareness on climate change issues. The reporting process presents an opportunity to promote information sharing and networking amongst all relevant institutions and stakeholders at national and local levels. Parties will indicate, where applicable, national climate change communication strategies that have been put in place, or that are proposed, to enhance the general understanding of climate change issues and integration of the same in national development planning processes. Preferred channels for information sharing and dissemination will be identified and set up during the project implementation phase; this may include websites, e-libraries and climate change offices. Participating

countries shall be required to identify and have elaborate plan of activities for raising awareness and education for different groups of people. This may include the use of publications, training workshops, and public meetings to disseminate project findings at different stages. Funds to support these activities will be specified in the Project Implementation Plan (Component 1).

Once drafting and compiling of BTR and/or NC information is complete (Component 2), participating countries will be encouraged to produce a single document that includes an executive summary. The document may be presented as a hard copy and in electronic format. The executive summary, which should be no more than 10 pages long, will be used for the purpose of making the national communication and its key findings accessible to policymakers, the media, and the public.

At the regional level, participating countries will be encouraged to join regional MRV networks created under the GSP to share their experiences and lessons learnt in national reporting. This support will be linked to regional network coordinators and international experts, who will provide guidance to countries as needs arise while enhancing south-south networking.

Participating countries will also be requested to exchange data and information, tools and methodologies, lessons learnt, and good practices to enhance the quality and utility of their reports through the streamlined website that will replace the GSP website. The merged GSP/CBIT website will provide information and materials, tools, relevant links, and country pages; and online learning modules and webinars. This support platform aims to provide streamlined support and capacity building at the country, regional, and global level to enable Non-Annex I countries under the UNFCCC and developing countries under the Paris Agreements to better respond to reporting requirements and to catalyze increased ambition within country NDCs.

C. DESCRIBE THE ENABLING ACTIVITY AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Discuss the work intended to be undertaken and the output expected from each activity as outlined in Table A

The project will be implemented by the Economy Division of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). UNEP has more than twenty years of experience supporting countries meet their reporting requirements under the UNFCCC, and it supports GEF enabling activities in over 80 countries. Over this time, UNEP has noted that these reports have not only assisted countries to meet their reporting requirements under the UNFCCC but more importantly have helped them to establish subcommittees and sectoral working groups responsible for specific chapters of national reports as well as link scientific assessments of climate change to national policies aimed at contributing to reducing GHG emissions and promoting adequate adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change whilst ensuring sustainable development of their national economies.

The Project will be executed by the following 8 national governments/ Executing Agencies (EAs), as indicated in the respective letters of endorsement

1. Ministry of Health, Wellness and the environment (Antigua and Barbuda)

2. Ministry of Environment, National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD) (Cambodia)
3. Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (Lao PDR)
4. Environmental Protection Agency of Liberia (EPA) (Liberia)
5. Ministry of Forestry and Natural Resources (Malawi)
6. Ministry of Environment (Maldives)
7. Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development. (Mauritania)
8. Ministry of Water Development, Sanitation and Environmental Protection (Zambia)

Annex I provide a short description of the different institutional frameworks that each of the participating countries will establish to execute the project. The general national project execution arrangements involve the establishment of Project Management Units (PMU) within the EAs for the overall management of all aspects of the project implementation. The PMU, constituting of a Chief Technical Advisor or Technical Advisor, Project Administrative Secretary/Accountant will provide technical support the national Technical Expert Groups (TEGs). The TEGs will be constituted along different Thematic Working Groups (TWG) (e.g. GHG Inventories, GHG mitigation, domestic measurement reporting and verification arrangements BTR/NC support needs) depending on project type (BTR and/or NCs). EAs will be encouraged to identify gender focal point in all working group to track and itemize issues linked to their respective reporting sections - adaptation, mitigation and greenhouse gases, gender financing, capacity, technology needs, public awareness, education, constraints and gaps. Any other relevant group will be established, based on a unanimous decision of the National Project Advisory Committee (NPAC) members. Additional information on national institutional arrangements; and coordination with other relevant climate change initiatives is provided in a separate attachment of **Annex I**

UNEP has previous experience working with above EAs during the preparation of previous NCs and or BURs and will therefore continue to play a pivotal role in assisting these teams to strengthen their capacities in reporting. The UNEP will support countries in two ways, in view of their national circumstances and capacity needs. UNEP will act as the GEF Implementing Agency as well as provide enhanced execution support to these countries. UNEP, through its Economy Division will disburse funds to each of the 8 National Governments.

(ii) UNEP's role as the Implementing Agency in the project is as follows:

- Lead in full internalization, UNEP Project Agreement signing and first disbursement/sub-allotment to executing agency
- Technically assess and oversee quality of project outputs, products and deliverables
- Review of reporting, checking for consistency between execution activities and expenditures, ensuring that it respects GEF incrementality rules.
- Clearance of cash requests, and authorization of disbursements once reporting is found to be complete and accurate

- Approve budget revision, certify fund availability and transfer funds
- Create consensus to resolve inter-institutional and multi-country issues
- Manage relations with the GEF
- Umbrella programme oversight and feedback on demand to GEF Operational Focal Points
- Manage relations with the GEF Evaluation Office and UNEP's Evaluation and Oversight Unit
- Provide consistent and regular oversight on project execution through an annual plan
- Follow-up with Executing agency for progress, equipment, financial and audit reports
- Provide no-objection to main TORs and subcontracts of the project, including selection of project manager or equivalent
- Attend inception workshops, field visits where relevant,
- Assess project risks, and monitor and enforce a risk management plan
- Ensure that GEF quality standards are applied consistently to all projects
- Ensure that independent evaluations are carried out according to GEF and UNEP requirements (dedicated budget, TOR, mission planning), and review evaluation reports.

(iii) UNEP's role in providing enhanced execution support to Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) - *(through global set aside funds allocated under output 1.1.2, covered by the 3% of total project cost)*. The following range of support services will be provided to the 8 participating countries, in addition to the IA services:

- Support EA teams to draft terms of references for consultants to be engaged in preparing the project implementation plans (Component 1) by: -
 - i. Assisting national governments to identify qualified experts to undertake stocktaking exercise, stakeholder consultations and PIP preparation.
 - ii. Reviewing the project implementation plan prepared by the consultant to ensure compliance with the GEF and UNEP financial guidelines.
- Provide advisory services during recruitment of project personnel and/or consultants to support the BTR and NC reporting process to ensure that the qualified candidates are selected to support project work.
- Closely monitor, in consultation with the EA, the technical quality of products, outputs and deliverables from local, regional and international consultants and national experts in line with the scope of their work.

- Provide training to country level project management teams on compliance with technical and financial reporting guidelines through the development of and dissemination of guidance notes to enable countries meet their reporting obligations to GEF and UNFCCC.
- Support national governments in identifying suitable national and sub-regional/ international climate change experts (by means of advertisements, website, and roster of experts) capable of carrying out the necessary thematic assessments in the areas of GHG Inventories, Mitigation Analysis and Vulnerability and Adaptation strategies
- Assist country teams to organize national workshops for different BTR/NC components, this will entail:
 - i. the identification of trainers for different BTR/NC components
 - ii. designing the course/workshop agenda
 - iii. reviewing course/workshop training materials.
 - iv. Appraising the technical skill and expertise of the trainers to ensure delivery of high quality and targeted training support.
- Support project partners in the identification of regional centers of excellence to support countries access climate relevant data, information and appropriate analytical tools particularly in the areas of GHG Inventories, mitigation actions.

D. DESCRIBE, IF POSSIBLE, THE EXPECTED COST-EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROJECT

The umbrella programme approach presents multiple benefits compared to preparation of Eight (8) single country enabling activity requests submitted to the GEF. This approach streamlines project development, approval and funds disbursement processes, which means that start-up of project activities is accelerated, and project cycle expedited saving significant time to countries and minimizing delay known during submission of NCs and BURs to the UNFCCC in the past. Having stated that, UNEP also recognizes that there is no such thing as "one size fits all" in enabling activities and has introduced the first component of the proposal to capture diversity within each participating country. The third project component has also been included to support continuous engagement of climate change structures/units in EAs, as well as stakeholders interested in climate change enabling activities, after completion and submission of reports to the UNFCCC.

The GEF developed financing guidelines on BTRs were availed in November 2020, with the indication that Parties could start accessing BTR funding in January 2021. In recognition of their national circumstances, LDCs/ SIDS are offered discretion in reporting and can choose to submit the information in their BTR at their discretion (*i.e. it may be less frequently than biennial*) (1/CP.21, para. 90 and 18/CMA.1 para. 4). This proposal comprises the 1st group of LDCs and SIDS transitioning to the Biennial Transparency Reporting process. This umbrella programme seeks to provide sufficient

lead time to these countries to explore this new reporting modality and submit their initial BTRs on time and UNEP will provide the needed execution support services to these countries throughout project phase.

On the BTR review process: - MPGs provide a choice to LDCs and SIDS, to participate in the same centralized review as a group (decision 18/CMA.1, para. 157). LDCs and SIDS may also choose to participate as a group during the subsequent working group phase of the facilitative multilateral consideration of progress (decision 18/CMA.1, para. 194). This is an idea that the UNFCCC secretariat may explore for this group of countries. The structure of the umbrella programme therefore allows for country-flexibility as well as options for countries to jointly share lessons learnt and undergo the review process jointly.

E. DESCRIBE, DESCRIBE THE BUDGETED M & E PLAN

The Logical Framework Matrix (**Annex A**) provides performance and impact indicators for project implementation along with their corresponding means of verification.

The project will be monitored through the following M&E activities:

- ? A Project Inception Workshop at the national level will be held within 2 months of start of project, after the establishment of the Project Management Unit. This will involve all key stakeholders identified during the national consultation process. An Inception Workshop report will be prepared and shared with participants to formalize various agreements and plans decided during the meeting.
- ? Monitoring BTR and NC technical progress against expenditures: The Project Coordinator will be responsible for preparation of quarterly progress reports and expenditure statements. Technical progress and financial reports shall be reviewed by the UNEP Task Manager and Fund Management Officer.
- ? Project Annual and final financial audit will be undertaken to assess probity (i.e. correctness, integrity etc.) of expenditure and transactions.
- ? Periodic Monitoring through discussions with key partners: the UNEP Task Manager will conduct periodic monitoring of activities based on the agreed schedule in the Project Implementation Plan to assess status of implementation of project. The monitoring of project activities will identify areas of improvements and will make recommendations on how to address gaps in project implementation.
- ? At the end of the project, a Terminal Operational Closure Report will be prepared, using the most recent UNEP operational completion report template to be obtained from the UNEP Evaluation Office. This is based on the recent GEF Evaluation Office confirmation that the non-expedited Enabling Activities projects do not warrant a terminal evaluation, as they are not considered FSP or MSPs. A Terminal Operational Completion Report for a single GEF ID will be prepared and will provide a comprehensive analysis on work carried out in each country.

Annex F presents a detailed monitoring and evaluation budget and workplan.

Type of M&E activity	Responsible Parties	Budget from GEF (US\$)	Budget co-finance	Time Frame
Project Inception Workshop (PIW)	National Project Management Unit, Technical Expert Groups and UNEP Task Manager to raise awareness, build stakeholder engagement and detailed work planning			Within 2 months of project start-up and establishment of the project management unit
Project Inception Report	Project Coordinator & UNEP Task Manager			Not more than 1 month after the Project Inception Workshop
Technical progress reports & expenditure statements	National Project Management Unit, Task Manager, Funds Management Officer			Four (4) quarterly expenditure and technical progress reports for any given year, submitted by January 31, April 30, July 31 and October 31 (latest) and at the end of the project implementation
Project Monitoring	UNEP Task Manager			Continuous
Terminal Operational Closure	National Project Management Unit, Task Manager, FMO, Consultant(s)			Initiated no earlier than six months prior to the operational completion of project activities
Total M&E Plan Budget		-	-	

F. EXPLAIN THE DEVIATIONS FROM TYPICAL COST RANGES (WHERE APPLICABLE)

N/A

ANNEX J: SAFEGUARD RISK IDENTIFICATION FORM (SRIF)

Safeguards Risk Summary

A. Summary of the Safeguards Risk Triggered

Safeguard Standards Triggered by the Project	Impact of Risk (1-5)	Probability of Risk (1-5)	Significance of Risk (L, M, H)
SS 1: Biodiversity, Ecosystems and Sustainable Natural Resource Management	1	1	L
SS 2: Climate Change and Disaster Risks	1	1	L
SS 3: Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency	1	1	L
SS 4: Community Health, Safety and Security	1	1	L
SS 5: Cultural Heritage	1	1	L
SS 6: Displacement and Involuntary Resettlement	1	1	L
SS 7: Indigenous Peoples	1	1	L
SS 8: Labor and working conditions	1	1	L

B. ESS Risk Level¹⁴

5	H	H	H	H	H
4	M	M	H	H	H
3	L	M	M	M	M
2	L	L	M	M	M
1	L	L	L	L	L
#	1	2	3	4	5

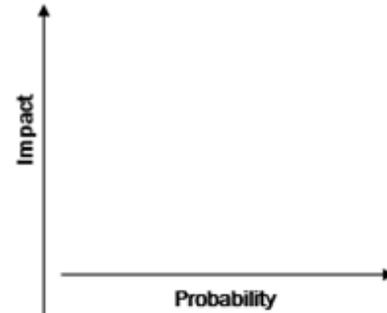
¹⁴ **Low risk:** Negative impacts minimal or negligible; no further study or impact management required.

Moderate risk: Potential negative impacts, but limited in scale, not unprecedented or irreversible and generally limited to programme/project area; impacts amenable to management using standard mitigation measures; limited environmental or social analysis may be required to develop an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP). Straightforward application of good practice may be sufficient without additional study.

High risk: Potential for significant negative impacts (e.g. irreversible, unprecedented, cumulative, significant stakeholder concerns); Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) (or Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA)) including a full impact assessment may be required, followed by an effective comprehensive safeguard management plan.

Refer to the UNEP ESSF (Chapter IV) and the UNEP's ESSF Guidelines.

- Low risk
- Moderate risk
- High risk
- Additional information required



C. Development of ESS Review Note and Screening Decision

Prepared by

Name: Suzanne Lekoyiet Date: 8 March 2021

Screening review by

Name: Yunae Yi Date: 09/03/2021

Cleared¹⁵

D. Safeguard Review Summary (by the safeguard team)

This is a low-risk project. UNEP ESSF guiding principles-- resilience and sustainability; human rights, gender equality and women empowerment, accountability and leave no one behind--are still applicable to the low-risk projects.

E. Safeguard Recommendations (by the safeguard team)

- No specific safeguard action required
- Take Good Practice approach¹⁶
- Carry out further assessments (e.g., site visits, experts' inputs, consult affected communities, etc.)

¹⁵ This is signed only for the full projects latest by the PRC time.

¹⁶ Good practice approach: For most low-moderate risk projects, good practice approach may be sufficient. In that case, no separate management plan is necessary. Instead, the project document demonstrates safeguard management approach in the project activities, budget, risks management, stakeholder engagement or/and monitoring segments of the project document to avoid or minimize the identified potential risks without preparing a separate safeguard management plan.

- Carry out impact assessments (by relevant experts) in the risk areas and develop management framework/plan
- Consult Safeguards Advisor early during the full project development phase
- Other _____

a) Activities under the proposed project are expected to generate no or limited adverse environmental effects, since most activities of the project are considered to support preventive measures. The Project will, generally, have positive environmental and social impacts as the project targets to support LDCs and SIDS countries meet their reporting obligation under the UNFCCC, in addition to generating a wealth of climate change related data to guide in designing priority adaptation and mitigation policies and actions to inform development strategies and sector programs.

Additional note: Please refer to the attached project document under the category -Non-expedited EA PIF and CEO Approval document- for the below listed figures, tables and annexes.

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Part III: Approval/Endorsement By GEF Operational Focal Point(S) And GEF Agency(ies)

A. Record of Endorsement of GEF Operational Focal Point (s) on Behalf of the Government(s):

Focal Point Name	Focal Point Title	Ministry	Signed Date
Her Excellency Diann Black Layne	GEF OFP	Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment	3/8/2021
Mr. Tin Ponlok	GEF OFP	Ministry of Environment	3/22/2021
Mr. Virana Sonnasinh	GEF OFP	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment	3/23/2021
Prof. Wilson K. Tarpeh	GEF OFP	Environmental Protection Agency of Liberia (EPA)	6/29/2021
Ms. Shamiso Najira	GEF OFP	Ministry of Forestry and Natural Resources	3/10/2021
Ms. Miruza Mohamed	GEF OFP	Ministry of Environment	3/8/2021
Dr. Mohamed- Yahya LAFDAL CHAH	GEF OFP	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development.	3/22/2021
Mr. Godwin Fishani Gondwe	GEF OFP	Ministry of Water Development, Sanitation and Environmental Protection	3/9/2021
Martina Otto	Chief a.i, Energy and Climate Branch	UNEP Co-financing of US\$ 15,000	7/16/2021

B. Convention Participation

Convention	Date of Ratification/Accession	National Focal Point
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change	2/2/1993	Her Excellency Diann Black Layne
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change	12/18/1995	H.E Mr. Say Samal & Mr. Mao Hak
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change	1/4/1995	Syamphone Sengchandala
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change	11/5/2002	Jefferson F. Nyandibo
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change	4/21/1994	Mr. Evans Davie Njewa
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change	11/9/1992	Ahmed Waheed & Mr. Ali Shareef
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change	1/20/1994	M. Sidi Mohammed El Wavi
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change	5/28/1993	Mr. Ephraim Mwepya Shitima

ANNEX A: Project Budget Table

Please attach a project budget table.

PROJECT COMPONENT	Q4, 2021	Yr. 2022	Yr. 2023	Yr. 2024	Yr. 2025	TOTAL
PROJECT COMPONENT 1: Preparation of Project Implementation Plans (PIPs) for Biennial Transparency Reports and National Communications						

Output 1.1.1 Project Implementation Plans for BTR and NC including stocktaking, institutional arrangements, stakeholders plan, work plans, and budget are completed	160,000.00	-	-	-	-	160,000.00
Output 1.1.2 Enhanced execution support services from UNEP	4,800.00	28,200.00	52,000.00	30,000.00	4,130.00	119,130.00
COMPONENT 1 sub-totals	164,800.00	28,200.00	52,000.00	30,000.00	4,130.00	279,130.00
PROJECT COMPONENT 2: Preparation of Biennial Transparency Reports and National Communications						
Output 2.1.1 Five (5) BTRs prepared and submitted to the UNFCCC by December 2024	-	598,500.00	1,078,500.00	571,000.00	22,000.00	2,270,000.00
5 BTR Inception Workshops	-	20,000.00	-	-	-	20,000.00

Preparation of BTR components; supporting group trainings, meetings, national workshops, and/or engagement of experts (national, regional and/or international) to prepare various BTR components consistent with the BTR and NC guidelines adopted at COP 23, & takes into consideration the Paris Agreement reporting requirements	-	512,500.00	1,012,500.00	505,000.00	-	2,030,000.00
Project Management Cost (PMC), including annual audits	-	66,000.00	66,000.00	66,000.00	22,000.00	220,000.00
Output 2.1.2 Three (3) BTR/NCs prepared and submitted to the UNFCCC by December 2024	-	361,800.00	649,800.00	435,300.00	14,100.00	1,461,000.00
3 BTR/NC Inception Workshops		12,000.00	-	-		12,000.00

Preparation of BTR/NC components; supporting group trainings, meetings, national workshops, and/or engagement of experts (national, regional and/or international) to prepare various BTR/NC components, in line with the Revised Guidelines for NCs, & takes into consideration the Paris Agreement reporting requirements	-	307,500.00	607,500.00	393,000.00	-	1,308,000.00
Project Management Cost (PMC), including annual audits	-	42,300.00	42,300.00	42,300.00	14,100.00	141,000.00
COMPONENT 2 Sub Totals	-	960,300.00	1,728,300.00	1,006,300.00	36,100.00	3,731,000.00
PROJECT COMPONENT 3: Stocktaking assessment and institutional arrangements for preparation of subsequent BTRs and NCs						
Output 3.1.1 Stocktaking assessment and institutional arrangements for preparation of subsequent BTRs and BTR/NC				30,000.00	50,000.00	80,000.00
COMPONENT 3 Sub Totals	-	-	-	30,000.00	50,000.00	80,000.00
GEF PROJECT COST	164,800.00	988,500.00	1,780,300.00	1,066,300.00	90,230.00	4,090,130.00