



**SGP** The GEF  
Small Grants  
Programme

## OPERATIONAL PHASE 8 (OP8)

### SGP COUNTRY PROGRAMME STRATEGY (CPS)

#### SIERRA LEONE



A degraded land as a result of mining in Kenema District, Sierra Leone (Photo: SGP Team)



Table of Content		Page
1	Introduction	2
2	Country Programme Summary: Key results and achievements	2
3	Country Priorities and Strategic Alignment	5
	3.1 Alignment with national priorities	5
	3.2 Gaps and opportunities	7
	3.3 OP8 strategic priorities of the SGP Country Programme	10
4	OP8 Priority Landscapes/Seascapes & Strategic Initiatives	13
	4.1 Grantmaking within the priority landscape/seascapes	13
	4.2 CSO-government-private sector dialogue platforms	17
	4.3 Promoting social Inclusion, including gender equality and women's empowerment	17
	4.4 Knowledge Management	17
5	Communication Plan	18
6	Resource Mobilization and Partnership Plan	18
7	Partnership Opportunities	19
8	Risk Management Plan	19
9	Monitoring And Evaluation Plan	20
	9.1 Monitoring approaches at project and country levels	20
	9.2 CPS Results Framework	24
10	National Steering Committee Endorsement	29

<b>List of Figures</b>	
Figure 1: Gola Rainforest National Park (75,000ha; 10°30-11°00W, 7°-8°00N)	14
Figure 2: Western Area Peninsula National Park (17,688ha; 13°00-13°30W, 8°-8°30N)	15

<b>List of Tables</b>	
Tabel 1: OP8 Financial Resources - SGP Country Programme	2
Table 2: Funds committed, and number of projects supported during OP5, OP6 & OP7 (2013-2024)	3
Table 3: Commitment of Funds by Focal area of projects during OP5, OP6 & OP7	4
Table 4. Highlights of the relevant conventions as well as regional/national plans	5
Table 5. SGP Country Programme's alignment with SGP OP8 Strategic Initiatives and country priorities/projects/programmes	10
Table 6: Innovative, inclusive, and impactful projects ideas for Grantmaking outside priority landscapes	16
Table 7. Description of risks and mitigation measures.	19
Table 8. M&E Plan at the Country Programme level	23
Table 9: Results Framework of SGP OP8 Country Programme Strategy	24
Table 10. The Signature of National Steering Committee Members	29



**Tabel 1: OP8 Financial Resources - SGP Country Programme (estimated US\$)<sup>1</sup>**

Total SGP Grants to date since Country Programme start date (2012)	<b>USD 4,098,593</b>
OP8 GEF Core Funds	<b>USD 500,000</b>
OP8 GEF STAR Funds	<b>USD 860,000</b>
Other funds (secured)	<b>USD 0</b>
Other funds (expected/to be mobilized)	<b>USD 400,000</b>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Eighth Operational Phase of the Small Grants Programme (SGP OP8) builds on 30 years of empowering local civil society (CSOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) in leading community-driven initiatives. These initiatives have improved household wellbeing, raised environmental awareness, and generated global environmental benefits. With increasing economic pressures and rising inequalities, vulnerable groups are increasingly marginalized and unable to cope with threats like ecosystem degradation, biodiversity loss, and climate change. Previous SGP phases have shown that integrated landscape-seascape approaches are effective in mobilizing stakeholders and linking CSOs/CBOs with partners to achieve livelihood and environmental outcomes.

SGP OP8 aims to engage local CSOs/CBOs globally in landscape-seascape approaches, giving them access to knowledge, skills, and grant assistance to enhance wellbeing, improve socioeconomic conditions, and deliver environmental benefits.

OP8 reflects key features of GEF Small Grants Programme 2.0, including support for youth, women, and Indigenous Peoples, and collaboration with mechanisms like the Microfinance Initiative and CSO Challenge Programme. It also aligns with GEF-8 strategies and the UNDP Strategic Plan (2022-2025), fostering innovation, scaling up, and multi-stakeholder alliances.

## 2. COUNTRY PROGRAMME SUMMARY: Key results and achievements

Since 2011 when SGP Sierra Leone was launched, the programme has successfully completed three GEF Operational Phases (OP5, OP6 and OP7) with significant results. Table 2 below shows that 182 projects have been funded with a total grant commitment of USD 4,098,593 from CORE and STAR Resources. This generated an in-cash co-financing of USD 875,365 and in-kind co-financing of USD 2,372,421. According to breakdown by phases, in the 5<sup>th</sup> operational phase, 58 projects were supported with USD 1,549,793 CORE and STAR Resources which generated in-cash cofinance of USD 101,929 and in-kind cofinance of USD 1,057,328. In the 6<sup>th</sup> Operational phase, 64 projects were supported with USD 1,393,800 mostly in the Gola Rainforest and Western Area Peninsula Forest which generated in-cash cofinance of USD 396,440 and in-kind cofinance of USD 426,866. In the 7<sup>th</sup> Operation phase 60 projects were supported with USD 1,155,000 which generated in-cash cofinance of USD 376,996 and in-kind cofinance of USD 888,227.

<sup>1</sup> The level of SGP OP8 resources is an estimated total of: (a) the GEF8 core grant allocation; (b) approved STAR resources; as well as (c) other sources of cost sharing & co-financing (country, regional and/or global levels). SGP countries with remaining OP7 balances that have not been pipelined will be expected to use these balances in line with the OP8 strategic approach to be coherent in terms of SGP programming and results expected.

Table 2: Funds committed, and number of projects supported during OP5, OP6 & OP7 (2013-2024)

	Number of Projects	Grant Amount (USD)	Co-financing in-Cash (USD)	Co-financing in-Kind (USD)
Year	OP5			
2013	36	1,041,015	60,286	910,847
2014	16	422,007	28,210	131,864
2015	1	22,000	0	0
2017	5	64,771	13,433	14,617
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1,549,793</b>	<b>101,929</b>	<b>1,057,328</b>
Year	OP6			
2016	9	120,000	21,119	45,106
2017	18	480,000	86,487	133,852
2018	24	488,800	148,669	168,392
2019	13	305,000	140,165	79,516
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>1,393,800</b>	<b>396,440</b>	<b>426,866</b>
Year	OP7			
2020	12	250,000	24,260	177,559.2
2021	14	250,000	114,127.6	141,468.2
2022	20	400,000	165,443	369,308
2023	13	250,000	73,165.4	199,891.6
2024	1	5,000	0	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>1,155,000</b>	<b>376,996</b>	<b>888,227</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>4,098,593</b>	<b>875 365</b>	<b>2,372,421</b>

Source: SGP Database 2024

A total of 182 projects have been implemented during the three operational phases (OP5, OP6 and OP7). Land degradation (57 projects) accounts for the largest investment, Climate Change (46 projects) comes in second, Biodiversity (40 projects) takes third, Capacity Development (22 projects) takes fourth, Chemicals and Waste Management (15 projects) takes fifth and International Waters (2 projects) takes last with the least investment (Table 3). All the projects had cross cutting issues of gender, social inclusion and capacity building. International Waters Focal Area accounts for the least investment for several reasons including the complexity and scale of the legal, jurisdictional, and technical challenges of the multiple countries and stakeholders involved in such project, and SGP Grantees, particularly smaller or less established ones lack the institutional capacity, human resources, or administrative support needed to manage complex projects in International Waters.

Table 3: Commitment of Funds by Focal area of projects during OP5, OP6 & OP7

Focal Areas	Number of Projects	Grant Amount	Co-financing in Cash	Co-financing in Kind
Climate Change	46	983,277	243,042	298,406
Biodiversity	40	968,962	207,215	588,657
Land Degradation	57	1,176,698	229,858	939,579
Capacity Development	22	581,716	125,945	365,791
Chemicals and Waste Management	15	347,940	59,240	179,088
International Waters	2	35,000	10,065	900
<b>Total</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>4,098,593</b>	<b>875 365</b>	<b>2,372,421</b>

Source: SGP Database 2024.

#### Other key significant achievements in OP5, OP6 and OP7:

In 2011, the Small Grant Programme considered the entire country as a single landscape during OP5. This approach was changed in OP6 and OP7 where specific landscape/seascape approach was adopted. Since 2011, SGP Sierra Leone has funded 182 projects, of these, 167 were successfully completed, one project was terminated, and 14 projects are currently ongoing. The significant results include 5,649.5ha of globally significant biodiversity protected land area and 20,000ha of fishing grounds or marine protected areas<sup>2</sup>. Fifteen (15) innovations or new technologies being developed or applied including fish farming techniques, use of EMAS pumps, banana bark peel as nursery bags, production of energy efficient clean cookstoves from clay and waste metals, briquettes production from rice husks, coconut shell and cocoa pods, the recycling of plastic wastes into back packs, slippers/shoes and eStones for floor paving, and the recycling of used tyres into sitting accommodation, flower pot and children's playground. In the forest edge communities, 42 projects piloted 101 innovative financial mechanisms for 3,524 families. The financial schemes have catalyzed access to microfinance and other essential resources that boost micro economic growth, empowered youth and women, influenced policies and protected the environment while alleviating poverty. The programme immensely contributed to the protection of 74,000ha of Gola Rainforest National Park where 122 forest edge communities strengthened their co-management skills and have successfully utilized benefits from the ecosystem services.

#### Land Degradation and Sustainable Forest Management

SGP restored 10,507ha of degraded land through Community Based Forest Conservation approach and developed four (4) local bylaws including a 10-year moratorium on the Gbonkor Makalu Community Forest that covers over 100ha and contributed to the Customary Land Rights Act, 2022. The funds also supported 35 projects that have sustainably managed 9,742 ha of land through the establishment of cashew, cocoa, coffee and oil palm plantations.

<sup>2</sup> SGP Database: [www.sgp.undp.org](http://www.sgp.undp.org)

### Climate Change

SGP supported 11 projects that contributed to the reduction of 62,787.79 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>. Thirty-one (31) new innovations were piloted including the production of energy efficient cookstoves and briquettes, improved fish smoking ovens in four shore-line communities in Moyamba District preserving 29,505ha of mangrove forest of the Yawri Bay a Marine Protected Area (MPA). Trained 200 technicians in the Western area and influenced 11 national policies on climate change mitigation and adaptation mechanisms including the early warning systems and rural water management that benefitted over 1,500 people in 3 districts.

### Chemicals and Waste Management

SGP supported 15 projects on Chemicals and Wastes Management that benefited over 1,000 households and created sustainable jobs for over 400 vulnerable youths and women in waste management. The programme has reduced, eliminated or prevented the release of 2,600 tons of U-POPs per year.

### International Water

SGP supported 2 International Water projects focusing on fish biodiversity study that introduced measures that protected 20,000 hectares of fishing area or marine protected area in Pujehun District and prevented 15,000 gram per liter (g/L) of solids waste Pollution from entering into the International Water.

### Capacity Building

SGP supported capacity enhancement of 66,692 people including 3,524 women and 2,910 grassroot youths. This indirectly benefited 1,803,103 households and 719 CBOs / NGOs participated with 123 CBOs directly funded. SGP triggered the formation and registration of 64 CBOs / NGOs.

## 3. COUNTRY PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

### 3.1 Alignment with national priorities

Aligning international environmental obligations with national priorities is crucial for Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone has ratified relevant Conventions and national planning frameworks related to GEF Focal areas as shown in Table 4. These are commitments geared towards sustainable management of its natural resources to contribute to macroeconomic development and environmental conservation for global benefits.

Table 4. Highlights of the relevant conventions as well as regional/national plans

Rio Conventions & National Planning frameworks	Date of Ratification/ Completion
UNCCD National Implementation Plan (NIP)	12 <sup>th</sup> June, 2019
GEF-7 National Dialogue	16 <sup>th</sup> -17 <sup>th</sup> January 2019
Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) for the UN SDGs	2019
Minamata Convention (MCO on Mercury)	1 <sup>st</sup> November 2016
Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing (ABS)	1 <sup>ST</sup> November 2016
National Determined Contributions (NDCs) for the Paris Accord	1 <sup>st</sup> October 2015
UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	2015
African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources	January 24, 2013
UNFCCC Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA)	2011



Strategic Action Programme (SAPs) for shared international waterbodies (IW)	September 2008
UNFCCC 1 <sup>st</sup> National Communications (1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> )	8 January 2007
UNFCCC National Adaptation Plans of Actions (NAPA)	2007
Kyoto Protocol	10 <sup>th</sup> November 2006
GEF National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA)	September 2006
Ramsar Convention on Wetlands	June 7, 2005
Stockholm Convention (SC) on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	September 26, 2003
Cartagena Protocol on biosafety to the CBD	2003
CBD National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)	2003
Draft National bio-safety regulation	2000
The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal	December 1999
International Convention on Civil liability for Oil Pollution Damage	30 May 1996
United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)	September 25, 1995
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	22 June 1995
Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)	December 12, 1994
Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)	28 <sup>th</sup> October 1994
Sanitary and Phytosanitary agreement	15 <sup>th</sup> April, 1994
The Vienna Convention on the Protocol of the Ozone Layer and Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer	April, 1993
United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)	24 September 1982
Convention concerning the protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage	16 November 1972
Convention on Fishing and Conservation of Living Resources of the High seas	20 March 1966
CODEX agreement	May 1963
National/Regional Plans or Programme	
National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan	2024
The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Act 2020, Amendment 2022	2022
Second National Determined Contributions (NDCs) for the Paris Accord	2021
National Adaptation Plan (NAP)	2021
National Framework for Climate Services	2020
National Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan	2015
The Environmental Protection Agency (Amendment) Act, 2010	2010
The Environmental Protection Agency Act, 2008 (Act No. 8 of 2008) – The Environmental Impact Assessment License Regulations, 2010.	2010
The Mines and Minerals Act, 2009	2009
The Environmental Protection Agency Act – 2008	2008
Abidjan Convention and protocol on Management and Protection of Coastal and Marine Environment in the Sub-Region	June 7, 2005
Bamako Convention on the ban of the import into Africa and the control of trans-boundary movements of hazardous wastes within Africa (Bamako Convention)	April 1993
The National Environmental Policy, 1990	1990
The Wildlife Conservation Act, 1972	1972



### 3.2 Gaps and opportunities

#### 3.2.1 Country Environment Context:

Sierra Leone is ranked as the third most vulnerable country to climate change, after Bangladesh and Guinea Bissau (IPCC AR5). It ranked 155th out of 182 countries in the Environmental Performance Index. Economic fragility, low climate adaptation capacity, and rapid urban growth exacerbate this situation. Rural-urban migration has placed immense pressure on environmental resources, affecting agriculture, food security, and livelihoods. Urban waste and deforestation worsen the impacts of climate change, especially in rural areas reliant on rain-fed agriculture. The August 14th, 2017 mudslide in Freetown, killing 1,141 people and causing \$30 million in economic losses, exemplifies this vulnerability.

The Country Programme Strategy for SGP-Sierra Leone considers the gaps identified in key national documents, including the Sierra Leone Medium-Term National Development Plan (2023-2028), the 2015 National Climate Change Strategy, the Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC), and the 2021 National Adaptation Plan. These frameworks provide the foundation for addressing climate and environmental challenges.

Since 2005, several key public institutions have been established to manage forestry, wildlife, biodiversity conservation, and environmental protection. These include the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Presidential Initiative on Climate Change, Renewable Energy and Food Security (PICREF) and the National Disaster Management Agency. SGP will collaborate with these entities, particularly the EPA-SL, to support GEF Civil Society networks and broaden project implementation.

Sierra Leone's population is approximately 8.98 million, with 59% in rural areas and 41% in urban areas. Rapid population growth, particularly in the Western Area, strains infrastructure and services. With 74.9% of the population under 35, there are both opportunities and challenges. Investment in education, healthcare, and jobs is crucial, yet high unemployment persists, especially among youth. Despite government interventions, young people continue to migrate from rural areas due to limited opportunities.

#### Gaps/Current Environmental Challenges

##### Vulnerability to Natural Hazards

Sierra Leone faces multiple natural hazards, including mudslides, droughts, floods, erosion, and tropical storms. Severe flooding and coastal erosion are linked to sea level rise and deforestation, impacting hydroelectricity generation and livelihoods. Climate hazards such as strong winds, thunderstorms, and shifting rainfall patterns further exacerbate food production and infrastructure. These challenges affect the country's ability to maintain export earnings and food security.

The National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) and the Sierra Leone Meteorological Agency lack sufficient resources to address disaster risks. Few weather stations exist, and there is a shortage of heavy equipment and trained personnel to manage disasters.

### **Water Management**

Water quality and availability are vulnerable to climate impacts, affecting domestic, agricultural, industrial, and hydroelectric uses. Migration to urban areas increases pressure on water resources.

Shifting rainfall patterns reduce access to water and energy, impacting rural and even urban areas. Also, pollution of rivers and streams occur due to several human activities including mining activities in some mining communities e.g. in Koidu town. Streams dry up during droughts, further limiting water access. Seasonal variation also affects protected water points, with many suffering shortages in the dry season.

In Freetown, water companies struggle due to inadequate resources, and the water supply network is inefficient, with frequent breakdowns. Groundwater facilities are poorly monitored, complicating holistic water management.

### **Land Degradation**

Sierra Leone faces rapid land degradation due to slash-and-burn farming, grazing, logging, and mining. These activities lead to deforestation, reduced soil fertility, and declining agricultural productivity, causing hunger and malnutrition. Floods and droughts have become more frequent, and the government requires external support to address these issues.

### **Coast and Marine Environments**

Sierra Leone's coastline and marine environments are under threat from overfishing, pollution, and sea level rise. Poor capacity in the maritime sector hampers fishing activity monitoring. Pollution from industrial and agricultural activities worsens environmental degradation.

### **Fisheries and Wildlife**

The fishing sector is underexploited, with illegal fishing costing the government over \$50 million annually. Improving management could boost fish stocks and exports. Wildlife reserves also have potential for revenue generation and community employment, but poor management limits these opportunities.

### **Bio-energy**

Sierra Leone's installed power generation capacity is around 90 MW, far below the 300-500 MW needed. As a result, wood biomass is the primary energy source for households, making up 86% of the country's energy consumption.

Studies estimate that wood biomass consumption is high, with rural families relying heavily on producing and using these fuels for their livelihood.



### **Unplanned Settlements and Waste Management**

Increased demand for housing (due to population pressures) is leading to the unplanned growth of Freetown and exacerbated waste and sanitation problems. The city generates 600 metric tons of waste per day, with most uncollected, posing health risks and contributing to pollution. Sustainable solutions like recycling are needed to address increasing waste generation and GHG emissions.

28. Industries in Freetown discharge wastewater into drainage systems, further polluting the Sierra Leone River Estuary.

### **Mining Sector**

Mining contributes significantly to GDP but requires stronger monitoring to address environmental and safety concerns. Small-scale mining presents uncertainties that require legislative harmonization and agency cooperation.

### **Transport, Trade, and Environmental Issues**

Road transport is essential for economic growth, but environmental assessments for major projects are lacking. The porosity of our international borders have resulted in losses in natural resources and agricultural products with significant revenue loss for the country.

Sierra Leone has lost approximately 75% of its forest cover<sup>3</sup>. Deforestation from agriculture, commercial logging, mining and charcoal production among others remains a serious environmental issue.

#### **3.2.2 Opportunities**

Sierra Leone, rich in natural resources, has ratified key environmental conventions and established the Ministry of Environment in 2020 to strengthen policy and institutional frameworks. The country has implemented various international environmental agreements, and the 2024-2030 Medium-Term Development Plan includes key priorities like food security, youth employment, and infrastructure development.

Stakeholder analysis has linked climate action to the government's "Big Five" initiatives. While other government efforts are laudable such as the establishment of the Presidential Initiatives for Climate Change, Renewable Energy and Food Security and the setting up of the Climate Finance Unit in the Ministry of Finance, SGP OP8 strategic initiatives will provide the opportunity to enhance these initiatives while addressing environmental challenges.

There are opportunities for collaboration and resource mobilization to support policy harmonization, institutional capacity building, and CSO-led environmental education and public awareness programs.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.globalforestwatch.org/dashboards/country/SLE/?category=forest-change>

The Gola Forest and Western Area Peninsula Forest face significant threats, and community engagement is crucial for their protection. Empowering forest-edge communities with sustainable livelihoods, such as food crop production, will reduce destructive practices like logging and charcoal burning.

The government's focus on alternative livelihoods, such as vegetable gardening and beekeeping, presents faster income opportunities thus promoting sustainable resource management.

Baseline data show the Gola and Western Area Peninsula Forests are rich in biodiversity and ecosystem services. OP8 interventions will support the management of community forests, enhance conservation efforts, and promote the Blue Economy, with potential benefits for women through sea farming, mangrove restoration, and tourism.

### 3.3 OP8 strategic priorities of the SGP Country Programme

In alignment with the agreed global OP8 Strategic Initiatives and based on needs and opportunities at the country level, SGP Sierra Leone prioritizes eight (8) strategic initiatives as indicated in column 2 of the Table 5 below.

Table 5. SGP Country Programme's alignment with SGP OP8 Strategic Initiatives and country priorities/projects/programmes

SGP OP8 Strategic Initiatives - Global	SGP Country Programme's OP8 Priorities	SGP Country Programme's complementarity with GEF, UNDP, and other projects and programmes
<p><b>Community-based conservation of threatened ecosystems and species</b></p> <p>1) Improve the effectiveness of biodiversity and ecosystem conservation and management through equitable governance systems by recognizing and respecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.</p> <p>2) Improve community-led biodiversity friendly practices and approaches, including promoting blue economy approaches (e.g. agriculture, fisheries, forestry, tourism, infrastructure, etc.).</p> <p>3) Enhance community led actions for protection of threatened species.</p>	<p><b>Community Based Conservation of two Protected Areas, Six Forest Reserved Areas and Nine Game Sanctuaries</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prioritize the conservation of 75,000ha of Gola Rain Forest National Park and 17,688ha of Western Area National Park.</li> <li>Support the conservation of 30,000ha of Forest Reserves within the Kambui Hills, Tingi Hills, Nimi Hills, Bojeni Hills, Tiwai and Tasso Islands.</li> <li>Support the conservation of 30,000ha of Ramsar Site, Sierra Leone River Estuary, Scarcies River, Mamunta – Mayosso Wildlife Sanctuary, Lake Mape &amp; Mabesi, Lake Sonfon, Sherbro River Estuary, Turtle Island, and Yawri Bay.</li> <li>Strengthen/create and support co-management structures of Protected Areas and Forest Reserves.</li> <li>Support community-led biodiversity-friendly initiatives including Community Gardens, Urban Green Spaces, Native Plant Restoration, Sustainable Climate-smart Agriculture, Environmental Education and Advocacy, Sustainable Tourism and Renewable Energy initiatives.</li> </ol>	<p>Sierra Leone National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans 2024, National Targets: 1,2,4,10, 11 and 14.</p> <p>Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan 2024-2030 (p. 167-168), Enabler 3.2: Forestry management and wetland conservation</p> <p>UNDP Country Programme Document for Sierra Leone 2025-2030, (p. 5, para. 13): "To champion innovative area-based conservation, restoration, and the sustainable use of natural resources, biodiversity, and ecosystems."</p>



<p><b>Sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and food security</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Increase efficiency and effectiveness of overall food production and value chain, including in vulnerable ecosystems (mountains, island ecosystems, etc.).</li> <li>2) Increase diversification and livelihood improvement.</li> <li>3) Remove deforestation from supply chain and expand restoration of degraded lands.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Support initiatives on food security, entrepreneurship development for food systems, value chain development and exportation of food products.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop and support Community-Based sustainable farming techniques (organic farming, fish farming, animal husbandry, agroecology, and permaculture),</li> <li>2. Support local food storage facilities and capacity development on nutrition and food preservation.</li> <li>3. Support agri-entrepreneurship training, and provide grants for small-scale food producers and processors,</li> <li>4. Support incubators and accelerators focused on food system innovations, programmes on trade fairs and networking events.</li> <li>5. Support food value chain development, storage facilities, transportation, and processing units.</li> <li>6. Promote conservation of river estuaries and mangrove restoration to improve fish breeding grounds and carbon sequestration</li> </ol>	<p>Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan 2024-2030 (p. 144-168), Enabler 1.3: Value addition and efficient management of natural resources.</p> <p>Feed Salone Strategy: A Blueprint for Agricultural Transformation in Sierra Leone 2023 - 2028 (p. 23 - 24), Pillars 3 and 5.</p> <p>UNDP Country Programme Document for Sierra Leone 2025-2030, (p.5, para. 14): "Support food-system value-chains such as fish, rice, and cassava; build partnerships with cooperatives; promote farm-to-market networks."</p>
<p><b>Low-carbon energy access co-benefits</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Support implementation of Paris Agreement and the NDCs</li> <li>2) Promote renewable and energy efficient technologies providing socio-economic benefits and improving livelihoods.</li> <li>3) Promote off-grid energy service needs in rural and urban areas</li> </ol>	<p><b>Low-carbon energy access co-benefits</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support community-based solar electrification and solar kiosks for increased access to renewable energy for homes, schools(solar library), healthcare facilities. mining operations and local communities.</li> <li>2. Support the development of biogas systems using agricultural and organic wastes to generate clean energy.</li> <li>3. Support the production and use of improved energy-efficient initiatives e.g. cookstoves and briquettes.</li> <li>4. Support Renewable Energy Training Programs focusing on the installation, maintenance, and management of renewable energy technologies.</li> <li>5. Support Community Awareness Campaigns and advocacy on policies on renewable energy solutions alignment with NDCs, and enhanced energy access.</li> <li>6. Support the Integration of Renewable Energy in Climate Adaptation for climate resilience, such as solar-powered water pumps for irrigation.</li> </ol>	<p>Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan 2024-2030 (p. 116), 5.4.1 Energy; Key Policy Action 4: Increase investment in low-cost renewable energy (solar, hydro, wind, and biomass).</p> <p>UNDP Country Programme Document for Sierra Leone 2025-2030 (p.5, para. 13, L7): "To promote the green energy transition, improve access to clean, affordable energy, support sustainable livelihoods."</p> <p>Sierra Leone's Updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) 2021 (p. 19), 4.1.1 Energy</p>
<p><b>Enhancing social inclusion</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Promote inclusive targeted initiatives.</li> <li>2) Mainstream social inclusion in all projects. (e.g. women/girls, Indigenous Peoples, youth, and persons with disabilities).</li> </ol>	<p><b>Enhancing social inclusion</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote targeted inclusive initiatives.</li> <li>2. Mainstream social inclusion in all projects.</li> <li>3. Ensure a focal person on social inclusion on the NSC and include social inclusion criteria into project selection process.</li> </ol>	<p>Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan 2024-2030 (p. 171), Enabler 4.</p> <p>Feed Salone Strategy: A Blueprint for Agricultural Transformation in Sierra Leone 2023 - 2028 (p. 25-26), Strategic Pillar 6:</p>



	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>4. Prioritize projects that target marginalized and underserved communities, including women/girls, people with disabilities, and low-income populations.</li></ol>	Sierra Leone National Youth policy 2020 (p.37), 5.1.5.  UNDP CPD Sierra Leone 2025-2030 (p.7, para. 25, L8-10); UNDP Project: Rule of Law, Sustaining Peace and Social Cohesion Programme, 2020-2024.
<b>Knowledge Management (KM)</b>  1) Capture knowledge and lessons from projects and activities. 2) Improve capacities of CSOs/CBOs. 3) Conduct South-South Exchanges to promote technology transfer and replication of good practices.	<b>Knowledge Management</b>  <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Capture knowledge and lessons from projects activities.</li><li>2. Improve capacities of SGP grantees (CSOs/CBOs).</li><li>3. Conduct South-South exchanges to promote technology transfer and replicate good practices.</li><li>4. Develop a knowledge management framework.</li><li>5. Create knowledge repositories and facilitate knowledge sharing platforms and learning.</li></ol>	UNDP Country Programme Document for Sierra Leone (2025-2030 (p8, para. 31): UNDP will promote policy research and knowledge management by collaborating with national authorities, academic institutions, research bodies, and think tanks.
<b>Results Management, Monitoring &amp; Evaluation (M&amp;E)</b>  1) Administer new M&E strategy in Country Programme and project design, implementation and overall decision making using participatory mechanisms.	<b>Results Management, Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</b>  <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Administer new M&amp;E strategy in OP8 Country Programme and project design, implementation and overall decision making using participatory mechanisms.</li><li>2. Establish partnership with print and electronic media among other approaches to improve visibility of SGP successes.</li><li>3. Support dialogue platforms and public lectures on SGP programme.</li></ol>	Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan 2024-2030 (P. 193-194) 5.6. Monitoring and evaluation, performance management and service delivery  UNDP Country Programme Document for Sierra Leone (2025-2030, p8, para. 28-31): IV. Monitoring and evaluation

## 4. OP8 PRIORITY LANDSCAPES/SEASCAPES & STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

### 4.1 Grant making within the priority landscape/seascapes

#### a) Process for selecting priority landscapes and seascapes

The SGP Country Programme Strategy for OP8 aims to incorporate the input of key rights holders, partners, and stakeholders to ensure sustained improvements for communities and target landscapes. After consultations, the National Steering Committee decided to continue focusing on the same landscapes from OP7: the Gola Rainforest National Park (75,000ha) and the Western Area Peninsula National Park (17,688 ha). These areas were chosen due to their global environmental significance, limited energy access, high poverty levels, and biodiversity, including National Parks, Protected Biodiversity Areas (PBAs), and regions of high forest encroachment.

To validate the decision to remain in these OP7 landscapes for OP8, stakeholders including disadvantaged groups were consulted to ensure their needs were addressed. These consultations identified project plans, risks, benefits, and mitigation measures, with a focus on gender-responsive interventions free from discrimination or coercion. Mapping of local organizations and other interventions was done to avoid



duplication and ensure complementarity with GEF Focal Areas. Addressing alternative livelihoods was prioritized to combat land and forest misuse, with suggestions including involving local people in conservation efforts, sharing carbon credit benefits, employing qualified locals in conservation, developing community projects, and enhancing capacity in tourism. These strategies aim to redirect communities' attention away from destructive practices like deforestation and focus on sustainable income-generating activities such as food crop production and tourism development, ensuring both environmental protection and economic growth.

### **b) Selected Landscapes for OP8**

The selected landscapes for OP8 are the Gola Rainforest National Park and the Western Area Peninsula National Park, both chosen for their importance to Sierra Leone.

#### **i) Gola Rainforest National Park:**

Located in southeast Sierra Leone, Gola Rainforest covers 75,000ha and is the largest remnant of the Guinean Rainforest, recognized internationally as a biodiversity hotspot. Declared a National Park in 2010 and nominated as a World Heritage Site, it supports 122 forest-edge communities who rely on the forest for farming, charcoal production, and other livelihoods.

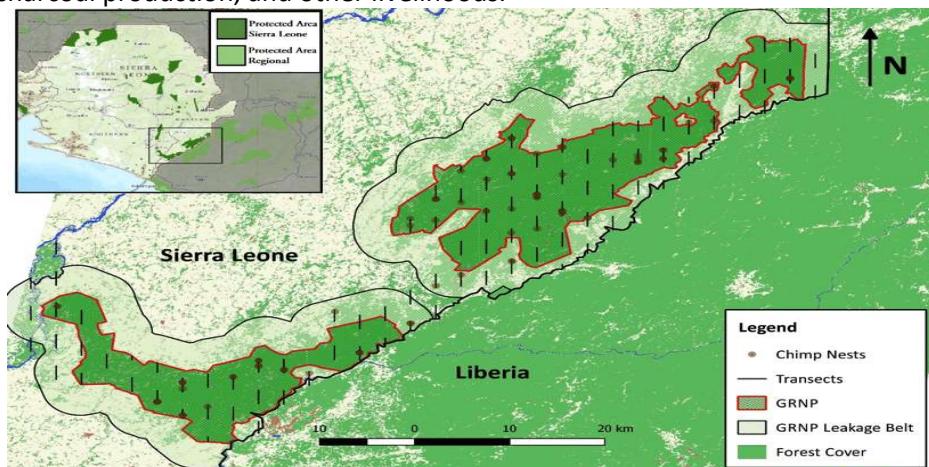


Figure 1: Gola Rainforest National Park (75,000ha;  $10^{\circ}30' - 11^{\circ}00'W$ ,  $7^{\circ} - 8^{\circ}00'N$ )

The CSOs in the Gola Rainforest National Park will benefit from scaling up the results of 25 impactful SGP projects aimed at forest conservation. Despite the rich biodiversity and global significance of Gola Forest, the investment in OP7 was small compared to the conservation and livelihood needs of 122 forest-edge communities across seven chiefdoms. The forest is home to many globally threatened species, making it vital both nationally and internationally.

#### **ii) Western Area Peninsula Park**

This 17,688-hectare mountain forest includes the Guma Valley Dam, which supplies water to over two million people. However, encroachment through settlement expansion, mining, and charcoal production has reduced its capacity, leading to water shortages. The park is also home to the Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary and several conservation organizations. The OP8 shall focus on addressing the gap of investing in the International Waters (Blue Economy) in follow up to previous SGP interventions in the Western Area Peninsula Forest. Sierra Leone is bounded to the west by the Atlantic Ocean as can be seen from the map.

Today, the blue economy when properly utilized, is one of the sources of economic strength in providing sustainable development opportunities in accordance with Sustainable Development Goal 14 that identified “Life below Water”. These tourist attractions require investment to generate more income. However, despite this vast economic potential of the blue economy, only fishing activities, limited port facility usage and limited tourism industry are partially exploited. The mangroves, beaches and biodiversity are thriving tourist attractions for Sierra Leone.

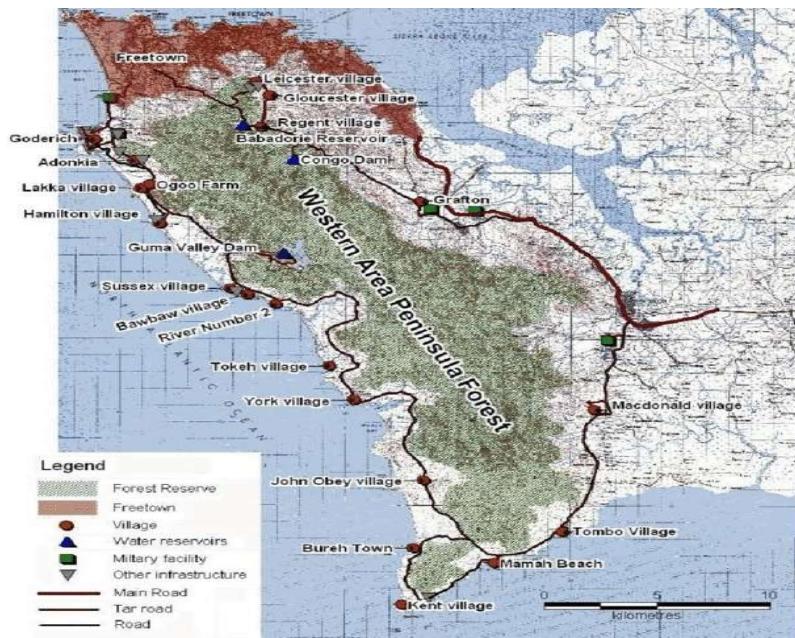


Figure 2: Western Area Peninsula National Park (17,688ha; 13°00'-13°30'W, 8°-8°30'N)

It has been acknowledged by the Sierra Leone Government that the vast potentials of the blue economy will provide opportunities for the country's low emission development pathway since the utilization of this source may lessen the strains on the limited land resources. It is for this reason that the OP8 shall contribute to the marine ecosystem restoration as a gap identified during the various stakeholders' engagements.

### c) OP8 Strategic Initiatives in the landscapes/seascapes

SGP shall implement three Strategic Initiatives in the chosen landscapes, these includes the following:

- **Strategic Initiatives (SI )1: Community-based conservation of threatened ecosystems and species**

SGP shall prioritize community-led biodiversity friendly initiatives that promote the blue economy, agroforestry, tourism, and protect threatened species including protecting the habitat for viable populations of Endangered, Restricted Range or Protected Species within the Western Area Peninsula Forest and the Gola Rainforest National Park.

➤ **Strategic Initiatives (SI) 2: Sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and food security**

SGP shall support projects on climate smart agriculture, sustainable fisheries and value chain addition to fisheries and agricultural products. SGP shall support initiatives that improve soil fertility and water conservation techniques for high yield, semi-intensive livestock management and food preservation techniques.

➤ **Strategic Initiatives (SI) 3: Low-carbon energy access co-benefits**

SGP shall support initiatives with low carbon emission technologies and renewable energy like solar kiosks, solar irrigation, solar electrification, solar driers and support conservation of carbon sequestration at the community level.

**d) Grantmaking outside the priority landscapes/seascapes**

SGP shall support CSOs and communities through training in project design, implementation and management, partnership, resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation to come up with innovative, inclusive, and impactful projects ideas that will attract funding from other donors in areas listed below to be implemented outside the Western Area Peninsula Forest and Gola Rainforest National Park. This will help to promote environmental conservation, community engagement and sustainable development countrywide. These additional resources shall be mobilized outside the the total CORE and STAR OP8 funds available for the country

Table 6: Innovative, inclusive, and impactful projects ideas for Grantmaking outside priority landscapes

Innovative Project Idea	Description	Possible Impact
Renewable Energy Initiatives	Promote solar, wind, or biogas projects that provide clean energy to local communities, reducing reliance on fossil fuels and deforestation for fuel	Improves energy access, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and encourages sustainable practices
Waste Management and Recycling initiative	Establish community-led waste management systems that focus on reducing plastic use and increasing recycling.	Reduces pollution, promotes community health, and creates job opportunities in waste management.
Biodiversity Monitoring and citizen full engagement	Involve local communities in biodiversity monitoring efforts, allowing them to participate in data collection and conservation efforts.	Empowers communities, provides valuable data for conservation, and fosters a connection to local ecosystems.
Community-Based Ecotourism Initiative	Develop ecotourism initiatives that involve local communities in guiding tours, showcasing cultural heritage, and offering homestays	Provides economic benefits to locals while promoting conservation awareness. It also fosters appreciation for the surrounding ecosystems
Cultural Heritage Preservation Initiative	Support initiatives that protect and promote local cultural heritage, including traditional knowledge about land use and biodiversity.	Strengthens community identity, promotes tourism, and ensures the transmission of traditional ecological knowledge
Agroforestry Initiative	Implement agroforestry practices that integrate trees with crops and livestock, enhancing biodiversity and soil health	Increases agricultural productivity, provides additional income sources, and improves resilience against climate change



Reforestation and Afforestation Projects	Engage communities in reforesting degraded areas and planting native species that restore habitats.	Enhances biodiversity, sequesters carbon, and provides resources like timber and non-timber forest products for local communities
Sustainable Fishing initiative (blue economy)	Work with local fishing communities to develop sustainable fishing techniques and marine conservation strategies	Protects marine biodiversity, ensures long-term food security, and supports local livelihoods
Education and Awareness Campaigns	Launch programs in schools and communities to raise awareness about environmental issues, conservation methods, and sustainable practices	Empowers future generations to value and protect their natural resources, fostering a culture of sustainability.
Community Gardens and Urban Agriculture	Create community gardens that provide fresh produce, promote biodiversity, and serve as educational spaces for sustainable agriculture	Enhances food security, improves community health, and strengthens community bonds

#### 4.2 CSO-government-private sector dialogue platforms

SGP has a strong track record of supporting local initiatives that address environmental and sustainable development challenges by integrating sectors. It will identify and strengthen existing CSO-government-private sector dialogue platforms to engage in key development processes. SGP will provide training and resources to enhance CSO capacity for policy discussions and advocacy, facilitate knowledge sharing, and establish communication channels for regular feedback. It will also support exchange visits and dialogues with government and the private sector to address national policies on global environmental issues.

#### 4.3 Promoting Social Inclusion, Gender Equality, and Women's Empowerment

SGP will promote social inclusion in line with Sierra Leone's development plan, funding projects in the following areas:

- **Women's Empowerment:** Prioritize gender-sensitive projects addressing inequalities and supporting women-led initiatives. SGP will provide training to women in leadership and project management.
- **Youth Empowerment:** SGP will fund youth-led projects, offering educational programs and grants to enhance skills in project management, advocacy, and environmental science, and support internships and fellowships for practical experience.
- **Persons with Disabilities:** SGP will promote inclusive projects that improve accessibility for persons with disabilities, providing training and resources tailored to their needs, and implementing monitoring systems to track their participation.

#### 4.4 Knowledge Management

SGP will document and share best practices, methodologies, and lessons learned through detailed reports, case studies, and multimedia content. Knowledge products such as policy briefs and toolkits will be developed to support stakeholders. SGP will organize conferences, workshops, and webinars to foster collaboration and knowledge exchange. It will invest in technology to collect and store knowledge, ensuring consistent application of knowledge management practices across the program and ensuring accountability and responsiveness to stakeholder needs.



## 5. COMMUNICATION PLAN

Based on GEF 8 communication strategic document that detailed the broad direction of OP8 towards improving its communications efforts with SGP Grantees/Organisations, a minimum standard for SGP grantee will be developed outlining the partners' activities. The communication strategy shall outline details and actionable steps that the grantees can take to achieve OP8 goals. It shall also include the implementation of reviewed parameters and the mechanisms that the grantees shall work within including branding requirements on UNDP, GEF and SGP. It shall give a detailed communication plan about the frequency of reporting/communicating on project deliverables, project landmark events, and means of implementation. During the OP8, sets of awardees of each phase shall be trained on the communication strategy based on the above outline. To measure success, the grantees shall be required to develop project's communication plan for the public. These shall include various media/audiovisual displays ranging from documentaries, billboards, fliers, and recordings of the community radio program among others. In cases dealing with behavioural change activities for the enhancement of the project objectives, jungle, town hall meetings and workshop reports shall be promptly communicated as planned. Community stand-up comedy and even school plays depicting moral values and solutions to challenges could also be included.

## 6. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AND PARTNERSHIP PLAN

### a) Secured, planned cash and in-kind co-financing

SGP Sierra Leone (SGPSL) has secured USD 860,000 from the STAR 8 allocation at the country level through an endorsement by the GEF Operational Focal Point (OPF). Similarly, through an endorsement of the Letter of Interest (LOI) for participating in the GEF Small Grants Programme for GEF-8, SGP SL shall access at least US \$500,000 of the available Core funding resources for Tranche Two in addition to about USD 500,000 CORE allocated for Tranche one. Thus, a total cash of US \$1.86 million has been secured for grant making.

SGP National Coordinator and the UNDP Country Office through the Sustainability and Local Economic Development (SLED) cluster have collaborated to develop proposals for funding in response to "calls for proposals". These provide greater opportunities for resources mobilization when these projects are approved. SGP and the Sustainability and Local Economic Development (SLED) unit at UNDP have earmarked completed SGP projects with compelling success stories that have potential for upscaling with funding from TRAC resources. SGP will target USD 200,000 of the TRAC resource. SGP and the UNDP Growth Accelerator has been complementing each other and have supported "Women in Energy" with USD 10,000 and USD 40,000 respectively, this cofinancing model will continue in GEF 8 targeting other grantees with an expected target of USD 200,000. The total planned cash co-financing is USD 400,000 which will likely generate another USD 400,000 in-kind co-financing.

### b) Co-financing opportunities

The SGP shall utilize one percent of the allocated resources towards building the capacity of existing CSOs to enable them to compete for and secure external funding to increase their in-cash co-funding contributions to SGP projects. Additionally, SGP will regularly evaluate the programme's funding needs and carryout donor mapping to leverage resources from diversified (non-GEF) sources. Once the donor

data is established, SGP shall develop agreements (MoA) with implementing partners to undertake joint proposal development and collaborate for the implementation of approved project. This approach is expected to raise up to USD 500,000.

## 7. PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The SGP country team shall assist communities and civil society organizations (CSOs) in building partnerships and accessing funding through:

i) Capacity Building Workshops and Training

The SGP team shall organize hands-on workshops focused on writing successful grant proposals emphasizing on key components such as problem identification, objectives, outcomes, budgeting, and evaluation, financial management and reporting. This will enhance the sustainability of grantees after SGP funding ends.

ii) Technical/Hands-On Assistance and Advisory Services

NSC members shall mentor CSOs and provide expertise in specific environmental sectors such as international waters, chemicals and waste management which have had low project implementation.

iii) Resource Materials and Tools

The SGP team shall develop an online portal with resources, tutorials, and frequently asked questions (FAQs) about the proposal process and distribute easy-to-follow guidelines, templates, and checklists to simplify the proposal development process.

iv) Networking, Information Dissemination and Collaboration Opportunities

SGP teams shall promote partnership building among CSOs and other stakeholders to improve collaboration on proposals development, experience sharing, problem identification and solutions mapping to increase the chances of securing funding. The SGP secretariat shall regularly provide information on available funding opportunities, deadlines, and application procedures through user friendly communication channels.

## 8 RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Table 7. Description of risks identified in OP8

Table 7 below describes the identified risks and mitigation measures.

Describe identified risk	Degree of risk (low, medium, high)	Probability of risk (low, medium, high)	Risk mitigation measure foreseen
Social and environmental risks Poor organization, corruption and poor financial management causing unequal benefit sharing arrangement.	Low	Low	Support forest and chiefdom management committees to manage expectations and distribute benefits and keep the record for accountability.



Insensitive to the sacred culture, knowledge, and practices of the communities.	Medium	Low	Mapping out sacred placed and Support social and environmental impact assessment to avoid cultural destruction.
Failure to respect customary resource use and permission patterns.	Medium	low	Consultative process with beneficiaries during projects planning and execution
Failure to accept new innovative livelihood initiatives including modern agricultural practices.	High	High	Demonstration plots and consultative process with beneficiaries during projects planning and execution
Poor leadership and infringing on indigenous authorities' rights, dignity and aspiration.	High	low	Formation of project management committee and involvement of beneficiaries at planning and execution.
Illicit livelihood activities within forest to sabotage the project implementation.	High	High	Promote formation of bylaws by chiefdom authorities and promote benefit sharing arrangement
Climate risks failure to put measures to control bushfires that destroy investments on land.	High	High	Train beneficiaries to construct fire belt to manage wildfire and encourage chiefdoms authorities to develop bylaws for bush fire control.
Natural risks including flooding, droughts, pests and diseases outbreak.	High	High	Collaborate with UNDSS, ONS and Ministry of Agriculture Ministry to investigate outbreak and provide solutions.
Other possible risks political instability due to change of government.	High	High	Coordination with UND SS and Office of National Security (ONS) and implement stress management strategies.
Poor commitments from local people and difficulty in mobilizing enough resources due to lack of quality and real-time data.	High	Medium	Project will be equitably distributed based on need and pre-project assessment will be done to obtain the commitment of beneficiaries.
Exclusion of stakeholders including women and persons with disabilities in project design and implementation.	High	Medium	Stakeholders participatory approach for better understanding and MOU signing to clarify roles and responsibilities.
Inadequate capacity of CSOs in some GEF Focal Areas to deliver expected outputs.	High	Low	Capacity development on new innovations and evolving ICT fields shall constitute 10% of OP7 funds

## 9 MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

### 9.1 Monitoring approaches at project and country levels

To effectively implement the OP8, the SGP shall set up a robust Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the key strategic priority areas and prepare assessment reports on the achievement of set targets and indicators to inform the NSC, CPMT and UNDP for decision making. The SGP National Coordinator shall be responsible for data collection, analysis and reporting on the strategic priority areas of the OP8 implementation including the quality of proposals, project inputs,

key deliverables and impacts on communities. The SGP shall use the results from the assessment report to identify gaps, challenges and take appropriate mitigation measures to address them.

The CPS has indicators relevant to outcomes aligned with those of Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan (2024-2030), Sierra Leone's Nationally Determined Contributor II (NDC 2) and UNDP's Country Programme Document (2020-2023). SGP shall strengthen, harmonize, and effectively coordinate existing mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of projects using a participatory approach involving CSOs and other stakeholders.

Tracking progress on the GEF 8 implementation at the project level and aggregating results at the Country Programme portfolio level shall involve a) data quality assurance, b) systematic recording, c) effective monitoring, and d) capacity building. The details of which are explained under the headings.

**a) Data Quality Assurance**

SGP shall use Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools and data management systems with built-in validation checks and automated error detection to enhance data quality and provide training to project staff on best practices for data collection and reporting, emphasizing the importance of data quality and accuracy. SGP shall draw from existing standardized reporting formats to develop country level reporting formats and guidelines to ensure consistency in data collection and reporting across all projects. All SGP projects shall draw from Project Roster of Indicators guided by SGP Country Programme M&E guidelines. The team shall implement procedures for cross-checking data from multiple sources (e.g., field reports, financial records, and beneficiary feedback) to validate accuracy and conduct regular audits of project data to verify accuracy, completeness, and reliability. These audits should be systematic and include both internal reviews and external evaluations to enhance quality Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).

**b) Recording of Project and Country-Level Data in SGP Database**

The SGP Global Centralized Database System (<https://sgp.undp.org/>) that already exist shall be utilized by the country team to record and manage all project data. The team shall however establish clear data entry protocols that shall include standardized fields and formats to ensure uniformity and prevent errors. The database will be regularly updated by implementing a schedule to ensure that project and country-level data are current and reflect the latest developments. It will be mandatory to reset strong password every three months to control access and data security, and other recommended measures shall be put in place to protect sensitive information and maintain data integrity. The team shall endeavour with permission from Headquarters to integrate the database with monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems to streamline data flow and facilitate real-time tracking of progress.

**c) Monitoring and Evaluation of SGP Projects**

The SGP team shall develop and use clear performance indicators to monitor progress of ongoing projects aligned with the project's objectives and outcomes and providing measurable data on achievements. Each grantee shall develop an M&E plan for approved project and invest 4-6% of the total grant amount on project level M&E including monitoring of GEF-8 indicators and evaluation of the

project. When the project is fully completed, these indicators will be reported in SGP project mid-term and final progress reports. The SGP team shall develop and obtain approval of Quarterly Monitoring Plans (QMP) which shall regulate when and where field visits and reviews are conducted to assess project implementation, validate reported data, and gather qualitative insights. Regular emails, phone calls and WhatsApp communications shall be maintained with grantees to urge them in meeting deadline for submission of progress reports including financial statements and narrative updates according to Annexes C, D, E and F of the standard reporting formats. These reports shall be reviewed to assess progress and address emerging issues before any outstanding tranche disbursement. The team shall undertake Mid-Term Reviews and Final Evaluations of projects to assess their effectiveness, identify challenges, and measure overall impact and establish feedback mechanisms for stakeholders, including beneficiaries, to report on project performance and provide suggestions for improvement.

**d) M&E Capacity Building of SGP Grantees**

SGP team shall utilize one percent of allocated resources for training of grantees and CSOs, CBOs on monitoring and evaluation (M&E) best practices, including data collection, analysis and reporting, proposal development and other training needs that may emerge during OP8 implementation. The team shall provide technical assistance and support by organizing workshops, webinars and seminars on M&E topics including data management, result-based monitoring, and impact assessment to help grantees develop M&E frameworks and tools tailored to their specific projects. The team shall follow up to assist grantees in developing and applying evaluation frameworks to measure project outcomes and impacts effectively. Resource Materials including training manuals, guides, how-to-do kits, video clips and other resources shall be shared through a portal or other communication platforms to help grantees understand and implement effective M&E practices. These platforms shall be utilized for sharing of best practices, lessons learned, and experiences related to M&E, fostering a learning community.

**e) Implementation Steps**

The GEF Small Grants Programme Sierra Leone shall ensure effective tracking, aggregation, and analysis of project and portfolio-level data to enhance the overall impact and efficiency of the program through:

- i. Developing and disseminating comprehensive guidelines for data quality assurance, database management, and M&E to all relevant stakeholders.
- ii. Regular monitoring for compliance with these guidelines and provide feedback to ensure adherence.
- iii. Continuous reviews and evaluation of the effectiveness of the data tracking and M&E processes, making necessary adjustments (reflect and adapt) to improve efficiency and accuracy.
- iv. Aggregating and analysing data at the Country Programme portfolio level to assess overall progress and impact and prepare reports for stakeholders.



Table 8. M&E Plan at the Country Programme level

M&E Activity	Purpose	Responsible Parties	Budget Source	Timing
Country Programme Strategy elaboration	Framework for action including identification of community projects	NC, NSC, country stakeholders, grantees	A SGP planning grant to engage consultants may be used to update OP8 CPS	At start of OP8
As part of NSC meetings, ongoing review of project results and analysis. This includes an Annual CPS Review	Assess effectiveness of projects, country portfolio; learning; adaptive management	NC, NSC, UNDP Country Office. Final deliberations shared/analysed with CPMT colleagues	Staff time, Country Operating Budget	At least one annual CPS review to ensure OP8 CPS is on track to achieve its results and make timely and evidence-based modifications to CPS as may be needed <sup>4</sup>
Annual Monitoring Report Survey <sup>5</sup>	Enable efficient reporting to CPMT and GEF. It serves as the primary tools to record and analytically present results to donors	NC/PA in close collaboration with NSC. CPMT provides technical guidance support and receives final country submission for further action	Staff time	Once per year in June-July
Country Portfolio Review	Methodological results capture of the portfolio at a given point to note impact level change as well as broader adoption. The goal is to support reporting to stakeholders, learning, and support to strategic development/implementation of CPS	NC, NSC	SGP planning grant to engage consultants may be used to undertake previous operational cycles impact review and utilize lessons for both OP8 CPS development and its implementation Global technical M&E support can be expected	Once per operational phase
SGP Database	Ensure recording of all Project and Country Programme inputs in SGP database	NCs, PAs	Staff time	Throughout the operational phase. Ensure quality assurance and completion of data prior to annual

<sup>4</sup> It is recommended that the Annual CPS review is done close to AMR submissions for both processes to benefit from each other (suggested timeframe is May- July). Note that OP8 CPS will be regarded as a dynamic document and can be updated by the SGP country team and NSC on a periodic basis to reflect any necessary adjustments to ensure maximum impact.

<sup>5</sup> Timely and quality country level submissions to Annual Monitoring Process are mandatory. As a Global Programme, it enables aggregated reporting by CPMT to GEF, UNDP and other stakeholders.



				monitoring cycle (May-June of every year)
Audit	Ensure compliance with project implementation/management standards and norms	External/independent auditors. NC/ PA to provide requisite support.	Global Operating Budget	Annually for selected countries on risk-assessment basis

## 9.2 CPS Results Framework

Table 9: Results Framework of SGP OP8 Country Programme Strategy

<b>Alignment with SDGs</b>		
1. No Poverty	6. Clean Water and Sanitation	11. Sustainable Cities and Communities
2. Zero Hunger	7. Renewable Energy	12. Responsible Consumption
3. Good Health	8. Good Jobs and Economic Growth	13. Climate Action
4. Quality Education	9. Innovation and Infrastructure	14. Life Below Water
5. Gender Equality	10. Reduce Inequalities	15. Life on Land
<b>Synergy with UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD) 2025-2030:</b>		
<b>Output 1.1</b> Farmers and fisherfolks, especially women and youth, and nature-based micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) adopt environmentally friendly practices and benefit from increased access to technology, finance, information, and facilities for improved income, livelihoods, production, and food security.		
<b>Output 1.2</b> Government and community stakeholders ensure development and enforcement of laws and policies, monitoring, and management systems to effectively manage waste and protect natural resources and valuable ecosystems.		
<b>Output 1.3</b> Gender-responsive prevention, preparedness, early warning and response systems mitigate the impact of environmental, climate change and other disasters, especially in coastal communities and informal settlements.		
<b>Output 2.2</b> Most vulnerable groups, particularly women, youth, and PWDs, have improved labour market-driven skills and increased financial inclusion for equitable and decent employment and business development opportunities.		
<b>Output 2.3.</b> People, especially in rural and hard-to-reach areas, have access to inclusive, gender-responsive data, digital solutions, technology, clean		
<b>Output 3.1</b> People, especially marginalized and vulnerable groups in hard-to-reach communities, benefit from coordinated and effective implementation of policies and strategies for public service delivery and enabling economic transformation.		
<b>OP8 SGP Programme Goal:</b> Engage local CSOs/CBOs in landscape-seascape approaches across the world, providing them access to knowledge and information, capacitating them through learning-by-doing, skills development, and delivering technical and grant assistance for interventions that enhance wellbeing and socioeconomic conditions and generate global environmental benefits.		

1 OP8 SGP CPS Strategic Initiatives	2 CPS Indicators and Targets	3 Means of Verification
<u>Strategic Initiative 1:</u> <b>Community-based conservation of threatened ecosystems and species</b> 1. Prioritize the conservation of 75,000ha of Gola Rain Forest National Park and	92,688 hectares of landscapes under improved practices (GEF core indicator 4.1 and 4.3).	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams (as part of midterm and final Progress reports)



<p>17,688ha of Western Area National Park.</p> <p>2. Support the conservation of 30,000ha of forest within the Kambui Hills, Tingi Hills, Nimi Hills, Bojeni Hills and Tiwai and Tasso Islands.</p> <p>3. Support the conservation of 30,000ha of Ramsar Site, Sierra Leone River Estuary, Scarcies River, Mamunta – Mayosso Wildlife Sanctuary, Lake Mape &amp; Mabesi , Lake Sonfon , Sherbro River Estuary, Turtle Island, and Yawri Bay.</p> <p>4. Strengthen/create and support co-management structures.</p> <p>5. Support community-led biodiversity-friendly initiatives including Community Gardens, Urban Green Spaces, Native Plant Restoration, Sustainable Climate-smart Agriculture, Environmental Education and Advocacy, Sustainable Tourism and Renewable Energy initiatives.</p>	<p>15,000 hectares of marine protected areas under improved management (GEF core indicator 2).</p> <p>15,000 hectares of marine habitat under improved practices to benefit biodiversity aside the protected area (GEF core indicator 5)</p> <p>6 Forest Reserved areas strengthened (5,000 ha X 6 Forests)</p> <p>2 National Protected Area Management Structures strengthened</p>	<p>Baseline assessment comparison variables (use of conceptual models and partner data as appropriate)</p> <p>Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database</p> <p>Country Programme Review</p>
<p><b><u>Strategic Initiative 2:</u></b> <b>Sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and food security</b></p> <p>1. Develop and support Community-Based sustainable farming techniques (organic farming, fish farming, animal husbandry, agroecology, and permaculture),</p> <p>2. Support local food storage facilities and capacity development on nutrition and food preservation.</p> <p>3. Support agri-entrepreneurship training, and provide grants for small-scale food producers and processors,</p> <p>4. Support incubators and accelerators focused on food system innovations, programmes on trade fairs, networking events.</p> <p>5. Support food value chain development, storage facilities, transportation, and processing units.</p> <p>6. Promote conservation of river estuaries and mangrove restoration to improve fish breeding grounds and carbon sequestration.</p>	<p>25,000 hectares (10 districts X 625ha X 4yrs) of degraded mining and agricultural land and ecosystems under restoration (GEF core indicator 3.1)</p> <p>7 partnerships (5 Agric Business Centres, Financial Service Associations and Rural Banks and 2 Private Sector organizations have at least five (5) linkages and two formal partnerships with MoUs) to advance sustainable agriculture and fisheries and/or food security (such as diversification, sustainable intensification, sustainable fisheries management, agroecological farming practices, climate-smart agriculture, certification programmes, local sourcing initiatives, waste reduction and circular economy, etc.)</p> <p>5,000 small holder farmers (10 districts X 125 farmers X 4yrs ) supported towards sustainable land use and productive income generating activities.</p>	<p>Individual project reporting by SGP country teams (as part of midterm and final Progress reports)</p> <p>Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database</p> <p>Country Programme Review</p> <p>Socio-ecological resilience indicators for production landscapes (SEPLs)</p>



	<p>800 farmers (5 districts X 40 farmers X 4yrs) supported in cassava and maize value chain development.</p> <p>5 projects supports linkages and partnerships for sustainable food production and value addition to enhance food security and improved livelihoods for small holder farmers.</p>	
<p><b>Strategic Initiative 3:</b> <b><i>Low-carbon energy access co-benefits</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Support community-based Solar electrification and solar kiosks for increased access to renewable energy for homes, schools, healthcare facilities, mining operations and local communities.</li><li>2) Support the development of biogas systems using agricultural and organic waste to generate clean energy.</li><li>3) Support the production and use of improved energy-efficient cookstoves.</li><li>4) Support Renewable Energy Training Programs focusing on the installation, maintenance, and management of renewable energy technologies.</li><li>5) Support Community Awareness Campaigns and advocacy on policies on renewable energy solutions alignment with NDCs, and enhanced energy access.</li><li>6) Support the Integration of Renewable Energy in Climate Adaptation for climate resilience, such as solar-powered water pumps for irrigation.</li></ol>	<p>5,000 tons of greenhouse gas emissions mitigated/avoided (GEF core indicator 6)</p> <p>100kWh (10kwh X 10 communities) increase in installed renewable energy capacity from community-scale systems (e.g., biomass, solar, etc.)</p> <p>10 projects with at least 4 typologies of locally adapted solutions promoting low-carbon technologies (such as briquette, improved ovens, new/modified biogas technology, locally developed energy-efficient stoves, innovative solar/wind energy, etc.)</p> <p>3 projects of community-oriented locally adapted energy access providing three (3) local solutions with successful demonstrations for scaling up and replication through UNDP Growth Accelerator.</p> <p>5,000 households (10 communities X 125 households X 4 years) with energy access from renewable sources.</p> <p>1,000 hectares (250 ha X 4years) of degraded forest and non- forest lands restored to enhance carbon stock.</p>	<p>Individual project reporting by SGP country teams (as part of midterm and final Progress reports)</p> <p>Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database</p> <p>Country Programme Strategy Review (NSC inputs)</p>
<p><b>Strategic Initiative 6:</b> <b><i>Enhancing social inclusion</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Promote targeted inclusive initiatives.</li><li>2) Mainstream social inclusion in all projects.</li><li>3) Ensure a focal person on social inclusion on the NSC and include</li></ol>	<p>10,000 people (250 people X 10projects X 4yrs) benefitting from GEF-financed investments disaggregated by sex (GEF core indicator 11)</p> <p>16projects ( 4projects X 4years) led by women or with focused interventions promoting gender equality and women's empowerment</p>	<p>Individual project reporting by SGP country teams</p> <p>Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database</p> <p>Country Programme Review</p>



<p>social inclusion criteria into project selection process.</p> <p>4) Prioritize projects that target marginalized and underserved communities, including women/girls, indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, and low-income populations.</p>	<p>8 projects ( 2 projects X 4years) that demonstrate models of engaging (a) local community, (b) youth, and (c) persons with disabilities.</p> <p>16 grants (4 projects X 4 years) with targeted support for 1) women focused organization; 2) youth focused organization 3) local community</p> <p>USD 400,000 (16 grants X USD 25,000) of total grant portfolio accessed 1) women focused organization; 2) youth focused organization 3) local community.</p>	
<p><b>Strategic Initiative 7:</b> <b><i>Results Management, Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</i></b></p> <p>1) Administer new M&amp;E strategy in Country Programme and project design, implementation and overall decision making using participatory mechanisms.</p> <p>2) Establish partnership with print and electronic media to improve visibility of SGP successes.</p> <p>3) Support dialogue platforms and public lectures on SGP programme.</p> <p><b>Strategic Initiative 8:</b> <b><i>Knowledge Management</i></b></p> <p>1) Capture knowledge and lessons from projects and activities.</p> <p>2) Improve capacities of SGP Grantees, CSOs/CBOs.</p> <p>3) Conduct South-South Exchanges to promote technology transfer and replicate good practices.</p> <p>4) Develop a knowledge management framework</p> <p>5) Create knowledge repositories and facilitate knowledge sharing platforms and learning.</p>	<p>40 projects (10projects X 4 years) with meetings involving local CSOs/CBOs or communities to monitor project results, assess impacts, and identify lessons learned</p> <p>Two (2) projects on capacity building on Monitoring, Evaluation, media and digital library to improve CBOs' M&amp;E and knowledge management skills.</p> <p>NC and NSC conduct at least one (1) monitoring visits to each project.</p> <p>Organize three (3) regional level knowledge exchange/sharing events with participation of local communities</p> <p>One (1) online knowledge repository strengthen for SGP reports.</p> <p>Two (2) country-level impact reviews conducted with evidence of SGP impact and lessons learned.</p> <p>Two (2) South-South exchanges between communities, NGOs/CSOs, or other partners within or across countries to transfer knowledge, replicate technology, tools or approaches on global environmental issues</p>	<p>Individual project reporting by SGP country teams</p> <p>Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database</p> <p>Country Programme Review</p>



## 10 NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE ENDORSEMENT

Table 10: The Signature of National Steering Committee Members

NSC members involved in OP8 CPS development, review and endorsement	Signatures
Prof. Basiru M. Koroma	
Dr. Joseph M. Macarthy	
Dr. Nana Pratt	
Dr. Reynold Johnson	
Ms. Tanzila Sankoh	
Mr. Sheku M. Kanneh	