

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

GEF Secretariat Review for Enabling Activity – GEF - 7

Basic Information

GEF ID

10973

Countries

Global (Cote d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Eswatini, Fiji, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritius, Sierra Leone, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Comoros, Congo DR, Gabon, Ghana, Kyrgyz Republic, Lesotho, Mongolia, Niger, Pakistan, Rwanda, Zimbabwe)

Project Title

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

GEF Agency(ies)

UNEP

Agency ID

UNEP: 018979

GEF Focal Area(s)

Climate Change

Program Manager
Patricia Marcos Huidobro

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

4/18/2022 PM:

Yes.

Agency Response

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

5/13/2022 PM:

Cleared. The budget has been revised and was found to be consistent with the proposal.

4/18/2022 PM:

No, please address the following comments:

- The completion date for the umbrella project is 1/31/2028. We understand some countries may not be able/do not have to meet (i.e. LDCs and SIDSs) the December 2024 timeline, however, December 2028 seems a very conservative timeline. Please explain the reason for including such a conservative completion date and/or update as needed.
- There is a mismatch in the budget. 26 stand-alone BTRs account for \$12.6M (26 x 484k) and 36 combined BTR/NC account for \$16.9M (36x517k). This adds up to \$31.2M and the Agency is proposing a \$29.3M budget + PMC. Thus, the requested budget is lower than it should be and it doesn't consider the 3% for execution support. Please revise the budget to make them consistent with the number of BTRs and combined BTRs/NCs proposed.
- Due to the size of the Umbrella project (above 10 million), and in line with the GEF Policy, the fee for this EA shall be 9.0% Please amend accordingly.

Agency Response

05/12/2022

Umbrella completion timeline of January 2028 is based on the estimated project start date for those countries in Table 2, phase III – that are LDCs and SIDS and are likely to initiate their BTR work in Yr. 2024 after completing their BURs. Considering the flexibility granted to these Countries on submission timelines, their projects typically take more than two years to be completed. We therefore prefer to keep the umbrella expected completion date of January 2028 at PIF stage as we continue to encourage each country to make their best efforts to finalize their reports on time.

This timeline will be reviewed and updated at CEO endorsement phase, based on: -

- (i) updated information that will be obtained from an annual survey to be administered to all countries in June/July 2022 which seeks to determine the status of their NC/BUR preparation. This will be reflected in Table 2.
- (ii) additional countries and/or reports that will be included in this umbrella programme at CEO endorsement phase, based on possible amendments that may arise, as described under the section on Scope of the umbrella programme and its flexibilities.

The umbrella programme budget & IA fee comment have been discussed with the GEF Secretariat and additional clarification provided. The budget was found to be consistent for this proposal and a dedicated worksheet uploaded in the portal with this resubmission.

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

5/13/2022 PM:

Cleared.

4/18/2022 PM:

No, with comments. One line has been included for "Recipient Country Government" in Table C without specifying the "Name of Co-financier" or (co-finance) "Amount (\$)". Please note the co-financing is not required for EAs. If specific co-financing contributions cannot be identified at PIF, please Table C blank.

Agency Response

05/12/2022

The above-mentioned line in Table C has been removed and the table is now blank.

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

5/13/2022 PM:

Cleared. We note there is an inconsistency in the LoEs, which states a higher agency fee than the one provided in the portal. However, since the LoE amount is incorrect but higher than the amount provided in the Portal, the GEF Sec is accepting the LoEs provided. Please at CEO Endorsement stage, make sure the agency fees in the LoE matched the Portal.

4/18/2022 PM:

No. Please address the following comments:

- Table D should have separate entries for each country that is included in the Umbrella Programme. Each entry shall match the amount in the Letter of Endorsement provided or to be provided for that specific country;
- In addition, for the countries with no LoE, the remaining total amount shall be presented as "Global".

Agency Response

05/12/2022

Table D has been amended to have separate entries for each country that has provided a Letter of Endorsement with the respective amounts specified, with an updated agency fee of 9% in line with the GEF Policy for projects above 10 million.

As suggested, the "Global" row comprises the funding available for countries that have not yet submitted LoEs as well as the execution support fee.

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

The STAR allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/18/2022 PM:

N/A. This Umbrella Programme will be funded by set-aside resources from the Climate Change Focal Area.

Agency Response

The focal area allocation?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/18/2022 PM:

N/A. This Umbrella Programme will be funded by set-aside resources from the Climate Change Focal Area.

Agency Response

The LDCF under the principle of equitable access?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/18/2022 PM:

N/A. This Umbrella Programme will be funded by set-aside resources from the Climate Change Focal Area.

Agency Response

The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/18/2022 PM:

N/A. This Umbrella Programme will be funded by set-aside resources from the Climate Change Focal Area.

Agency Response

Focal area set-aside?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/18/2022 PM:

Yes. There are sufficient resources from the Climate Change Focal Area set-aside to support this Umbrella Programme.

Agency Response

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

5/13/2022 PM:

Cleared. The budget has been discussed with the Agency (which has uploaded a detailed budget excel sheet in the GEF Portal) and was found to be consistent with the proposal.

4/18/2022 PM:

Yes. The proposed umbrella program demonstrates a cost-effective approach to meet the project objectives. Please address the comment above on the mismatch between the amount requested in sub-component 1 and the number of reports expected.

Agency Response

05/12/2022

The umbrella programme budget & IA fee comment have been discussed with the GEF Secretariat and additional clarification provided. The budget was found to be consistent for this proposal and a dedicated worksheet uploaded in the portal with this resubmission.

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

5/13/2022 PM:

Cleared.

4/18/2022 PM:

Yes, with comments. Please address the following comments:

- Table 2 indicates that Kyrgyzstan Third NC "is under finalization". However, the country submitted its Third NC to the UNFCCC in January 24, 2017. Please correct.
- Table 2 also indicates that Pakistan has submitted three NCs to the UNFCCC. However, the country has submitted its first NC in 2003 and

its second NC in 2009. According to the , as part of the GEF Report to COP26, the third NC is under preparation and it is estimated to be submitted to the UNFCCC on December 2024. Please clarify and/or amend.

- In Table 2, for countries in Phase III, please provide an estimated date for NC and/or BUR submission when possible.

- Suggest to rephrase the following sentence "For this later group, BTR/NC resources will only be disbursed to national partners after the UNFCCC submission process of current report(s) is confirmed" as follows: "For this later group, BTR/NC resources will only be disbursed to national partners after the UNFCCC submission process of report(s) currently under preparation is confirmed".

- Suggest deletion of this sentence: "This is a request that GEF's Implementing partners – UNDP and UNEP have also proposed in informal meetings organized by the GEF as a strategy to expedite the funding". accessibility to countries.

- In this section of the PIF: "Any uncommitted funds, if any, will be communicated at CEO endorsement request submission. By doing this, UNEP continues to show its commitment and flexibility to ensuring that it supports as many countries as possible to access GEF BTR1 funding in a timely manner", suggest to include also the following: "In case of any uncommitted funds at the time of the cut off date for additional countries to express interest to join the program, the uncommitted funds may be used to finance BTR2 in some of the countries which are receiving funding for BTR1, through bundling of resources, in an effort to ensure that no resources will remain uncommitted from this umbrella".

Agency Response

05/12/2022

Thanks for the comments.

Status of NCs for Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan have been updated in Table 2.

The approximate dates on NC and/BUR submission to UNFCCC for countries under phase III have been included in Table 2. These dates will be reviewed at the CEO endorsement request phase based on responses obtained from an annual survey conducted in June/July 2022 to determine status of their NC/BUR preparation for COP 27 reporting purposes.

As suggested, the abovementioned exert from text in subsection "Scope of the umbrella programme and its flexibilities" has been edited to read as follows: "For this later group, BTR/NC resources will only be disbursed to national partners after the UNFCCC submission process of report(s) currently under preparation is confirmed" (p. 8).

As suggested above, in the subsection "Scope of the umbrella programme and its flexibilities", the following sentence has been deleted: "this is a request that GEF's Implementing partners – UNDP and UNEP have also proposed in informal meetings organized by the GEF as a strategy to expedite the funding accessibility to countries "

The text in the subsection "Scope of the umbrella programme and its flexibilities" has been amended to include the following sentence: "In

The text in the subsection "Scope of the umbrella programme and its flexibilities" has been amended to include the following sentence: "In case of any uncommitted funds at the time of the cutoff date for additional countries to express interest to join the program, the uncommitted funds may be used to finance BTR2 in some of the countries which are receiving funding for BTR1, through bundling of resources, in an effort to avoid returning uncommitted resources to the GEF from this umbrella " (p. 8).

Goals, Objectives, and Activities.

Is the project framework sufficiently described?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

5/13/2022 PM:

Cleared.

4/18/2022 PM:

Yes, with suggestions. Please see below a few suggestions for the Agency's consideration:

- In the M&E Plan please consider including a country dissemination workshop after the submission of the report/s to the UNFCCC for information and further engagement of country stakeholders;

- Since in country capacity seems to be an issue for most or many of the countries under this umbrella, please consider making a stronger link at either PIF or CEO Endorsement with the Capacity Building for Initiative Transparency (CBIT), since many of the countries under this umbrella are benefitting from it. This would help avoid potential overlaps and benefit from the capacity building activities already on-going under the CBIT projects. Also, if possible, identify which countries have on-going or upcoming CBIT projects (this can be done at CEO Endorsement);

- Please consider including the following paragraph (either at PIF or CEO Endorsement) in relation to the GHG Inventory: "*The project will use the common tabular formats presented in Annex II to decision 5/CMA.3 for the electronic reporting of the information necessary to track progress made in implementing and achieving nationally determined contributions under Article 4 of the Paris Agreement*".

- Please consider adding the section highlighted in **bold** "Any changes in BTR/NC costing will change (i) total cost allocated/country; (ii) number of expected countries **and/or report supported through this** the umbrella, and will therefore be communicated to the Council members for consideration, through an amendment notification".

- Please consider using a paragraph confirming that countries which has recently started the preparation of a NC will receive funding for a standalone BTR, while countries which have submitted the last NC and not yet started the new one will receive funding for a combined NC/BTR.

Agency Response

05/12/2022

On the M& E Plan: Based on the latest discussions between UNEP and the GEF, no budget should be allocated in the M&E plan for Enabling Activities projects, hence the suggested inclusion of workshop & dissemination activities into the M& E plan will not fit into this section. The point raised, however, on stakeholder engagement and disseminations workshops is critical and countries have always conducted and will continue to be guided by UNEP to allocate funding for stakeholder engagement events, publication, dissemination and submission of reports to the UNFCCCC. This is done at the onset of the project. This text has been included under the Stakeholder section, p. 19.

Information on Capacity Building for Initiative Transparency (CBIT) for each participating country will be further detailed at CEO Endorsement. Text has been included in pg. 13 under the section on consistency with national priorities.

As suggested, the following paragraph has been included in p. 15, under section B. Enabling Activity Goals, Objectives, and Activities: 'Countries will be guided to use and benefit from training that will be available on the use of the common tabular formats presented in Annex II to decision 5/CMA.3 for the electronic reporting of the information necessary to track progress made in implementing and achieving nationally determined contributions under Article 4 of the Paris Agreement'.

The text in p. 10 has been amended to read as follows: "Any changes in BTR/NC costing will change (i) total cost allocated per country; (ii) number of expected countries and/or report supported through this umbrella, and will therefore be communicated to the Council members for consideration, through an amendment notification".

A paragraph has been included to confirm that countries which have recently started the preparation of a NC will receive funding for a standalone BTR, while countries which have submitted the last NC and not yet started the new one will receive funding for a combined NC/BTR, as per p. 10.

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

5/12/2022 PIF

5/13/2022 PM:

Cleared.

4/18/2022 PM:

Yes.

Agency Response

05/12/2022

Additional information on stakeholder engagement has been provided in p. 19 in response to GEF's comment to 'include country dissemination workshop after the submission of the report/s to the UNFCCC for information and further engagement of country stakeholders in the M&E plan'.

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

4/18/2022 PM:

Yes.

Agency Response

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

5/13/2022 PM:

Cleared. We note there is an inconsistency in the LoEs, which states a higher agency fee than the one provided in the portal. However, since the LoE amount is incorrect but higher than the amount provided in the Portal, the GEF Sec is accepting the LoEs provided. Please at CEO Endorsement stage, make sure the agency fees in the LoE matched the Portal.

4/18/2022 PM:

Yes, with suggestions. Please address the following comments:

- Upload the Letter of Endorsement for Guinea-Bissau. This Letter has been uploaded to the "Document" section of the GEF Portal, but not in Section III. Part A of the PIF.

Agency Response

05/12/2022

The Letter of Endorsement for Guinea-Bissau has been uploaded to Section III of the GEF Portal, as requested

Response to Comments

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

GEF Secretariat Comment

4/18/2022 PM:

N/A.

Agency Response

Other Agencies comments?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

4/18/2022 PM:

N/A.

Agency Response

GEFSEC DECISION

RECOMMENDATION

Is CEO clearance/approval recommended?

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

5/13/2022 PM:

Cleared.

4/18/2022 PM:

No. Please address comments above.

Additional Comments

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

Secretariat Comment at PIF/Work Program Inclusion

Please see below additional recommendations to be considered at CEO Endorsement stage:

- Information on Capacity Building for Initiative Transparency (CBIT) for each participating country will be further detailed at CEO Endorsement; including information on countries that have on-going or upcoming CBIT projects.
- At CEO Endorsement, in Part III - Section A please indicate in parenthesis the country each of the OFPs belongs to.
- In all LoE submitted at PIF stage, there is an inconsistency in the LoEs which state a higher Agency Fee than the one provided in the portal. The GEF is accepting this inconsistency, given that the amount in the LoE is higher, but please for all new LoEs provided at CEO Endorsement stage, please make sure the agency fees are correct.

Review Dates

PIF Review Agency Response

First Review
Additional Review (as necessary)
Additional Review (as necessary)
Additional Review (as necessary)
Additional Review (as necessary)

PIF Recommendation to CEO

Brief reasoning for recommendations to CEO for PIF Approval