

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

GEF Secretariat Review for Enabling Activity – GEF - 7

Basic Information

GEF ID

10781

Countries

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

Project Title

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

GEF Agency(ies)

UNEP

Agency ID

UNEP: 01869

GEF Focal Area(s)

Climate Change

Program Manager

Milena Vasquez

Non- Expedited Enabling Activity req (PIF)

Part 1: Project Information

Focal area elements

Is the enabling activity aligned with the relevant GEF focal area elements in Table A, as defined by the GEF 7 Programming Directions?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/2/2021: See comments below:

- Please add the list of countries to Part I: Information in addition to leaving the choice "global".
- Please add the BTR/NC choice under Type of Report as well. Please also add expected submission date to the UNFCCC.
- Please change the Rio Marker for CCM to 2.

4/29/2021: Cleared

Agency Response

[Response29042021](#)

1. In addition to "global", all countries under the umbrella have been listed
2. BTR/NC choice and expected submission to the UNFCCC provided
3. Rio Marker for CCM changed to 2

Project description summary

Are the components in Table B and as described in the PIF sound, appropriate, and sufficiently clear to achieve the project objectives?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/2/2021: See comments below:

- The PMC in Table B should reflect the aggregate PMC from each report per the costing table. The proposed additional support to LDC/SIDS can be part of the project components (perhaps component 1 would be appropriate considering the focus on helping draft terms of references and identify experts).
- While co-financing is not required for enabling activities, per GEF policy there should be proportionality between the GEF grant associated with the PMC and the co-financing. Please increase the level of co-financing dedicated to the PMC so it is more proportional to the GEF resources portion (i.e close to 10% of co-financing).

4/29/2021: Cleared

Agency Response

Response29042021

1. Table B has been updated with the aggregate PMC from each report as per the costing table
2. 3% enhanced execution support budget for SIDS & LDCs (equivalent to US\$ 119,130) has been included as output 1.1.2 under component 1
3. Co-financing for PMC has been increased to be proportional with the GEF grant associated with PMC

Co-financing

Are the indicative expected amounts, sources and types of co-financing adequately documented and consistent with the requirements of the Co-Financing Policy and Guidelines, with a description on how the breakdown of co-financing was identified and meets the definition of investment mobilized?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion 4/2/2021: Co-financing is not required for EA's; however, \$700,000 has been identified at this stage. This will be confirmed at CEO Endorsement.

Agency Response

[Response29042021](#)

Co-finance has been reduced from US\$ 700,000 to US\$ 408,000 based on the changes of the scope of the umbrella.

GEF Resource Availability

Is the proposed GEF financing in Table D (including the Agency fee) in line with GEF policies and guidelines?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/2/2021: Table D should have separate entries for each country that is included in the Umbrella Programme. Each entry for the countries should match the amount in the Letter of Encorsements provided and to be provided. In addition, please add a "Global" entry to reflect the additional execution support amount.

4/29/2021: Cleared

Agency Response

[Response29042021](#)

1. Separate entries for each country under the umbrella, with matching amounts as per LoEs have been included in table D
2. "Global" entry that reflects enhanced execution support has been included in table D

Are they within the resources available from (mark all that apply):

Are they within the resources available from (mark all that apply).

The STAR allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion 4/2/2021: This Umbrella Programme will be funded by set-aside resources from the climate change focal area.

Agency Response Noted

The focal area allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion 4/2/2021: This Umbrella Programme will be funded by set-aside resources from the climate change focal area.

Agency Response Noted

The LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Agency Response N/A

The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Agency Response N/A

Focal area set-aside?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion 4/2/2021: Yes, there are sufficient resources to support this Umbrella Programme from the climate change focal area set aside.

Agency Response Noted

Is the financing presented adequate and demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objectives?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion 4/2/2021: Yes, the financing requested is based on full-cost basis for reporting obligations. In addition, the programme will provide additional execution support to SIDS and LDCs.

Agency Response Noted

Part 2: Enabling Activity Justification

Background and Context

Are the achievements of previously implemented enabling activities cited since the country(ies) became a party to the Convention?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/2/2021: Based on the existing status of reporting of the 13 countries included and the GEF's guidelines for supporting BTRs, it appears that 7 of the 13 countries are ready to launch their processes for their next report:

1. Antigua and Barbuda - has an ongoing NC4 with expected submission in 2022, and therefore can begin preparations for its first BTR now.
2. Cambodia - has an ongoing NC3 with expected submission in 2021, and therefore can begin preparation for its first BTR now or wait for the submission of the NC and begin preparations for its first BTR/NC
3. Fiji - has an ongoing BUR expected to be completed by December 2022 and no ongoing NC; however instead of supporting its next NC alone we would recommend Fiji pursue it in conjunction with its first BTR as well.
4. Lao PDR - has an ongoing NC3 with expected submission in 2021, and therefore can begin preparation for its first BTR now or wait for the submission of the NC and begin preparations for its first BTR/NC
5. Malawi - has an ongoing BUR expected to be submitted soon and no ongoing NC; so it is eligible to request support for a BTR/NC now.
6. Maldives - has an ongoing NC3, but no ongoing BUR, so it is eligible for a stand-alone BTR now.
7. Zambia - has no ongoing NC or BUR; therefore it is ready to prepare a BTR/NC now.

In order to avoid delaying further the preparation of these reports by having to wait for the Council approval and CEO endorsement of the Umbrella Programme, which would necessitate waiting for the submission of the following reports:

1. Lesotho - ongoing BUR and NC that are planned to be submitted in 2021. Endorsement would have to wait for submission of NC3.
2. Liberia - ongoing BUR (not marked in Table 1 - needs to be fixed) and NC that were expected to be submitted by the end of 2020. Endorsement would have to wait for submission of NC3.
3. Mauritania - ongoing BUR 2 (expected submission was end of 2020) and NC (NC expected to be submitted in 2024). Endorsement would have to wait for submission of BUR.
4. Mauritius - ongoing BUR 1 (expected submission was end of 2020) and NC (NC expected to be submitted in 2024). Endorsement would have to wait for submission of BUR.
5. Nepal - ongoing BUR 1 (expected submission in 2022) and NC (NC expected submission was end of 2020). Endorsement would have to wait for submission of NC. Like Fiji, we would recommend Nepal pursue its NC4 in conjunction with its first BTR as well.

The GEF recommends UNEP to consider supporting a few (i.e. 4) of the first groups of countries, which are ready to initiate preparations now through stand-alone EAs outside of this Umbrella Programme. This would allow those countries a higher possibility of completing and submitting their first BTR by December 2024. In addition, this Umbrella Programme can be available to include additional countries prior to

endorsement for other countries which may become eligible for BTR support over the next year through the submission of their ongoing NC and/or BUR.

We would suggest that the Umbrella Programme set a deadline (i.e. December 2021) for inclusion of other countries based on the submission of these reports to ensure a timely endorsement and start, particularly if it intends to support BTR/NC for which our suggested deadline for requesting support is January 2022. This would mean that if those countries have not yet submitted their NC to the UNFCCC; they would have to request support for a stand-alone BTR (if possible) or await for top-up support in GEF-8.

We also note that Eritrea has not ratified the Paris Agreement yet, and therefore cannot be included in this Umbrella Programme at this stage.

4/29/2021: Changes have been made based on phone calls between the GEF Secretariat and UNEP. Countries ready to be supported will be prioritized with a more expedited timeline for approval and project commencement. Other countries will be supported through stand-alone EAs on a rolling basis as they become ready. Cleared.

Agency Response

Response29042021

1. As of 22nd April 2021, a total of 9 out of 13 countries were ready to initiate their next report: namely Antigua and Barbuda, Cambodia, Fiji Lao PDR, Liberia, Maldives, Mauritania, Malawi and Zambia.
2. Based on the number of countries ready to initiate their next report, the umbrella option has been retained to support only 8 countries to prepare their BTR or NC/BTR. To expedite this process and also ensure that countries are able meet the December 2024 deadline for BTR submission, UNEP intends to submit the CEO endorsement request immediately after GEF council approval, and will therefore work in parallel with Executing Agencies to get additional information that will go into the endorsement document. All the 8 countries have submitted their LoEs. No additional countries will be added to this umbrella. Below is a plan for the umbrella approval and project commencement:

Milestone	Timelines
Council Approval	Mid – June 2021
Submission of CEO endorsement request	Mid – July 2021
GEF Approval	Mid – September 2021
Project internalization & PCA signing by EAs	October – November 2021
Project commencement	December 2021

3. Fiji has been excluded from the above umbrella as the country has an ongoing BUR which will be submitted to UNFCCC by December

3. Fiji has been excluded from the above umbrella as the country has an ongoing BUR which will be submitted to UNFCCC by December 2022. Therefore, the country will be supported to prepare a stand-alone EA for a combined NC + BTR.
4. All other countries (Lesotho, Nepal & Mauritius) with pending reports have been excluded from the umbrella to avoid slowing down countries that are ready. A request for stand-alone EA for BTR or BTR/NC will be prepared when they will be ready.
5. Eritrea has been dropped from the umbrella since it has not ratified to the Paris Agreement. The country will be supported to prepare a stand-alone EA after submission of its current NC and BUR.
6. Liberia's BUR1 has been marked as "Reports completed and available on the UNFCCC website", based on the current status of NC/BUR submissions

Goals, Objectives, and Activities.

Is the project framework sufficiently described?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/2/2021: See comments above. Also, based on changes to how additional support is linked to project components, please make changes to description as necessary.

4/29/2021: Cleared

Agency Response

[Response29042021](#)

Enhanced execution support has been included as part of component one under table B (output 1.1.2) and Table D, and explained in Session C (ENABLING ACTIVITY AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION)

Stakeholders.

Does the PIF include indicative information on Stakeholders engagement to date? If not, is the justification provided appropriate? Does the PIF include information about the proposed means of future engagement?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion 4/2/2021: Yes.

Agency Response Noted

Gender equality and women's empowerment.

Is the articulation of gender context and indicative information on the importance and need to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women, adequate?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion 4/2/2021: Yes.

Agency Response Noted

Part III. Endorsement/Approval by OFP

Country endorsement

Has the project been endorsed by the country's GEF Operational Focal Point and has the name and position been checked against the GEF database?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/2/2021: 11 letters of endorsement have been submitted. Based on changes suggested, this will be reviewed again.

4/29/2021: All countries included in these countries have submitted LOEs.

Agency Response

Response29042021

Eight (8) Letters of Endorsement have been submitted based on the change of scope of the umbrella programme. The umbrella programme will only support the 8 countries.

Response to Comments

**Are all the comments adequately responded to? (only as applicable)
Gef Secretariat comments?**

GEF Secretariat Comment

Agency Response

Other Agencies comments?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Agency Response

Agency response on the below Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion:

- **Response 5/4/2021**

1. We have been unable to remove the letters of endorsement and UNFCCC ratification of countries that are not supposed to be in this umbrella. We had requested for the 5 LoEs to be deleted. We are still following up on the same with the GEF Sec ITS.
2. The proposal underwent UNEP internal review and it was considered as a low risk project. The Internal review has also been uploaded in the portal.

GEFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

Is CEO clearance/approval recommended?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/2/2021: Please address comments above. In addition, we note that per the GEF Policies and Guidelines, M&E budgets are not required as these costs do not apply to EAs, please remove.

5/3/2021: Please remove the Letters of Endorsements from the countries that are no longer part of the Umbrella. Please work with ITS to remove as well the UNFCCC ratification and focal points from the those countries too. In addition, as an EA activity, UNEP may not require Environmental and Social Risk screening. Could you please provide information on whether a risk screening has been carried out and or provide a brief justification why not. I will be sending back the project

5/4/2021: ESS screening has been uploaded. Other issues addressed by ITS. PM recommends clearance.

Additional Comments

Additional recommendations to be considered by Agency at the time of CEO endorsement/approval.

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Review Dates

	PIF Review	Agency Response
First Review	4/2/2021	4/27/2021
Additional Review (as necessary)	4/29/2021	
Additional Review (as necessary)	5/3/2021	
Additional Review (as necessary)	5/4/2021	
Additional Review (as necessary)		

PIF Recommendation to CEO

Brief reasoning for recommendations to CEO for PIF Approval