



## **Application Guidelines for Small Grants for Civil Society Organizations Integrated Governance Programme II, UNDP**

### **Introduction**

UNDP is the UN's global development network, an organization advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience, and resources to help people build a better life. UNDP is on the ground in about 170 countries and territories, working with national counterparts on solutions to global and national development challenges. In the programme countries, UNDP supports stabilization, state-building, governance and development priorities in partnership with the host governments, the United Nations system, the development partners and other partners to help the country to achieve sustainable development by eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, accelerating structural transformations for sustainable development and building resilience to crises and shock.

UNDP has been a trusted development partner of the Maldives for more than 40 years, helping to achieve the eradication of poverty, reduction of inequalities and exclusion in areas such as governance, environment protection, climate change mitigation and adaptation. In each of its thematic areas of work, UNDP at the request of its national partners provides relevant policy advisory support, technical assistance, advocacy, and knowledge to help Maldives achieve its global commitment on Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). With Maldives's transition to Middle Income Country Status, Official Development Assistance from traditional donor sources has been on the continuous decline. UNDP is therefore working with its national partners to identify and tap into alternative and innovative financing mechanisms for development. This process involves broadening outreach and forging wide-ranging partnerships with stakeholders - including other UN agencies, the government, the private sector, philanthropic Foundations, multi-lateral and bi-lateral donors and International Finance Institutions to advance the country's development strategies and objectives.

### **Background**

As a democratic society building itself from the complexities and gains made over the past decade, civil society in the Maldives has an important role in promoting transparency, accountability, the rule of law and other aspects of good governance. Civil society organizations are also often the channel through which marginalized groups can make their voices heard. They are also an essential means, of protecting and promoting civil, political, social and economic rights, and are better positioned to tackle social issues and undertake prevention and

intervention programmes at the grassroots level. Their knowledge and experience working closely with specific groups and communities gives them credibility and the advantage to deliver timely and more context specific programmes.

UNDP Maldives developed the Integrated Governance Programme II (IGP II) in 2016, which aims to increase citizen voice and participation in democratic discourses through strengthening institutions and empowering people, including through the establishment of platforms. One of the key results envisioned by the Programme is to facilitate inclusive participation in governance processes through the increased representation and meaningful participation of women in the political sphere.

While Maldives has made considerable progress towards gender equality on the education and health front, there still remain significant barriers for women in other areas. Women still remain underrepresented in decision making positions and rarely have the opportunity and authority to participate in decision making at the policy level. In Maldives, only 4 women were elected to the Parliament in 2019<sup>1</sup> and 39 women were elected to local councils out of a total 653 members elected in 2017.<sup>2</sup> The amendments to the Decentralization Act in 2019 paved way for equal representation and participation of women in the local governance structure with the establishment of a 33% quota for women in island and city councils. The amendments also strengthen the role of Women's Development Committees as advisory bodies to the local councils. However, research indicate, apart from systemic barriers, women also face significant cultural barriers due to strong subscription to social and gender norms to undertake such decision-making roles.<sup>3,4</sup> Hence, it is imperative that UNDP direct its support to strengthen the activities that civil society is undertaking at grassroots level to tackle gender stereotypes and promote women's participation in all spheres.

As such, the Integrated Governance Programme of UNDP is calling for proposals for Small Grants for locally registered Civil Society Organizations in the Maldives.

**Objective:**

The primary objective is to support strengthening of the democratic space for civil society, and to effectively engage CSOs to address social and gender norms that hinders women's participation in public and political life.

The Small Grants will support the above objective through activities that advocate and address gender equality efforts, women's rights and increasing women's participation in the public and political sphere. This includes, but is not limited to, using different means to promote awareness and facilitate discussions and dialogues among island communities on social and gender norms that hinders women's participation, the importance of having female leaders and women in

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<sup>1</sup> Election Commission of Maldives (2019) *Statistics Report: Parliamentary Elections 2019*

<sup>2</sup> Election Commission of Maldives (2017) *Statistical Report of Local Council Elections 2017*.

<sup>3</sup> Human Rights Commission of the Maldives, Family Protection Authority and UNDP Maldives (2020) *"Rights" Side of Life: 3<sup>rd</sup> Human Rights Survey of the Maldives*

<sup>4</sup> National Counter Terrorism Centre and UNDP Maldives (2021) *Women as Peacebuilders and Agents of Change in the Maldives*

elected positions, and the merit in establishing temporary special measures such as the quota system.

### **Minimum Eligibility Criteria**

1. The proposal should be submitted by registered civil society organizations.
2. Project proposals should be prepared according to the description and format detailed in Annex I and II respectively.
3. Project must be focused on the main thematic area of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and must specifically contribute in some way, towards increasing women's participation in public life.
4. Project budget should be between MVR 100,000 – MVR 120,000.
5. The project period should be between 6 – 8 months.

### **Selection Process**

All proposals submitted will go through an initial screening to ensure they meet the minimum eligibility requirements. Following this, the proposals will be evaluated by the UNDP Grants Evaluation Committee. The evaluation will consist of two stages; evaluation of the submitted documents and an online/phone interview with the NGOs. The CSOs will then be shortlisted based on the Evaluation Criteria (included in the section below).

The shortlisted CSOs will then be assessed for financial and administrative management capacity including reference checks on prior project experience. If the selected CSOs meet the assessment requirements, further technical support will be provided by UNDP to strengthen the proposal.

Following this, the grant agreement will be signed between the CSO and UNDP. The progress of the grant will be closely monitored by UNDP in accordance with the clauses stipulated in the Grant Agreement; this includes disbursement of grant amount in tranches and narrative and financial reporting that will be done by CSOs along with submission of relevant documents, following the completion of each tranche.

### **Evaluation Criteria**

The evaluation criteria are divided into technical criteria, which comprises of 85% of the total score, and the financial criteria, which comprises of 15% of the total score.

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Points</b>
<b>Technical Criteria (85 points)</b>	
Project's relevance to the main thematic area	10
Project methodology (concrete activities and results)	40
Project feasibility and sustainability	35
<b>Financial Criteria (15 points)</b>	
Feasibility of budget and adherence to guidance	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

**Deadline for Submission of Proposals**

The deadline for the submission of proposals is **21 June 2021 before 16:00hrs.**

All proposals and queries need to be directed to:

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## **Annex I – Completing the Proposal Application**

**Minimum Eligibility Criteria:** Ensure that the proposal and the CSO meets the minimum eligibility criteria.

**Mandatory Information:** Make sure that all the requested details have been filled in correctly.

1. **Project Title:** A brief project title
2. **Summary of Proposed Project:** This section is to give a short summary (maximum ½ page) of the proposed project, its objectives, and the results that the project aims to achieve.
3. **Background:** This section should include an analysis identifying the need for the project in the proposed location(s). It should include rationale, vital statistics of the island, atoll or region, and include data to show evidence of the issue that the project is seeking to address.
4. **Project Objective:** This section should clearly state the project objective(s), in a way that it demonstrates the change that the project envisions to bring to the target community, disaggregated by gender.
5. **Outputs and activities:** This section should include the immediate changes that the project intends to bring to the target community outputs or results. Each output should be followed by a list of clearly defined activities that are planned under the project.

Activities should be listed in a logical order and numerically linked to the relevant output. Please refer to the template in Annex II.

6. **Target Groups:** Clearly identify group or the population the project aims to benefit, disaggregated by gender.
7. **Partners/Stakeholders:** Indicate here if the project will be implemented in collaboration with any other agencies / individuals (for example, island council, other CSOs, government offices, etc.), and how these actors contribute to the project.
8. **Risks and Proposed Means of Mitigation:** Describe the possible obstacles and challenges which might affect or hinder project implementation or the achievement of the project purpose. Risks should be considered at all levels of the project, including political, operational, administrative, internal project risks etc., and the planned approaches in preventing, reducing the impact or working around these risks. This section should also include any assumptions made of the project environment or context while planning the project.
9. **How does your project address gender inequality?** In this section, clearly describe the steps that will be undertaken to ensure women’s participation at all levels of the

project, including project planning, decision making, implementation of project activities (such as allocation of quotas for women participants, any special arrangements made to ensure convenience and accessibility for women in project events, etc.), data collection, measuring results, etc.

**10. Work Plan & Budget:** The project work plan should include the Outputs, Activities, and the Indicators, Baselines, Target Result that is to be achieved to measure the results (as per the template in Annex II).

The Budget should include a detailed description of the costs associated with activities listed in the work plan. If there are other sources of funds contributing to the project, the sources and amounts should be clearly indicated. Costs indicated in the budget should be realistic. Work plan and budget should be made as per the template in Annex II.

**11. Sustainability and Future Plans:** This section assesses how the CSO will contribute to the sustainability of the results that are envisaged through the project. The proposal will be scored based on the CSO's future plans to continue project activities beyond the project period. Also, the project's link to the broader objectives and vision of the CSO and the idea of replicating the project approach will be given consideration.

**12. CSO Information:** Clearly describe:

- a. Organizational structure of the CSO, with details of how the executive board is elected, and how the day-to-day operation of the CSO is managed.
- b. The management arrangement for this project including details of the project focal point (name, position, email and contact number should be specified).
- c. Describe the previous work done by the CSO in this area with reference letters or contact details of reference where possible.
- d. Relevant partnerships that the CSO has developed.
- e. Information of projects implemented by the CSO in the past five years.

**The project will not grant financial support to:**

- Physical infrastructure development
- International consultancy firms
- Procurement of capital equipment of more than 5% of the budget.

## **Annex II – Application Template**

\*Note: Please refer to Annex I on details to be included in each section of the Application Template.

<b><u>Small Grants Application Form</u></b>
<b><u>Name of CSO:</u></b>
<b><u>Location of CSO:</u></b>
<b><u>Registration No.:</u></b>
<b><u>Details of Focal Point:</u></b> Name: Designation: Contact number: Email:
<b><u>Project Description</u></b>
<b><u>Project Title:</u></b>
<b><u>Thematic Area:</u></b> Which thematic area does your project focus on? Please tick below: <input type="checkbox"/> Increasing women in leadership and decision-making roles <input type="checkbox"/> Tackling social and gender norms that hinders women <input type="checkbox"/> Empowering young girls as changemakers <input type="checkbox"/> Engaging men and boys for gender equality <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____
<b><u>Summary of Proposed Project: (not more than 1/2 page)</u></b>
<b><u>Background:</u></b>
<b><u>Project Objectives:</u></b>

<b><u>Project Location:</u></b>	
<b><u>Description of Output and Activities</u></b>	
<b><u>Output 1:</u></b>	
<b><u>Target Groups or Beneficiaries:</u></b>	
<b><u>Partners/Stakeholders:</u></b>	
<b><u>Name of Activity 1:</u></b>	<b><u>Description of Activity:</u></b>
<b><u>Name of Activity 2:</u></b>	<b><u>Description of Activity:</u></b>
<b><u>Output 2:</u></b>	
<b><u>Target Groups or Beneficiaries:</u></b>	
<b><u>Partners/Stakeholders:</u></b>	
<b><u>Name of Activity 1:</u></b>	<b><u>Description of Activity:</u></b>
<b><u>Name of Activity 2:</u></b>	<b><u>Description of Activity:</u></b>
<i>(please insert more rows as needed)</i>	
<b><u>How does your project address gender equality?</u></b>	
<b><u>Sustainability and Future Plans:</u></b>	



<b>Risks and Proposed Means of Mitigation</b>		
<b>Risk</b>	<b>Risk Level (Low, Medium, High)</b>	<b>Means of Mitigation</b>
Risk 1:		
Risk 2:		
<i>(please insert more rows as needed)</i>		

<b>Work Plan and Budget</b>					
<b>M&amp;E</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Time frame</b>	<b>Budget Breakdown</b>	<b>Total Budget</b>
Indicator:	Output 1:	Activity 1:	<i>(Month/Year to Month/Year)</i>	<i>(Item1): (Amount)</i>	<i>(Total Amount for Activity)</i>
Baseline:				<i>(Item 2): (Amount)</i>	
Target Results:		Activity 2:			
Indicator:	Output 2:	Activity 1:			
Baseline:					
Target Results:		Activity 2:			
<i>(please insert more rows as needed)</i>					

**\*\*Note: Please include CSO information (with the details described in Annex I) as a separate page following this section.**