

SGP The GEF
Small Grants
Programme



THE GEF SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME
Results Report 2023-2024

The Small Grants Programme

Results Report 2023-2024

INTRODUCTION

The Small Grants Programme (SGP) has been providing financial and technical support to civil society and community-based organizations on innovative community-driven initiatives that address global environmental issues – such as biodiversity loss, climate change mitigation and adaptation, land degradation, international waters management, and chemicals and waste management – while improving livelihoods for over 30 years. The largest and longest standing corporate programme of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), SGP has been implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) since its launch in 1992. During this time, SGP has constantly evolved and grown into a unique global delivery mechanism to scale up local actions that can develop and deliver solutions to multiple challenges.

Driven by evidence, as noted in this report, the active leadership of local communities to address these critical environmental problems holds the key to effective stewardship of the environment and sustainable development. Currently active in 127 countries, SGP plays a unique role in meeting the objectives of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In each participating country, SGP is facilitating close linkages and synergies with MEA-related policies and strategies, such as National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs), National Adaptation Plan (NAP), Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and others, all of which emphasize the importance of engaging wider stakeholders, including civil society organizations (CSOs), local communities, and Indigenous Peoples.

SGP has evolved into a social inclusion platform, with a strong focus on empowering and improving the skills of women, Indigenous Peoples, youth, and persons with disabilities. Besides its central role as an incubator and accelerator of community innovations, SGP also plays a key role in bringing together civil society, government, private sector, and others to promote systemic change from the community level. This was evidentially noted by several evaluations during the reporting period. For example, the Evaluation of Community Based Approaches (CBA) at the GEF acknowledged that “SGP has a long history of supporting CBAs and is a built-in resource and mechanism for identifying bottom-up initiatives with a track record of implementation success and existing capacity.” SGP is preparing to expand in scope and scale in its upcoming eighth operational phase, focusing on diversification, innovation, and optimization, as well as on establishing wider partnerships and synergies with GEF agencies, donors and a diverse range of stakeholders for further impact.

SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN 1992, SGP HAS IMPLEMENTED



29,744

PROJECTS



US\$838

TOTAL IN GRANTS,
GEF AND OTHER DONORS
(IN \$ MILLIONS)



US\$990.5

MOBILIZED IN CO-FINANCING
(IN \$ MILLIONS)



136

COUNTRIES



127

ACTIVE
COUNTRIES

METHODOLOGY

This report presents SGP's results for the period 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024, in alignment with the GEF reporting year. The results presented here are based on reporting by 115 SGP Country Programmes. A conservative methodological approach is used for results calculations, with an emphasis on 953 projects that were completed during the reporting period. This approach is consistent with SGP results reporting in the past years. Any ongoing progress from projects under implementation is not included, unless explicitly stated.



GEF PORTFOLIO
1 JULY 2023 - 30 JUNE 2024



GEF FUNDING
ACTIVE PORTFOLIO OF GRANT PROJECTS



COMBINED PORTFOLIO
GEF AND OTHER PARTNERS, 1 JULY 2023 - 30 JUNE 2024

887 NEW PROJECTS

2,123 ACTIVE PROJECTS

2,351 ACTIVE PROJECTS

953 COMPLETED PROJECTS

US\$80.3 GRANT PROJECT FUNDING (IN \$ MILLIONS)

US\$88.3 GRANT PROJECT FUNDING (IN \$ MILLIONS)

US\$73.6 GRANT PROJECT LEVEL CO-FINANCING (IN \$ MILLIONS)

US\$81.2 GRANT PROJECT LEVEL CO-FINANCING (IN \$ MILLIONS)

Geographic coverage



127
ACTIVE COUNTRIES




112
GLOBAL COUNTRY PROGRAMMES



15
UPGRADED COUNTRY PROGRAMMES

Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) currently account for 62% of SGP global country programmes, covering 39 LDCs and 37 SIDS.

Focal area distribution¹


45% 
BIODIVERSITY

19% 
CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION

19% 
LAND DEGRADATION

5% 
CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

5% 
CHEMICALS AND WASTE

4% 
CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

3% 
INTERNATIONAL WATERS



¹ Percentages in each focal area based on active portfolio as of 30 June, 2024.

Progress towards GEF-7 core indicators

In GEF-7, SGP has emphasized the promotion of strategic and results-based investments at the local level, in alignment with GEF-7 Focal Area Strategies and Impact Programmes. In this context, SGP has aligned its results framework with the GEF-7 results framework by applying the relevant Core Indicators and Sub-Indicators, as agreed with the GEF Secretariat and in line with the agreed guidelines outlined in ME/GN/01: Guidelines on Core Indicators and Sub-Indicators.

SGP RESULTS ON GEF-7 CORE INDICATORS² FOR 2023-2024



538,217

Marine protected areas under improved management effectiveness (hectares)



55,180

Area of degraded agricultural lands restored (hectares)



2,083,991

Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (hectares)



150,042

Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems (hectares)



1,599,679

Area of marine habitat under improved practices to benefit biodiversity (hectares, excluding protected areas)



706,915

Direct beneficiaries as co-benefit of SGP intervention



375,125

Women



331,790

Men

² The indicators above represent direct impact due to SGP intervention in line with GEF-7 indicator methodology.



Progress towards Focal area objectives

In alignment with the overall GEF programming, SGP focuses its efforts on targeted strategic initiatives that promote integrated approaches in addressing key global environmental issues by covering all GEF focal areas. Most SGP projects continue to have multiple benefits and integrated approaches with relevance to more than one focal area. However, for reporting purposes, projects were categorized under one primary focal area.



BIODIVERSITY

SGP's biodiversity focal area portfolio supported improvements in the management effectiveness of protected areas and in mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into production landscapes/seascapes and sectors. Support towards creation and management of Indigenous Peoples and Communities Conserved Areas and Territories (ICCAs) are a key part of SGP's biodiversity portfolio.



Spotlight on Algeria

In **Algeria**, the Association MARENOSTRUM Chercell implemented a project to enhance knowledge of and access to information on marine and coastal biodiversity in the *wilaya* (province) of Tipaza. The project organized naturalist outings to provide the general public and university students with educational brochures, with a focus on the use of the PARSAC app, a digital tool for collecting data on marine biodiversity. The outings and the app were part of a participatory citizen science approach to enrich the marine biodiversity database. Educational outings and workshops also engaged schoolchildren with activities such as games and hands-on observation of marine species, fostering a comprehensive understanding of marine protection. In addition, training sessions in marine biology equipped 183 participants (105 women and 78 men) with the skills necessary for systematic observation and conservation efforts.

Introductory training in scientific monitoring protocols provided diving participants with theoretical and practical skills in naturalist monitoring techniques and scientific diving. The training sessions brought together divers and non-divers from different coastal *wilayas* to establish a network of naturalist observers and ambassadors for the PARSAC app, facilitating data collection along the entire coastline.

Through a series of participatory consultative workshops, the project engaged local directorates, research institutes, universities, scuba diving clubs, and other stakeholders to refine the PARSAC app. This collaborative approach ensured the digital tool met the diverse informational needs of the community.





CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION

The climate change mitigation focal area portfolio supported low-carbon energy transformation at the community level through the introduction of low greenhouse gas (GHG) technologies, with proven environmental and economic co-benefits contributing to multiple SDGs and improved livelihoods.

RESULTS

217
PROJECTS COMPLETED
THIS YEAR

18,248
HOUSEHOLDS SUPPORTED
WITH ENERGY ACCESS
CO-BENEFITS

65
TYPOLOGIES OF ENERGY ACCESS
SOLUTIONS WITH SUCCESSFUL
DEMONSTRATIONS OR SCALING UP
AND REPLICATION

36
COUNTRY PROGRAMMES THAT
ADDRESSED COMMUNITY-LEVEL
BARRIERS TO DEPLOYMENT
OF LOW-GHG TECHNOLOGIES

Spotlight on Barbados

In **Barbados**, the Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity (BIMAP) completed a project that contributed to climate change mitigation, in alignment with the country's goal of achieving 100-percent carbon neutrality by 2030. Building on prior sustainability measures, such as outfitting the compound with LED lights and installing water tanks with rain harvesting systems, the project demonstrated and operationalized BIMAP's commitment to environmental stewardship.

A major achievement was the installation of a 36 kWp (kilowatt-peak) grid-tie solar PV power system on the roof of the institute in Wildey, just east of the capital Bridgetown. This installation resulted in a 50-percent reduction in the institute's reliance on fossil fuels. The process involved site visits, electrical upgrades, solar PV setup, and grid connection, all executed through a collaborative effort between BIMAP and the installer. The project conducted a public awareness campaign to highlight the benefits of PV power systems, water and energy conservation, reaching over 5,000 members of the public. In addition, BIMAP transitioned to a paperless campus with the application of innovative strategies to minimize paper usage. By integrating the MOODLE e-learning environment into course delivery, facilitating online registrations and payments, and offering digital course components, the institute reduced its paper consumption by 60 percent. The transition promoted an eco-friendly environment for both staff and students, with around 2,092 women and 1,075 men benefitting from the project.





SUSTAINABLE LAND AND FOREST MANAGEMENT

The land degradation focal area portfolio supported the restoration and prevention of land degradation and promoted sustainable land and forest management. Activities targeted rural communities, which are highly dependent on agroecosystems and forest ecosystems for their livelihoods. On sustainable forest management, during the reporting year, SGP projects focused on sustainable land use, land-use change, and forestry management to ensure connectivity between ecosystems and restorative activities. The projects have also supported activities to decrease pressure on forest resources.

RESULTS

202
PROJECTS COMPLETED
THIS YEAR

143,843

COMMUNITY MEMBERS
DEMONSTRATING AGRICULTURAL,
LAND AND WATER
MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

98,440

HECTARES OF LAND UNDER
IMPROVED AGRICULTURAL,
LAND AND WATER
MANAGEMENT

6,049

FARMER LEADERS
INVOLVED IN SUCCESSFUL
DEMONSTRATIONS OF
AGROECOLOGICAL PRACTICES

538

FARMER ORGANIZATIONS, GROUPS
OR NETWORKS DISSEMINATING
IMPROVED CLIMATE-SMART
AGROECOLOGICAL PRACTICES

Spotlight on

Vanuatu

In **Vanuatu**, the women-led NGO Woman I Toktok Together (“women talking together”) completed a project to empower women on the island of Erromango in forest management and food security. Major threats contributing to land degradation include deforestation due to agricultural expansion, logging, and the impacts of natural disasters. Slash-and-burn techniques and tilling on steep slopes have exacerbated soil erosion, undermining local agriculture.

The project targeted women, who are critical in agriculture but often lack awareness of the underlying environmental issues. Through the project, women in 11 villages were educated about the impacts of deforestation and strategies for enhancing food security. The project facilitated knowledge exchange on best practices for forest restoration and food stock improvement, particularly in the wake of twin cyclones that struck the island in 2023. Key project activities included promoting backyard gardening and the preservation of resilient native crops such as wild yam, a vital energy source during food shortages and disasters. The project supported the recovery of yam stock by distributing seedlings to women and men across the island. These seedlings were integrated into backyard gardens alongside other crops and fruit trees, and protected against animals by wire fencing. Additionally, the project fostered networking among women across three other islands in the Tafea province, further promoting the use of resilient yam crops to enhance regional food security.





CHEMICALS AND WASTE

The chemicals and waste management focal area portfolio supports control and reduction of the use of harmful chemicals. SGP's efforts focused on the sound management of hazardous chemicals and waste, including persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and mercury, to minimize adverse effects on human health and the global environment. There is a growing need among local communities to address issues related to waste management initiatives, including plastics and e-waste.

RESULTS

96

PROJECTS COMPLETED
THIS YEAR (INCLUDING
MERCURY PROJECTS)

23,414

KILOGRAMS OF HARMFUL
CHEMICALS AVOIDED FROM
UTILIZATION OR RELEASE

12,494

KILOGRAMS OF PESTICIDES
AVOIDED, REDUCED
OR PREVENTED

64

NATIONAL COALITIONS AND
NETWORKS ON CHEMICALS AND
WASTE MANAGEMENT ESTABLISHED
OR STRENGTHENED

2

MERCURY
MANAGEMENT
PROJECTS
COMPLETED

Spotlight on Nigeria

In **Nigeria**, the organization Digital Peers International completed a project deploying IT strategies to engage youth in plastic waste management in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). Estimates indicate that less than 10 percent of the 95,000-142,000 tonnes of plastic waste generated in the country every year is recycled. The project aimed to reach around 4 million people and reduce plastic waste generation by 3 to 4 metric tonnes per day. Four hundred youth were selected from a pool of applicants, organized into teams, and provided with training and tools for plastic use and waste management solutions through IT platforms. Site visits were conducted for these youth and students from three government secondary schools, showcasing opportunities in plastic recycling through tours of recycling factories and dump sites.

The project resulted in the development of a gamified plastic waste management app and an e-library & directory app. The former encourages users to participate in virtual challenges, fostering a sense of competition and accomplishment in waste management efforts, while the latter serves as an information hub, providing resources on plastic waste management, recycling locations, and relevant contacts for plastic waste collection. Additionally, an ICT boot camp called DIGITEST 2023 was held, where children aged 8 to 18 went through intensive training and competition to create and refine ideas for plastic waste management apps and other innovative solutions. The youth were also trained on alternative uses of recycled plastics,

such as making bricks, tiles, household furniture, and interior decorations. The project utilized data collected on the volume of waste generated in the FCT City Centre and collaborated with the Abuja Environmental Protection Board and the University of Abuja to facilitate seamless connections between plastic waste collectors and recycling factories.



SGP Nigeria



INTERNATIONAL WATERS

The international waters focal area supported the sustainable management of transboundary waterbodies through community-based activities. SGP continued to develop and demonstrate effective community-based actions and practices in support of the Strategic Action Plans (SAPs) that were developed among countries sharing the transboundary waterbodies, including river basins, large marine ecosystems, and others. It is important to note that, in addition to the international waters focal area portfolio, many of the marine, coastal, and freshwater management projects supported by SGP are often categorized under the biodiversity focal area as their primary focal area, with strong benefits towards transboundary waterbodies.

RESULTS

30
PROJECTS COMPLETED
THIS YEAR

2,417

HECTARES OF SEASCAPES
SUSTAINABLY MANAGED

1,518,329

HECTARES OF MARINE, COASTAL AREAS
OR FISHING GROUNDS SUSTAINABLY
MANAGED

23

TONNES OF LAND-BASED
POLLUTION REDUCED/
PREVENTED FROM
ENTERING WATER BODIES

11

SEASCAPES/INLAND
FRESHWATER
LANDSCAPES
SUPPORTED

Spotlight on Maldives

In the **Maldives**, the organization Maldives Resilient Reefs (MRR), in close collaboration with the local council of Hithadhoo and the Blue Marine Foundation, has made significant strides in establishing the first legally enforceable community conserved area (CCA) in the country. The CCA is home to a rich biodiversity of marine life and serves as a critical multi-species grouper spawning aggregation site. Created through a bottom-up approach under the Decentralization Act, the CCA allows local communities to manage marine resources within the council's jurisdiction. During the project, the Hithadhoo CCA received strong support from the local community and tourism operators, with a participatory process ensuring that the management plan and regulations reflected everyone's needs and concerns. Women were consulted on the draft management plan, with efforts to increase their participation in swimming, snorkelling, diving, awareness sessions, and citizen science training. Men, especially those in fishing, were included in consultations and training sessions. Youth were engaged in citizen science training, marine research, and conservation activities.

As a result of the project, the Hithadhoo Kandhu Kolhu area will become an official no-take zone, eliminating fishing pressure and enabling fish stocks to replenish, while sustainable fishing methods will be implemented in the rest of the CCA. A user fee negotiated with tourism operators will cover operational expenses and generate funds for community projects. The Environment Officer at Hithadhoo Council, supported by the MRR/Blue Marine team, is already conducting monitoring activities, with community members trained

in citizen science of marine ecosystems. A blueprint has been drafted for other local councils interested in establishing CCAs, paving the way for increasing protected ocean area in the Maldives and supporting the 2030 international commitment to protect 30 percent of the country's maritime territory.





CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

SGP provides support to enhance and strengthen the capacity of communities and civil society organizations to address global environmental challenges. Community-level capacity development activities have been supported since OP5, in alignment with the GEF focal area strategies.

RESULTS

64

PROJECTS COMPLETED
THIS YEAR

530

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS
WITH DEVELOPED OR IMPROVED
CAPACITIES

492

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS
WITH DEVELOPED OR
IMPROVED CAPACITIES

Spotlight on Malaysia

In **Malaysia**, Wetlands International conducted a project to address the challenges faced by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs), and community-based organizations (CBOs) in the country, ensuring their sustainable operation with a focus on capacity building, project financial management, and monitoring and evaluation. The stakeholders included past and current SGP grantees, local NGOs, CSOs, CBOs, research institutions, members of academia, potential funding agencies, government agencies at both state and federal levels, and media agencies. The targeted beneficiaries primarily consisted of local NGOs, CSOs, and CBOs managing, implementing, and preparing project reports for SGP in Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah, and Sarawak.

The project had three main objectives: enhance the capacity of SGP grantees, review project and financial reports, and organize monitoring and evaluation trips to selected project sites. Capacity building for SGP grantees included a training needs assessment conducted via a multiple-choice questionnaire, followed by the engagement of experts based on the assessment results and virtual training sessions delivered through Zoom, all recorded and archived for future access. For project and financial report reviews, the project team developed checklists aligned with SGP's format requirements and reporting standards, provided constructive feedback to trainees, and held focus group discussions to address any difficulties and knowledge gaps. The organization

of monitoring and evaluation trips involved collaboration with the SGP Malaysia Secretariat to plan and schedule site visits for National Steering Committee (NSC) members, allowing them to observe project impacts and interact with grantees.







Contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals





Grantmakers plus and cross-cutting approaches

Social inclusion

During the reporting period, SGP continued to undertake targeted efforts to support greater social inclusion of marginalized groups, including women, Indigenous Peoples, youth, and persons with disabilities.



41% PROJECTS LED BY WOMEN OR WOMEN'S GROUPS



22% PROJECTS ENGAGING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES



86% GENDER RESPONSIVE PROJECTS



43% COUNTRIES WITH AN INDIGENOUS PEOPLES FOCAL POINT ON THE NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEES



88% COUNTRIES WITH A GENDER FOCAL POINT ON THE NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEES



872 INDIGENOUS LEADERS WITH STRENGTHENED CAPACITIES



50 PERSONS WITH DISABILITY ORGANIZATIONS CONTRIBUTING TO SUSTAINABLE STRATEGIES



71% COUNTRIES WITH A YOUTH FOCAL POINT ON THE NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEES



SGP Zimbabwe

In **Zimbabwe**, the Youth Development Initiative Trust supported semi-intensive fish farming to enhance economic resilience and food security for women in Arda Transau, Manicaland Province. The project benefited 50 women, including four with disabilities. Key activities included training and equipping these women to engage in fish farming, supporting and sustaining fish farms, and building 50 functional ponds. Additionally, the project focused on rehabilitating degraded areas through gully reclamation, tree planting, wetland protection, and market linkages. A total of 75,000 fingerlings were distributed to the beneficiaries. Household fish farming allowed the collection of fish waste, which was used as fertilizer in surrounding gardens, promoting integrated farming and efficient water and waste management. In addition, the project developed a fish farming mobile app called *Hove Dzedu* (Our Fish). This app, available both online and offline, provides comprehensive and interactive content on fish farming. For those without mobile phones, a hard copy manual was developed. The app offers features such as practical information and assistance on rearing fish and maintaining ponds, performance monitoring for individual beneficiaries, personalized feedback, and timely problem identification.

The project empowered women in Arda Transau by involving them in various activities within the fish farming value chain, such as fish production, processing, and marketing. This engagement provided opportunities for women to take on decision-making roles, secure leadership positions, and have a voice in shaping policies and in interventions at the household level. As a result, total profits amounted to US\$ 8,117, and eight women managed to cover tuition fees for a total of 13 children. Two months after the first batch harvest, household food consumption scores increased by 62 percent. There was a 78-percent increase in protein intake in beneficiary households, as they now had fish as a regular part of their diets.

In the **Solomon Islands**, the White Rock Group completed a project that supported the Indigenous Peoples of Rennell Island, a minority Polynesian race. The Hatagua community in west Rennell faced constant water shortages due to their distance from water sources and reliance on rain catchment. Families had to fetch water using buckets and containers from local shops, with some resorting to pots and bottles, while others had nothing to collect water with due to low supply and high demand. Over the years, changing weather patterns resulting from climate change led to frequent droughts.

The sustainable water supply project provided easy access to clean and safe water, especially for women, children, and people with special needs, by installing solar-powered pumps. Two water tanks of 10,000 litres capacity each were purchased, along with pipes and other materials. Technical experts from the community advised the project team



SGP Solomon Islands



on the optimal locations for the water tank stands and solar panels. Community members actively participated throughout the project, which enabled fresh water to be pumped from the ground using solar power, stored in water tanks, and distributed throughout the community. Previously, during the dry season community members had to walk long distances to access underground water. With the solar-powered pumps, water is now easily accessible to 132 people, including children, ensuring a reliable supply for cooking, drinking, and household sanitation. It will help minimize the spread of water-borne diseases such as cholera, typhoid, and diarrhoea. The reliable water supply also enhances the community's resilience to the impacts of climate change.

In **Peru**, the *Comunidad Campesina Ccapacmarca* (Farming Community of Ccapacmarca) completed a project that actively involved 40 young community members and successfully set apart 1,548 hectares of headwaters for sustainable management. This was done through a communal agreement for the implementation of a public investment project (for sustainable forest development in the communities of the Ccapacmarca district in the Cusco region. In addition, the project developed a water resource management plan for the Quepuro basin. The young participants received training in integrated water resource management and agroecological production systems. They also participated in practical workshops on organic fertilization and played a key role in cultivating Andean crops.

Through their efforts, the project restored 20 hectares of land for the agroecological production of quinoa and tarwi crops and destined 31 hectares of closed-off areas for the restoration of *queñua* (*Polylepis sp.*) forest. It also ensured that 131 hectares of land are now managed communally to restore vegetation cover (including natural pastures), implement infiltration trenches and protect local areas near the

Qenqo community. The project promoted sustainable forest management and showcased the leadership of youth in enhancing community resilience and food security.

In **Georgia**, the Keda Local Action Group implemented a project to create an effective and replicable initiative to improve the socio-economic conditions of persons with disabilities while achieving environmental goals. With the active participation of persons with disabilities, the project built a 16-metre retaining wall in the village of Kuchula as a direct climate adaptation measure to address immediate environmental concerns, such as soil erosion and flood risks. During the project, persons with disabilities in Keda Municipality formed an informal coalition named Climate Ambassadors. The project provided training on environmental subjects to the members of the coalition, covering sustainable natural resource management, climate change, and environmental protection. Workshops and seminars were key to this initiative, along with the development of thematic publications to enhance awareness. Through these specialized training and hands-on activities, 20 members of the coalition enhanced their skills in socio-economic and environmental matters specific to Keda Municipality. In addition, a comprehensive climate change adaptation plan was developed, outlining measures tailored for local communities, which improved readiness to mitigate climate-related natural disasters.

Young individuals were actively involved in various activities. They led an information campaign and mobilized persons with disabilities. Environmental events, organized jointly by the coalition and local students, raised awareness among the residents of Keda about environmental issues and facilitated the social integration of persons with disabilities. A video produced during the project reached more than 225,000 people across Georgia via social media, significantly boosting public engagement and awareness of environmental issues.



Broader adoption

Scaling up, replication, and policy influence

SGP encourages the replication and scaling up of good results and measures that have a strong impact, including influencing of relevant policies at the national, regional and global levels. This takes place at grantee and portfolio levels both within and across countries.

125

PROJECTS SCALED UP OR REPLICATED

82

PROJECTS INFLUENCED POLICY THROUGH THEIR ACTIVITIES

Capacity Development Strategies Deployed by SGP Country Programmes³



71% PROMOTED PEER-TO-PEER EXCHANGES



62% ORGANIZED TRAINING WITHIN PROJECT GRANTS ON SPECIFIC TECHNICAL ISSUES



71% STRENGTHENED GRANTEE NETWORKS



55% CONNECTED GRANTEES WITH THE ACADEMIA OR RESEARCH CENTERS



68% ORGANIZED TRAINING FOR SGP GRANTEES ON DIFFERENT SUBJECTS TO IMPROVE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION



48% CONNECTED GRANTEES WITH DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES/PRACTITIONERS



63% CONNECTED GRANTEES WITH NGOs/INGOs



41% CONNECTED GRANTEES WITH PRIVATE SECTOR COMPANIES



63% CONNECTED GRANTEES WITH GOVERNMENT SERVICES

³ Percentages based on 115 SGP country programmes that reported this year.





In **Fiji**, the Yavusa Navakavu Development Trust implemented a project that demonstrates successful scaling up through innovative resource mapping, leveraging its results to attract further support. Its major achievement was the development of the Navakavu Blue Economic Zone Master Plan for the community, utilizing detailed mapping of land and marine resources. This map is the first of its kind in any Fijian resource-owning unit, as are known the Indigenous clans that own 87 percent of land in Fiji. The map served as a powerful tool for the Navakavu people to effectively manage their environment and plan for sustainable development. A lead consultant, Blue Horizon, was hired to draw up the master plan, in consultation with stakeholders. The Navakavu community actively participated in the entire process. The project conducted a governance workshop to establish a technical expertise mechanism available within Navakavu. Following this, the project held a series of training sessions on key areas, such as project management, financial management, and monitoring and evaluation.

Strategic partnerships played a crucial role in scaling up the project. For instance, funding from UNDP was secured for the construction of a mangrove walkway, while the Fijian government expressed interest in supporting the Navakavu *yavusa* (clan) due to the project's outcomes and the community's commitment to sustainable practices. This potential government support could encompass various areas, such as infrastructure development or livelihood initiatives, directly benefiting the community's well-being.

In **Eswatini**, Women Unlimited completed a project under the Plastics Innovation Programme that developed several key initiatives at the national level to influence policy on plastic waste management. The project aimed to establish a community-based zero-waste

management system, raise awareness, and ensure public participation in local and global campaigns. Building on the results of the UNDP Accelerator Lab Phatsa Sakho Nawe Campaign, its primary goal was to advocate for an outright ban on single-use plastic materials, a milestone that was achieved in 2024 with a significant contribution from this initiative. In addition, the project led to the establishment of a draft National Action Plan on plastic waste management, which awaits cabinet approval. It also conducted a diagnostic analysis of policy gaps in plastic waste management, with recommended strategies to address them.

The Eswatini Waste Conference, also known locally as Waste *Indaba*, was hosted under the project by Women Unlimited in partnership with the Eswatini Government. The event brought together policy leaders, members of academia, industry actors, and local community stakeholders to discuss pressing waste management issues in the country and to build a circular economy within the waste sector. The project made significant investments in the knowledge and training of policy leaders and stakeholders, contributing to improved environmental practices and local development. During the project, women, who are more actively involved in waste picking and sorting, received training on how to create sustainable livelihoods through plastic and other waste. This contributed to establishing innovative income-generating waste management solutions in the Kwaluseni area. Partnering with the Eswatini Environment Authority, the project held community-based roadshows for World Environment Day and International Day of Zero Waste. The knowledge gained from the project was disseminated through media blogs, videos, and social media stories, ensuring widespread awareness and engagement.



Livelihoods and sustainability

Improving livelihoods is one of SGP's core strategies. Recognized as a direct incentive for and benefit of improved and sustainable management of natural resources, including land, forest, and water, it generates global environmental benefits and often reduces pressure on the environment and natural resources.

Strategies to Improve Livelihoods and Quality of Life Deployed by SGP Country Programmes⁴



⁴ Percentages based on 115 SGP country programmes that reported this year.

In **South Africa**, Dziphathu Green Technologies, a small, youth-led startup, completed a innovative project to collect and convert plastic waste into building materials using advanced nano technology. The technique features a unique manufacturing process that produces construction materials, such as paving and building bricks, from plastic and other waste materials. Remarkably, this process requires neither water nor cement, yet the resulting products are stronger than traditional cement-based materials. The potential of this technology is promising, although it is still undergoing testing in collaboration with a local university and in close partnership with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research and the National Cleaner Production Center.

The project constructed a workshop space, as the youth had previously been operating in an open backyard. It also supported the construction of a storeroom, office space with necessary equipment, the purchase of machinery, and marketing efforts for income generation. As a result, the project collected five tonnes of waste and produced 2,000 bags of low-smoke charcoal eco-briquettes that were sold to local retailers and the community, generating an estimated ZAR 10,000 (US\$ 545) each month, along with an additional ZAR 6,000 (US\$ 327) from the sale of bricks and pavers. The project has created 16 jobs for young unemployed people in the community and has attracted additional funding from South African National Parks to replicate its operations at a site near the Kruger National Park gate, where eco-briquettes will be supplied to lodges within the park.

CSO-government dialogues

CSO-Government Policy and Planning Dialogues ensure community voices and participation are promoted and enhanced in the global and national policy processes related to global environment and sustainable development issues. SGP has strengthened its role as a CSO-led multi-stakeholder platform by working closely with governments and different civil society actors. These platforms also provide opportunities to discuss possible shifts in relevant policies and practices, besides encouraging strong partnerships with different stakeholders to scale up and commercialize successful community projects.



5,714 CSO/CBO REPRESENTATIVES INVOLVED

168 DIALOGUE PLATFORMS ORGANIZED

40% OF COUNTRIES CONDUCTED CSO-GOVERNMENT DIALOGUES



South-south exchange

South-South Cooperation is another key strategy to improve knowledge exchange and technology transfer among countries and regions in the south. SGP's community innovation exchange platform is one of its key initiatives to promote knowledge exchange among SGP countries and support cross-regional synergies and sharing of good practices. The overall aim is to produce high-impact results and enable broader adoption of innovations and practices developed by SGP grantees, civil society, and other key stakeholders.



40 SOUTH-SOUTH EXCHANGES SUPPORTED TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE AND CAPACITY ON INNOVATIONS ACROSS COUNTRIES

18% OF COUNTRIES FACILITATED SOUTH-SOUTH EXCHANGES

Knowledge and communications



2,526 LOCAL MEDIA MENTIONS



1,419 FACT SHEETS, CASE STUDIES, BROCHURES, PUBLICATIONS, AND VIDEOS PRODUCED



1,221 TRAINING SESSIONS CONDUCTED



38 NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL AWARDS RECEIVED

Monitoring and evaluation



1,696 PROJECTS (72% OF ACTIVE PORTFOLIO) VISITED TO TRACK PROGRESS



1,380 M&E VISITS CONDUCTED

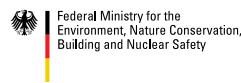


Partnerships

SGP fosters partnerships across a wide spectrum of stakeholders to broaden the scope of the programme and to scale up and replicate successful SGP initiatives. The finance mobilized through these partnerships serve as co-finance to GEF resources. The synergies created by the collaborations are critical to the wider impact of grant activities.

During the reporting period, several partnerships continued with significant additional resources, for which SGP serves as the delivery platform. The COVID-19 Response Initiative of Global Support Initiative to territories and areas conserved by Indigenous Peoples and local communities (**ICCA-GSI**) is under implementation in 45 countries. The Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative Programme (**COMDEKS**) **Phase 4** was launched in 2022, covering 15 countries. Meanwhile, the Community-Based Adaptation Programme (**CBA**) **Phase 3** is currently under implementation, with the involvement of 26 countries from the Asia and Pacific region. The ongoing **Plastic Waste Management & Behaviour Change Programme**, in collaboration with Rare, engaged 18 countries in its training programme. Launched in June 2023 in partnership with the African Union Commission, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) **Great Green Wall** (GGW) Innovation Programme aims to address land degradation, desertification, and climate change in eight countries from the Southern African region. In addition, the partnership between **1,000 Landscape for 1 Billion People** (1000L) and SGP was launched in late 2023, while Phase 2 of the collaboration between SGP and Mountain Partnership, hosted by the FAO, entered the incubation and acceleration stages. Building on previous successes, SGP's partnership with **SOS SAHEL** has continued to contribute to the realization of environmentally sustainable development in the drylands of the Sahel region. During the reporting period, SGP's **Plastic Innovation Programme** in partnership with UNDP was successfully closed.

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SGP

The GEF
Small Grants
Programme

The Small Grants Programme (SGP) is a corporate programme of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Established in 1992, SGP is currently active in 127 countries and promotes community-based innovation, capacity development, and empowerment through sustainable development projects of local civil society organizations with special consideration for Indigenous Peoples, women, and youth. SGP has supported over 28,000 community-based projects on biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, climate change mitigation and adaptation, sustainable land management, conservation of international waters, and chemicals and waste management, while generating sustainable livelihoods.



The GEF is a family of funds dedicated to confronting biodiversity loss, climate change, pollution, and strains on land and ocean health. Its grants, blended financing, and policy support helps developing countries address their biggest environmental priorities and adhere to international environmental conventions. Over the past three decades, the GEF has provided more than \$22 billion and mobilized \$120 billion in co-financing for more than 5,000 national and regional projects.
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www.undp.org

SGP

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