

Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme (SGP) Implemented by UNDP. Project Proposals Preparation

Background:

SGP was designed for **two objectives**: (1) support the **needs of communities and CSOs**, and; (2) **contribute to the creation of Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs)**. GEBs can be created through the community-based approach following the “**local action, global impact**” framework. SGP country programmes are **not charitable institutions**. SGP projects produce excellent examples of community-based projects. But **sometimes these projects do not even show adoption by neighboring communities**. Some **grantees’ work is like building “an oasis in the middle of a vast desert”**. The projects (or oases) are good in themselves but the much larger problems (or the vast desert) just keep on expanding. SGP’s work have to **go beyond projects and into supporting national, even global, social movements supportive of environment and sustainable development**.

Priority grant-making should be directed at grassroots groups such as **community-based organizations (CBOs), indigenous peoples, farmers, women, youth and children, and workers**. Those that are especially **vulnerable because of poverty, social exclusion or disability** should also be provided priority.

SGP is **flagship** of GEF UNDP. It **addresses the poor and vulnerable communities through strengthening their resilience to Climate Change**. Its uniqueness is also its **ability to provide livelihood options for the vulnerable and the poor**. The **focus should be on “farmers’ leaders” as we need leaders and promoters at landscape level**.

Points to be Considered when Preparing PP

1. Well elaborated and sound Project Proposal (PP) in the GEF focal/thematic areas. The maximum grant a CBO/NGO can access is US\$50,000 while the average is about US\$25,000. The GEF Thematic areas include **Conservation of Biodiversity, Climate Change mitigation/proofing, Prevention of Land Degradation, Protection of International Waters and Chemicals**). In addition to the above focal areas, the project should also contribute to **livelihood improvement, capacity building, community empowerment, gender issues** and its **contribution to local and global environment**.
2. The applicant should **use the PP template and guideline** when preparing project proposal. The **standard cover sheet, a one-page table of contents** and not more than fifteen **pages of text (font size 12)** (including any charts or diagrams). The project proposal should be signed by NGO/CBOs and directly sent to GEF SGP Ethiopia office. Additional attachments (not more than ten pages), which may include documents certifying the legal status of the organization, audit report, support letter or endorsements of the proposed project by concerned bodies; funding commitments or other indicators of participation and support from other institutions, and **evidence of community support and participation** should be sent to SGP. In preparing a PP, the applicant **should follow the major (numbered) points of the outline set forth in the provided**

template. Ensuring that the **entire bullet points included** in the outline is addressed. The information required can be less but not **more than the pages stipulated**. The proposal should also have **abbreviations, LFA, sketch map** of the project area showing the boundary and natural resources, **organizational structure**, etc.

3. **Title of the project.** This is important as it indicates from the outset **what the project is going to do**. It should not be vague. Check if it goes along with GEF thematic area. It should be **clear, precise, geographic focus**, etc. The title of the project is usually **specific to the type of intervention** and the location where the project will be implemented
4. The application must fall within the **agreed geographic areas/woreda/kebele** as indicated in the OP7 SGP Ethiopia Country Programme Strategy (CPS). Which are the **three land/waterscapes**. The project should be implemented at land/waterscape level. Projects coming **outside the three land/waterscapes** will also be considered depending on the **types and innovativeness**.
5. The NGO/CBO has to be **legally registered by responsible government** body. It should also have all **relevant documents**; i.e. bylaws, stamp, different vouchers, bank account, ledger, members registration book, minutes record book (Minutes of BoD), office etc. For the project proposal to be approved, the CBO should have a letter from the woreda or any other relevant government offices confirming that the **land or the area the project will be implemented has been discussed and agreed** and it is ready to actively participate and also take **over the responsibility when the project period ends especially** in case of NGO supported projects.
6. For the **project to continue beyond the project period, strengthening or formation of CBOs** is an important element to be considered. This is a cornerstone for empowerment of the community and sustaining of the project. The **applicant NGOs** should clearly indicate in the project document the issue of **CBO strengthening/formation** and take the necessary steps from the outset of the project.
7. To ensure ownership and sustainability of the project, the project should be developed carefully to **avoid free distribution of project inputs**. The activities should follow **business model, where, planned activities generate income**. There should be cost recovery for the supported activities. The income generated could be used for strengthening the community to run activities within and beyond the kebele.
8. Evidence on the **political commitment of the woreda government administration** to supporting the project through regular follow up by **assigning its technical staff** that would engage in **project cycle management starting from PPP, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, report preparation**, etc. The **commitment letter has to be signed and stamped by the concerned government body**. The project to be implemented should be considered as **part of the woreda development plan** and this has to be agreed and **reported** by the woreda government.
9. **Level of co-financing and financial readiness** by the applicant organizations. The applicant should show clearly **what it intends to do with its own resources** and indicate what will be achieved using the resources from GEF SGP. **Additional co-financing from other development** partners is highly encouraged. The SGP support should be considered as **seed money** and applicants should exert maximum effort to make substantial contribution. It is anticipated that the **applicant,**

- community, government and others will put about 30%** of the total budget requirement for the project.
10. **Strong technical and institutional capacity of the NGO/CBO** helps avoid failure in implementing the project. Its experience in **handling financial resources is also critical**. **Attention on capacity building of CBOs and community institutions** should be given by all concerned (NGOs, government). Capacity of the NGO/CBO in terms of experience in the field of environment, available staff and qualifications are necessary. **Experience of the applicant in implementing such projects, the probability of replication and up scaling of the project will be checked**.
 11. **Results and indicators** of the project should be very well stated and **quantified** in the body part of the proposal and in the LFA. (The indicators are attached at the end of the PP guideline and template). This helps for **monitoring the project**. The **objectives, strategies, activities** and **budget** part should be consistent throughout the proposal and the linkage should be clearly shown. It also helps the contribution of the project to the SGP country programme.
 12. The relation of the **magnitude of the problem** stated in the PP and the contribution of the planned activities to the problems should be clear. It is recommended if pictures that show the degree of the problems are included in the PP. Include activities that address the stated objectives. The **Objectives** should as much as possible be SMART. The **strategies** the project is going to follow to meet the set **objectives needs to be elaborated clearly**. Such strategy could include, working with and through CBOs, using the government structure and the **establishment of core and technical committee**, etc. The role of NGOs in building the capacity of CBOs should be indicated clearly.
 13. In the **M&E section of the PP**, there should be well **elaborated M&E plan**. In addition to the regular monitoring, it should be clearly stated that **mid and terminal evaluation** will be conducted to draw lessons about the performance of the project. This will help all concerned bodies to take corrective measures. **Budget for M&E should be included** in the budget part of the project proposal. Monitoring budget could go **up to 2% of the SGP's contribution**.
 14. **Knowledge management and communication** should also get attention in the project document. 1% of the total grant requested from SGP could be included for such activity. The budget could be used for documentation and sharing of experiences. It should be included in the body and budget part of the project proposal.
 15. **Baseline information**. Before the commencement of the project the reality on the ground should be assessed and documented. These include **human capital; natural capital; financial capital; social capital and physical capital**. The **scenario if no action is taken** should be shown in the PP. The contribution of the project towards addressing the problems should be well elaborated. In the budget part of the proposal, it should include resources (from the applicant) for primary and secondary baseline data collection and producing the baseline document. This information will show the magnitude of the problems and measure that need to be taken. The project should **focus on concrete but few activities** that could contribute to the achievement of the project objectives. The project should be manageable **by the CBO/NGO**.

16. The roles and **responsibilities of different partners/stakeholders** involved in the implementation of the project should be well stated in the project document and there should be internal agreement signed with those concerned once the project is approved. The **establishment of technical committee** at woreda level that will be responsible to support the grantee in **project cycle management** is a good strategy in ensuring timely implementation.
17. **Training, workshop, conference, experience sharing** could be included in the project proposal depending on the need and the budget should be **maximum of 5%** of the support from SGP.
18. The maximum **administration cost** (supervision, auditing, travel, etc.) should not exceed 10% of the total request made to GEF SGP. The detail should be shown in the budget part of the PP.
19. Before signing the **Memorandum of Agreement (MoA)** the grantee must clearly understand the **obligations of each as stipulated in the MoA**. The grantee should understand the MoA and the Annexes attached. There are also **supplemental annexes** that the grantee should complete and submit with reports during each reporting period.
20. **Familiarizing and official launching** of the project should be done once the MoA is signed and transfer is made to the grantee. A maximum of Birr 2500 (two thousand five hundred) from SGP's contribution could be budgeted to undertake this activity.
21. It is advisable to limit the **project duration to a maximum of 24 months**. However, this depends on the nature of the PP. When preparing project proposals, it is advisable to use **the norm developed by Ministry of Agriculture** for different soil and water conservation activities. Government DSA rate should be applied where applicable. GEF SGP support **cannot cover salary** of staff of the NGO/CBO.
22. Check if there is **budget allocated** for each activity as sometimes it is mentioned in the project document but not included in the budget part. One of the important parts of the project proposal is **budget part and this needs to be reviewed thoroughly**. Most of the time they are not as **detailed as possible** and it is over/under stated. The applicant should try to get information from **different sources related to cost of goods and services** is very important to verify the request. The budget **should be prepared in Birr**.
23. The applicant should explore on the **importance of technology penetration**. These are useful in **covering wider geographic area if the technology** is suitable and accepted by the community. Rather than **experimenting new and unproven practices**, good to focus on those activities **that have shown result and accepted by the community**. Good/best practices that are documented could be taken as example depending on the context.
24. Major areas of interventions that the applicant could discuss with the community and include in the PP could fall under the following areas: increase vegetation cover including through the management of areas closed off to grazing; increased application of compost to enhance soil fertility and agricultural productivity; enhancement of ecosystems capacity to maximize goods and services sustain; diversified application of renewable energy and capacity development to

the community; livelihood improvement; empowerment and gender. All these should be linked to the GEF thematic areas.

25. SGP will invest more than 70% in the selected landscape/seascape. However, that there is possibility for the non-landscape/seascape focused grant projects. This will allow those communities and NGOs that have urgent need for support and whose projects are also strategically important to still be supported. Give attention to the innovate nature of projects, example of grandmothers solar engineers at barefoot college. Projects that are “iconic.” These grants within the 30% (or less) can be used for grantmaker+ and other activities at the national level that are also supportive of the projects within the selected landscape/seascape (i.e. policy advocacy, networking, communications and KM) as well as important in helping create the national outcomes and impacts that we aim for in SGP OP7.
26. Focus on quality impact and not on the number of projects. SGP should focus on how to go beyond supporting individual projects. It is not a matter of giving money, but to go and see what impact or changes these have brought. What differences did the fund bring? Aim high and integrate. SGP will make target groups in charge of their destination. “do less but more effectively” with Clear Results.
27. During OP7 disaggregated data on gender is a must. RUM should get attention. Putting pictures before and after project support is a very good illustration of SGP’s contribution
28. Inception workshops to discuss on the PP, MoA, reporting requirements, KM, etc. will be made at different times.