

SGP The GEF
Small Grants
Programme



THE GEF SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME

Results Report 2024-2025

The Small Grants Programme

Results Report 2024-2025

INTRODUCTION

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) 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 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, National Adaptation Plans, Nationally Determined Contributions, 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 to achieve the relevant MEAs' objectives and SDGs. This impact has been consistently highlighted in various evaluations conducted by GEF and UNDP during the reporting period. As noted in the [Evaluation of the UNDP Strategic Plan 2022-2025](#), SGP "played a key role in promoting green and inclusive transitions and enhancing environmental resilience at subnational level."

In 2025, SGP also launched Operational Phase 8 (OP8) with a renewed commitment to empowering local civil society and community-based organizations (CBOs) to implement integrated landscape and seascape approaches for environment and sustainable development worldwide. This phase focuses on expanding access to knowledge, strengthening capacity, and delivering decentralized technical and grant support. OP8 also aims to enhance human well-being, generate global environmental benefits, and unlock large-scale financing for landscape and seascape initiatives.

SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN 1992, SGP HAS IMPLEMENTED



30,379

PROJECTS



US\$859.6

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



US\$1,010.5

MOBILIZED IN CO-FINANCING
(IN \$ MILLIONS)



136

COUNTRIES



127

ACTIVE
COUNTRIES

METHODOLOGY

This report covers the reporting period from July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025, in alignment with the GEF reporting year. The results presented in this report are based on reporting by 116 SGP country programmes. A conservative methodological approach is used for results calculations with an emphasis on 783 GEF-funded projects that were completed during the reporting period. This approach is consistent with SGP results generation in the past years. Any ongoing progress from projects under implementation is not included unless explicitly stated.





GEF PORTFOLIO

1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025



GEF FUNDING

active portfolio
of grant projects



COMBINED PORTFOLIO

GEF and other partners,
1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025

402 NEW PROJECTS

1,620 ACTIVE PROJECTS

1,859 ACTIVE PROJECTS

783 COMPLETED PROJECTS

US\$69.9 GRANT PROJECT FUNDING
(IN \$ MILLIONS)

US\$78.7 GRANT PROJECT FUNDING
(IN \$ MILLIONS)

US\$61.4 GRANT PROJECT LEVEL CO-FINANCING
(IN \$ MILLIONS)

US\$68.6 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


43% 
BIODIVERSITY

19% 
CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION

19% 
LAND DEGRADATION

6% 
CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

5% 
CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

5% 
CHEMICALS AND WASTE

3% 
INTERNATIONAL WATERS

¹ Percentages in each focal area based on active portfolio as of 30 June, 2025.

Progress Towards GEF-7 Core Indicators

In GEF-7, SGP places greater emphasis on promoting 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 GEF guidelines on Core Indicators and Sub-Indicators.

SGP RESULTS ON GEF-7 CORE INDICATORS² FOR 2024-2025



542,392

Marine protected areas under improved management effectiveness
(hectares)



50,746

Degraded agricultural lands restored
(hectares)



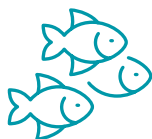
2,989,441

Landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity
(hectares; excluding protected areas)



3,849,401

Landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems
(hectares; excluding protected areas)



105,902

Marine habitat under improved practices to benefit biodiversity
(hectares; excluding protected areas)



51

Solid and liquid Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and POP-containing materials/products removed or disposed
(tonnes)



813,836

Direct beneficiaries



439,073

Women



374,763

Men

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



Progress towards

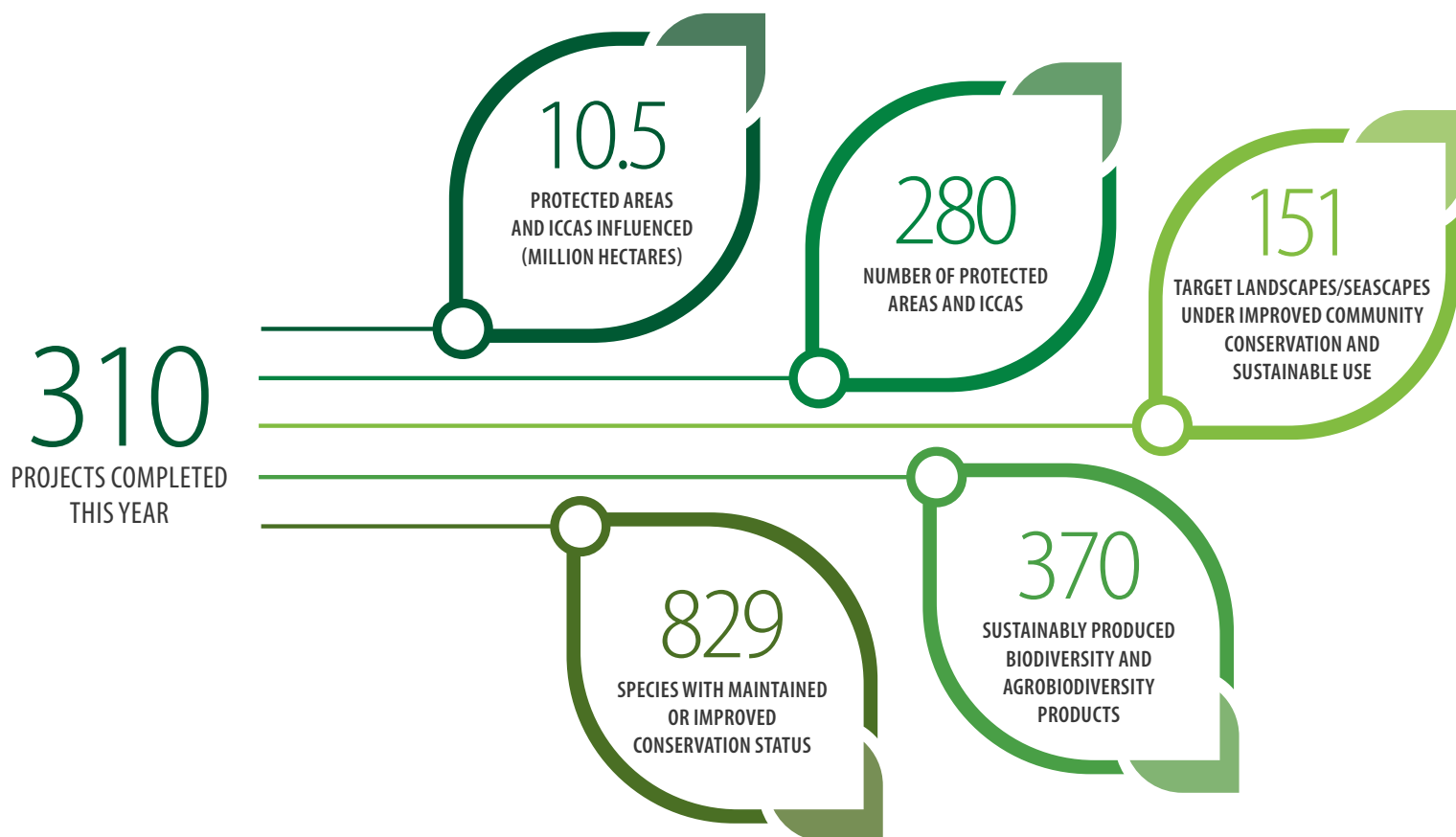
Focal Area Objectives

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



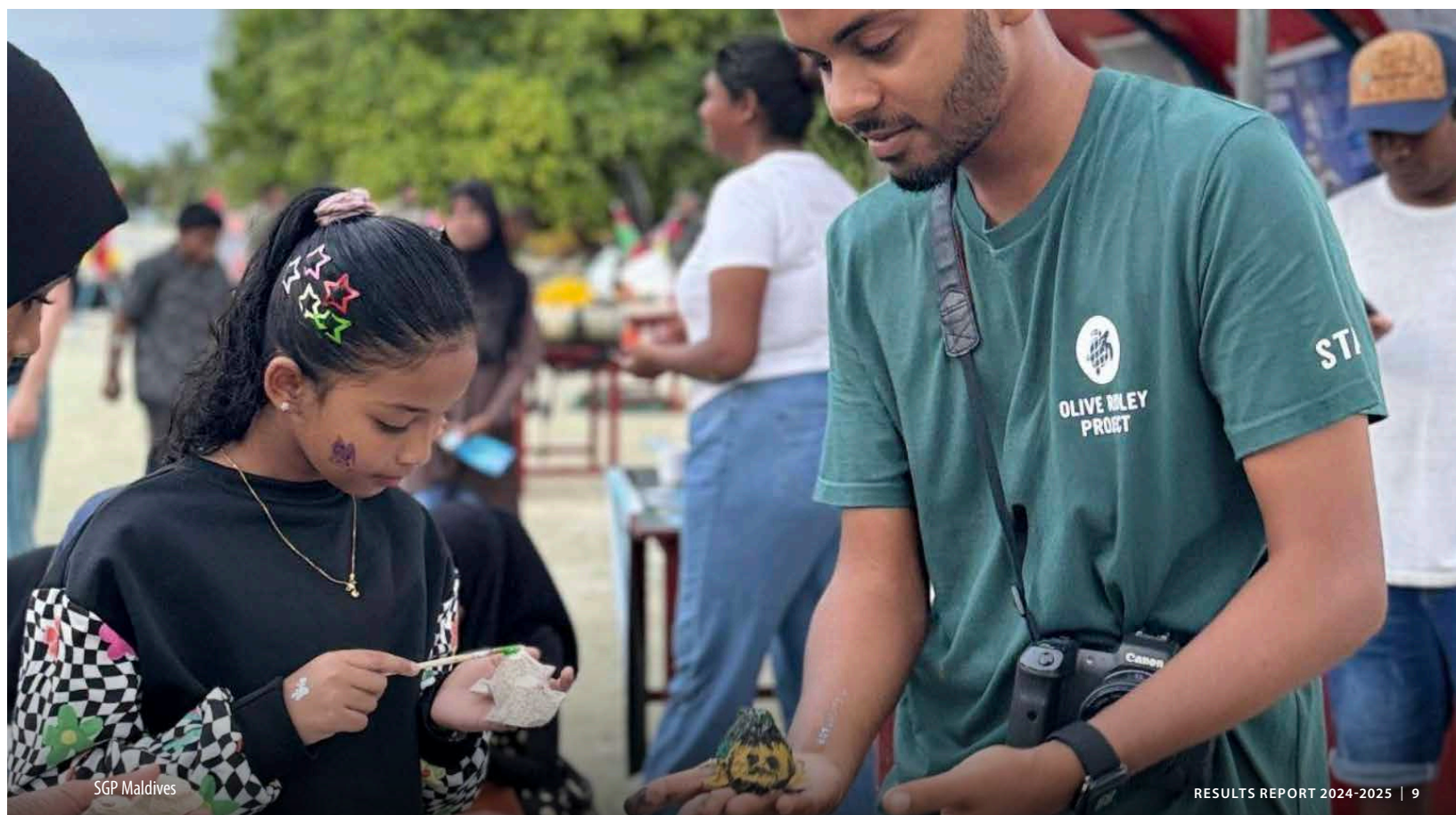
SGP's biodiversity focal area portfolio supported improvements in the management effectiveness of protected areas and in mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into production landscapes/seascapes and sectors. Support towards creation and management of Indigenous Peoples and Communities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



Spotlight on the Maldives

In Laamu Atoll, **Maldives**, the Olive Ridley Project is leading community-based efforts to protect endangered green sea turtles and their habitats. Operating in L. Gaadhoo and L. Maavah, the initiative combines traditional knowledge, modern technology, and strong local engagement. On L. Gaadhoo's velaa heylihi beach, one of the country's most important green sea turtle nesting sites, the Sea Turtle Ranger Programme has helped reduce illegal egg poaching from an average of 54 percent (2018–2022) to just 2 percent in 2023. Rangers have conducted regular beach surveys since 2023, recording over 260 nesting activities. In 2024, drones were introduced to monitor beach erosion, seagrass health, and enhance anti-poaching activities.

The programme also builds local capacity through training in drone operation, Geographic Information Systems, and field data collection. In L. Maavah, the Sea Turtle Beach Guardian Programme employs a Community Officer who monitors nearby uninhabited islands to identify illegal turtle capture. Supported by local police, schools, and the Women's Development Committee, the initiative has encouraged a cultural shift towards turtle conservation, supported by the incorporation of traditional knowledge from former L. Gaadhoo residents into the conservation programme.





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

176

PROJECTS COMPLETED
THIS YEAR

18,823

HOUSEHOLDS SUPPORTED
WITH ENERGY ACCESS
CO-BENEFITS

69

TYPOLOGIES OF COMMUNITY-ORIENTED,
LOCALLY ADAPTED ENERGY ACCESS SOLUTIONS
WITH SUCCESSFUL DEMONSTRATIONS
OR SCALING UP AND REPLICATION

31

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

Spotlight on

Morocco

In **Morocco**, the Riayat Ibn Assabyl Association is transforming two orphanages in Lahraouiyyine into models of eco-responsibility. The project addresses climate change and resource efficiency through an integrated approach to water, energy, agriculture, and climate. The aim is to reduce energy costs, water waste, and environmental impact, while improving living conditions for the children in their care. A key achievement was the installation of a 40-kilowatt rooftop solar power plant, which has been operational since January 2025. Now supplying over 50 percent of the orphanages' electricity, the system cut CO₂ emissions by over 40 tonnes per year. Energy upgrades also included replacing old gas ovens with electric ovens and installing smart water heaters. To monitor and optimize consumption, the project introduced digital systems for tracking electricity and water use, helping identify abnormal patterns and prevent waste. At the girls' orphanage, a water reuse system was installed to treat and recycle rainwater, well water, and wastewater for flushing, laundry, and irrigation. In addition, over 170 fruit trees were planted and irrigated using a drip system, following environmental assessments. Through its participation in Elec Expo 2024 and Solaire Expo 2025, the project has the potential to inspire replication in institutions across the country.





RESULTS

PROJECTS COMPLETED THIS YEAR

COMMUNITY MEMBERS
DEMONSTRATING AGRICULTURAL,
LAND AND WATER
MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

AREA UNDER IMPROVED
AGRICULTURAL, LAND AND
WATER MANAGEMENT
(HECTARES)

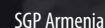
FARMER LEADERS
INVOLVED IN SUCCESSFUL
DEMONSTRATIONS OF
AGROECOLOGICAL PRACTICES

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

In **Armenia's** Syunik region, the Urban Foundation for Sustainable Development set out to improve agricultural practices and livelihoods through a sustainable irrigation system. Recent conflicts in the area have led to a reduction in available farmland, thus increasing the need for high-value crop production. This project was able to restore approximately 300 hectares of degraded land and successfully reduce irrigation costs by 40 percent, allowing farmers—many of whom are women—to improve the quality of the agricultural production value chain.

A key feature of the project's success was a solar-powered water pumping station equipped with modern energy-efficient pumps capable of delivering 100 litres per second from the Vorotan canal. The project also included the reconstruction of an 80m³ reservoir with hydro-insulating materials, a 900-meter pressure pipeline, and a 5,000-meter gravity-fed distribution network. Innovative tools, such as an electromagnetic flow meter and a floating valve for automatic pump shut-off, were installed to enhance water management and efficiency.

About 200 households and 20 refugee families from Nagorno-Karabakh, totalling 1,270 individuals, benefited from improved access to water and agricultural knowledge. The project also engaged youth in practical training on renewable energy and land rehabilitation. The initiative illustrates how sustainable land use can improve incomes and strengthen community resilience in the Syunik region.





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

17

PROJECTS COMPLETED
THIS YEAR

105,958

SEASCAPES SUSTAINABLY
MANAGED (HECTARES)

9,927

MARINE, COASTAL
AREAS OR FISHING GROUNDS
SUSTAINABLY MANAGED
(HECTARES)

85

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

20

SEASCAPES/INLAND
FRESHWATER
LANDSCAPES
SUPPORTED

Spotlight on

Cameroon

In **Cameroon**, the Cameroonian Mutual for Education and Employment (MCE2) led a project focused on strengthening marine ecosystem monitoring and promoting sustainable development along the coastline in Kribi. The project generated a rich scientific and community-driven foundation for coastal protection. Over 64 species of marine microalgae, from 38 genera and 35 families, were identified and classified, establishing a vital database for monitoring the health of the marine ecosystem. The study covered 210 hectares of marine area, spanning 30 km of coastline — from Londji to Mboro— and reaching up to 35 km into the ocean. Around 1,000 community members, including residents and university youth, received school kits, training sessions, and awareness materials focused on seawater quality and marine biodiversity. Using a participatory, bottom-up approach, the project combined community perspectives with scientific techniques, including direct observation, sea-based sampling, and laboratory analysis of physicochemical and biological parameters. By linking scientific research with community engagement, MCE2 has created a foundation for informed environmental decision-making, empowering coastal communities to become active stewards of their marine resources.



SGP Cameroon



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

45

PROJECTS COMPLETED
THIS YEAR (INCLUDING
MERCURY PROJECTS)

101,543

PESTICIDES AVOIDED,
REDUCED OR PREVENTED
(KILOGRAMS)

76,892

HARMFUL CHEMICALS
AVOIDED FROM UTILIZATION
OR RELEASE (KILOGRAMS)

29

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

5

MERCURY
MANAGEMENT
PROJECTS
COMPLETED

Spotlight on China

In **China**, the China National Resource Recycling Association contributed significantly to improving chemicals and waste management in Hong'an County, Hubei Province. With growing volumes of medical waste in the area, especially from plastic and glass materials, the need for effective and accountable systems is urgent. This project addressed that need by standardizing disposal procedures in participating facilities and enhancing the skills of 272 healthcare workers through comprehensive training sessions, which led to an 18 percent improvement in sorting accuracy. These efforts not only improved daily waste handling practices, but also helped reduce errors and inconsistencies in disposal.

A key innovation was the introduction of an electronic tracking system, adopted by some of the county's 469 medical facilities. This technology enabled 91 percent traceability of recyclable waste, reducing reliance on manual records and increasing accountability. In addition, upgraded storage with clear signage helped reduce sorting errors at the grassroots level, while optimized collection routes by Hubei Sujie Recycling lowered transport costs by 15 percent and improved logistics efficiency by 20 percent.

At Hong'an County People's Hospital, the results were measurable: in 2024 alone, 28.37 tonnes of plastic infusion bottles and 45 tonnes of glass bottles were recycled – a year-on-year increase of 15.89 percent and 12.5 percent, respectively. These gains highlight the importance of structured recycling systems within medical institutions. By building local capacity and integrating digital tools, the project has laid a strong foundation for smarter and safer medical waste management.





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

49

PROJECTS COMPLETED
THIS YEAR

437

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS
WITH DEVELOPED OR
IMPROVED CAPACITIES

278

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS
WITH DEVELOPED OR IMPROVED
CAPACITIES

Spotlight on Bolivia

In **Bolivia**, the Community Development Project implemented a comprehensive environmental education programme in Guaraní communities across the Chiquitanía and Pantanal regions, located within the buffer zones of the Otuquis, San Matías, and Kaa Iya protected areas. The project achieved several important milestones that significantly advanced environmental education in the region. More than 126 teachers (60 women and 66 men) received training through the Specialized Unit for Continuing Education, which not only strengthened their capacities but also deepened their understanding of the complex environmental challenges facing the Chiquitano Dry Forest, incorporating its conservation into their pedagogical practice. To support firsthand learning, five Pedagogical Forests were created as living classrooms to provide direct experiences with nature and cultivate being from an Indigenous worldview, moving beyond teacher training based on the mechanical replication of content. Alongside this, an educational toolbox was developed, combining printed materials, digital content, and recreational resources tailored to the local cultural and ecological context. A virtual classroom was also launched to provide ongoing support and professional development for educators.

Around 1,800 students participated in project activities, including children (482 girls and 502 boys) and adolescents (434 young women and 382 young men) assuming meaningful roles as park rangers and

members of the Pedagogical Forest Management Committees. This strengthened the functionality, sustainability, governance, and social ownership of the Pedagogical Forests. The project also addressed longstanding challenges, such as the limited access of Indigenous children to environmental education rooted in their cultural heritage and sustainable practices, as well as the gradual loss of Chiquitano environmental values due to the absence of intergenerational dialogue. Ultimately, through a holistic, territorial, intercultural, and participatory approach, the project established a solid foundation for long-term cultural and environmental resilience, while also contributing decisively to public policies for the protection and appreciation of the Chiquitano Dry Forest, one of the world's richest ecosystems.





Capacity Development Strategies Deployed by SGP Country Programmes³



74%

**STRENGTHENED
GRANTEE NETWORKS**



63%

**ORGANIZED TRAINING WITHIN
PROJECT GRANTS ON SPECIFIC
TECHNICAL ISSUES**



70%

**PROMOTED
PEER-TO-PEER EXCHANGES**



57%

**CONNECTED GRANTEES
WITH THE ACADEMIA
OR RESEARCH CENTERS**



69%

**CONNECTED GRANTEES
WITH NGOS/INGOs**



45%

**CONNECTED GRANTEES
WITH DEVELOPMENT
AGENCIES/PRACTITIONERS**



69%

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



37%

**CONNECTED GRANTEES
WITH PRIVATE
SECTOR COMPANIES**



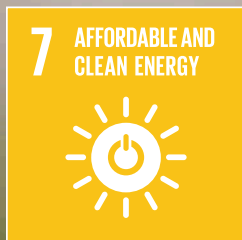
65%

**CONNECTED GRANTEES
WITH GOVERNMENT SERVICES**

³ Percentages based on 116 SGP country programmes that reported this year.



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.



39% PROJECTS LED BY WOMEN OR WOMEN'S GROUPS



20% PROJECTS ENGAGING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES



83% GENDER RESPONSIVE PROJECTS



44% COUNTRIES WITH AN INDIGENOUS PEOPLES FOCAL POINT ON THE NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE



90% COUNTRIES WITH A GENDER FOCAL POINT ON THE NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEES



829 INDIGENOUS LEADERS WITH STRENGTHENED CAPACITIES



73 PERSONS WITH DISABILITY ORGANIZATIONS ENGAGED IN SGP ACTIVITIES



73% COUNTRIES WITH A YOUTH FOCAL POINT ON THE NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEES



35% PROJECTS WITH YOUTH LEADERSHIP OR ENGAGEMENT





In **Viet Nam**, the Women's Union of Phu Yen Province empowered women while advancing Tuy Hoa City's transformation into a greener, smarter, and more sustainable urban centre. A key project focus was supporting informal female waste workers through access to clean transport, improved working conditions, and livelihood opportunities. A revolving loan fund of over 350 million VND (approximately US\$ 13,241) was established to provide interest-free loans to more than 40 female informal waste collectors for green transport. In parallel, 20 women received electric motorbikes – worth a combined 800 million VND (approximately US\$ 30,265) – through co-financing from the non-profit Thien Tam Fund, boosting their income potential and reducing environmental impact. More than 350 community members participated in awareness campaigns, and 70 women participated in trainings and awareness programmes on green transport, environmental protection, and occupational safety. These efforts fostered environmental leadership among women and youth, positioning them as change agents in their communities. The project also invested in long-term infrastructure, establishing two Green Traffic Stations and donating bicycles to support community mobility and eco-tourism. Over 1,000 tourists used electric bicycles during the pilot phase, reinforcing green transport adoption citywide. Crucially, the project strengthened the organizational capacity of the Women's Union, expanding its ability to support women's economic empowerment and environmental advocacy. By placing women at the center of urban sustainability, the initiative contributed to multiple Sustainable Development Goals, including poverty reduction, gender equality, and climate action. The project's ripple effects – greater awareness, access to resources, and inclusion in city planning – mark a significant step toward inclusive, low-carbon infrastructure in Phu Yen Province. Building on the experience and lessons learned from the project, the Women's Union was able to raise more funding from UNDP and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for an additional 85 green vehicles.



In **Peru's** Tacna–Capaso landscape, the Specialized Association for Sustainable Development led Aymara Indigenous communities to implement integrated livelihood strategies through seven community projects. These initiatives helped 916 Indigenous households strengthen local capacities and adopt sustainable resource management practices that improved food security, income generation, and cultural resilience. In the high Andean zones, alpaca herders adopted improved practices in animal health, breeding, and pasture management to enhance fiber quality. The introduction of specialized breeders increased the population of colored alpacas in the area by 30 percent and restored the availability of three traditional fiber colors. Working with national and local partners, the communities improved shearing methods and established a fiber collection center, enabling the commercial sale of



45,000 kg of classified alpaca fiber. In addition, women artisans began incorporating colored fiber into their crafts, adding value to their products. Indigenous vicuña herders practiced sustainable wildlife management with authorization from the National Forest and Wildlife Service, conducting four *chakus* – a sustainable method for capturing wild vicuña – and harvesting 125 kilos of vicuña fiber. The herders also protected 320 animals from poaching. Five local organizations enhanced their leadership skills and participated in national vicuña forums. Additionally, 20 community members, including 12 women and eight men, received training in fiber processing and mechanical shearing. In ancestral agricultural terraces, three Indigenous producer organizations restored 12 native potato varieties and other Andean crops using agroecological practices. These efforts increased yields by 20 percent, and value-added processing of colored prickly pear provided new income opportunities. The project demonstrates the strong leadership of Indigenous communities, effective collaboration with institutions, and innovations rooted in cultural traditions.

In the Talas Region of **Kyrgyzstan**, the public association Our Village is an Organic Area implemented a project with a strong focus on youth engagement and sustainable development. The initiative aimed to enhance local economic opportunities, while reinforcing the Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) for organic certification. A total of 100 young men and women received training in organic farming techniques, medicinal herb processing, and the use of digital tools for data collection. These trainings enabled youth to actively contribute to the creation of 12 unique herbal tea blends, which were marketed through online platforms, such as Wildberries and eBay, thereby expanding foreign market access. Young participants made up 40 percent of all workshop attendees and actively took part in the activities of the PGS certification committee, ensuring their direct

involvement in decision-making processes. As a result of the project, youth-generated income increased by 25 percent through herb sales. Additionally, 80 percent of the trained youth reported improved skills in sustainable agriculture and digital marketing, contributing to their long-term employability. The project not only strengthened the local economy, but also provided practical tools for youth empowerment, linking environmental sustainability with rural entrepreneurship.

In **Nepal**, a project led by the Community Development and Environment Conservation Forum successfully demonstrated how persons with disabilities (PwD) can play a vital role in conservation efforts. With active engagement from PwD, the project supported the development of a disability-friendly disaster and climate resilience framework in Indrawati Rural Municipality. This framework ensured PwD participation in ward-level disaster management committees and during annual budget planning. It also led to targeted municipal funding for goat-keeping by PwD. The project facilitated skill-building for 107 disabled community members through training in organic farming, mushroom cultivation, handicrafts, and small livestock enterprises. Notably, 22 PwD began earning income from organic vegetable farming on 2.8 hectares of land. Through the project, some of the participants managed multipurpose nurseries, and others contributed to the planting of over 12,000 fruit and bamboo seedlings across 20 hectares and 6,250 clumps of broomgrass on sloped lands, supporting soil conservation. The project also produced a simple guideline to support PwD participation in environmental projects, particularly those funded under SGP. Monitoring and social audit activities engaged local officials and community stakeholders, increasing transparency and accountability. This initiative offers a strong model for inclusive, disability-sensitive conservation programming in disaster-prone and ecologically sensitive regions.



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.

89 PROJECTS SCALED
UP OR REPLICATED

72 PROJECTS INFLUENCED POLICY
THROUGH THEIR ACTIVITIES

In **Zambia**, a project implemented by the Save Environment People Agency (SEPA) serves as a strong example of scalable, community-driven development. Through training in climate-smart agriculture, agroecology, and financial literacy, over 50 households improved food production and resilience. The project's integration of modern techniques like drip irrigation with Indigenous practices – such as composting with livestock manure and traditional vegetable drying – resulted in improved soil fertility, nutrition, and sustainable livelihoods. Importantly, women and youth were central to implementation, highlighting the project's inclusive design. The initiative's success has garnered support from the local District Commissioner's Office, the Ministry of Agriculture, and other stakeholders, positioning it as a viable model for replication. SEPA is now seeking additional funding to scale the project to neighboring villages. Its community-led approach, emphasis on climate resilience, and recognition of Indigenous knowledge offer a practical framework that can be adapted in similar rural settings. As such, the project has strong potential to be replicated more widely, contributing to inclusive climate action and long-term food security.





SGP North Macedonia

In **North Macedonia**, Planktonium led a national initiative to support the implementation of extended producer responsibility by preparing draft by-laws for managing additional waste streams. Rooted in the North Macedonia Law on Waste Management, the project focused on aligning national regulations with European Union (EU) directives and establishing a unified legal framework for the management of special waste streams, including tires, oils, textiles, and end-of-life vehicles. The initiative resulted in the preparation of 16 draft by-laws that define clear obligations and procedures for both collective and independent operators. These legal drafts address key aspects of extended producer responsibility, such as requirements for obtaining consent, keeping records, reporting, public awareness efforts, and treatment standards for specific waste categories. Notably, the by-laws introduced standardized rules across the waste sector, contributing to a more transparent and accountable system. Activities included

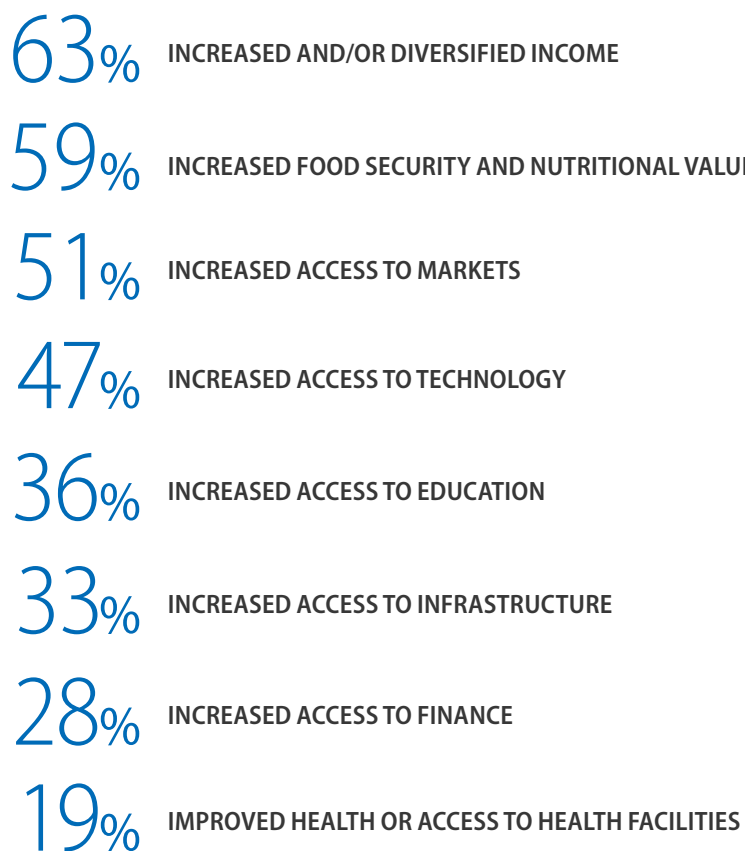
a comprehensive analysis of national and EU regulations, and two public consultations held in May and July 2024 with over 120 stakeholders from civil society, the business sector, and government representatives from the Ministry of Environment. These consultations ensured inclusive participation in shaping waste policy and helped refine the legal texts through stakeholder feedback. The project was implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Faculty of Technology and Metallurgy. The adoption of these draft by-laws marks a significant step toward meeting EU accession requirements under chapter 27 on environment and climate change.



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 116 SGP country programmes that reported this year.





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.

35% OF COUNTRIES CONDUCTED
CSO-GOVERNMENT
DIALOGUES

242 DIALOGUE
PLATFORMS
ORGANIZED

3,600 CSO/CBO
REPRESENTATIVES
INVOLVED

In **Mauritania**, the Association for the Integrated Development of Guidimakha launched an initiative to establish a platform for dialogue and joint action between government administrations, elected officials, technical services, and local populations around the sustainable management of natural resources in the Lake Aleg watershed. The initiative aimed to strengthen collaboration and shared responsibility through an inclusive, participatory governance model inspired by the French *Contrat de Rivière* approach. Consultations were held with local authorities and stakeholders to identify key challenges and lay the groundwork for the dialogue platform. These discussions emphasized the urgent need to address the progressive degradation of Lake Aleg's ecosystems, caused by overexploitation, pollution, and unsustainable agricultural practices. The lake is a crucial source of livelihood for surrounding communities, and participants stressed that any management strategy must protect these socio-economic interests. A central theme of the consultations was the importance of inclusivity, particularly the involvement of marginalized local communities in decision-making. An in-depth diagnosis of the lake's economic potential was conducted by an external consultant and will inform discussions and priorities moving forward. The initiative provides a structured, transparent space for dialogue between civil society and government bodies, ensuring that resource management solutions are rooted in local realities and jointly developed.





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.

18% OF COUNTRIES FACILITATED
SOUTH-SOUTH EXCHANGES

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

In **Tonga**, the Civil Society Forum of Tonga organized a parallel week-long exchange programme during the 53rd Pacific Islands Forum Meeting. The exchange, known as the People's Forum Meeting, brought together civil society organizations and minority groups, including local community representatives from across Tonga. The People's Forum Meeting provided a valuable opportunity for information sharing, networking, capacity development, and relationship building among like-minded organizations and groups. The programme aimed to strengthen collaboration and foster dialogue within the civil society space. Significantly, the event was joined by participants from various Pacific islands – including Fiji, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, and the Solomon Islands - who were in Tonga for the Pacific Islands Forum Meeting. These regional participants, counterparts to Tonga's civil society organizations, contributed to a broader exchange and mutual learning environment. This gathering demonstrated the importance of inclusive engagement and cross-border collaboration within the civil society landscape of the Pacific region.



In February 2025, SGP **Lesotho** participated in a South-South exchange with South Africa through a study tour aimed at strengthening community-based ecotourism in Sehlabathebe National Park (SNP) in Lesotho, part of the shared transboundary Maloti Drakensberg Park World Heritage Site. Both Lesotho and South Africa developed their own Community Management of Protected Areas for Conservation (COMPACT) Site Strategy, as well as a joint transboundary strategy to guide collaborative conservation and community development activities across the World Heritage landscape. For Lesotho, this exchange is particularly critical. Although local communities have strong traditions of horse ownership, some local community tourism entities – like the Thusanang Lichaba Pony Trekking Association – have lacked the technical capacity, equipment, and infrastructure needed to meet the tourism standards of neighbouring South Africa. As a result, tourists often enter SNP using South African horses and services, limiting economic opportunities for Lesotho-based operators. The study tour to Golden Gate Highlands Park in South Africa allowed 18 participants – including Association members, SNP staff, and SGP Lesotho representatives – to learn directly from experienced South African counterparts about horse care, stable management, and quality service delivery. This South-South exchange is helping Lesotho improve its tourism offering, enhance cross-border collaboration, and ensure that local communities can fully benefit from the shared World Heritage Site.





Monitoring and Evaluation

1,629 PROJECTS (88% OF ACTIVE PORTFOLIO) VISITED TO TRACK PROGRESS

1,351 IN PERSON M&E VISITS CONDUCTED



Knowledge and Communications

1,428 FACT SHEETS, CASE STUDIES, BROCHURES, PUBLICATIONS, AND VIDEOS PRODUCED

2,382 LOCAL MEDIA MENTIONS

1,356 TRAINING SESSIONS 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, SGP continued to serve as a delivery platform for several major partnerships, mobilizing significant resources. The COVID-19 Response Initiative of Global Support Initiative to territories and areas conserved by Indigenous Peoples and local communities (**ICCA-GSI**) is being implemented in 50 countries to support Indigenous Peoples and local communities. The Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative Programme, **COMDEKS Phase 4**, active in 15 countries, promotes the Satoyama concept of societies living in harmony with nature. Meanwhile, the Community Based Adaptation Programme, **CBA Phase 3**, is advancing resilience through 80 projects across 26 Asia-Pacific countries.

The **Plastic Waste Management & Behaviour Change Programme**, in collaboration with Rare, engaged 18 countries in training and produced a guidance tool on plastics management before successfully closing during the reporting period. The five-year **PROCARIBE+ programme** supports integrated ocean management and blue economies in the Caribbean and Northern Brazilian Shelf, with SGP implementing community focused components in five Caribbean countries.

Launched in June 2023, the **GGW Sustainable Land and Forest Management Innovation Programme**, in partnership with the African Union Commission and SADC, addresses land degradation and climate change in eight Southern African countries. SGP also strengthened collaboration with the **Caribbean Biodiversity Fund**, enhancing synergies and knowledge exchange among Caribbean SIDS.

Finally, the **Business Incubator and Accelerator for Mountains and Islands**, implemented in 10 countries with FAO's Mountain Partnership, fosters resilience through innovative entrepreneurship in agricultural and textile value chains, combining grants, technical assistance, and capacity development

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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 30,000 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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