



INFORMATION NOTE

GEF SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTED BY UNDP



SGP The GEF
Small Grants
Programme





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GEF Small Grants Programme

Established in 1992, the year of the Rio Earth Summit, the GEF Small Grants Programme (funded by the Global Environment Facility – GEF) supports community-led initiatives that address global environmental issues. SGP provides financial and technical support to local civil society organizations (CSOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs), with a special focus on Indigenous Peoples, women, and youth, to develop and implement innovative local actions that tackle global environmental challenges, while also improving livelihoods and reducing poverty.

GEF SGP finances community-led initiatives through a decentralized, country-level delivery mechanism, usually supported by a country management team and a multistakeholder governance structure. SGP is designed to mobilize bottom-up actions by empowering local civil society and community-based organizations, including women, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, youth, and other marginalized or vulnerable groups.

The programme funds **grants of up to \$50,000–\$75,000** and also provides a maximum of **\$150,000 for strategic projects**. These larger projects allow for scaling up and replication of successful approaches, covering many communities within critical landscapes or seascapes.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is one of the three implementing GEF Agencies of the Small Grants Programme through its national coordinators.

At the global level, the Central Programme Management Team in UNDP headquarters provides oversight of SGP's global operations and decentralized country programmes. At the national and local levels, SGP operates in a decentralized, country-driven manner through country programme teams composed of a National Coordinator (NC), often a Programme Assistant (PA), and a National Steering Committee (NSC) in each participating country. SGP country programmes are hosted primarily by UNDP Country Offices but may also be hosted by national institutions (NHIs).

International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists 2026 & SGP

Resolution 76/253 adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, proclaiming 2026 as the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP), and decision 29/COP.16 on Rangelands and Pastoralists adopted at the 16th Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), mandate GEF and the SGP to contribute to achieving the objectives of the Year. Additionally, the IYRP and its objectives are fully aligned with SGP's mission and the OP8 framework.

The IYRP strongly aligns with SGP's mission and SGP OP8 priorities, particularly the support for community-led action in globally significant landscapes. Many rangelands are OP8 target landscapes—such as drylands, mountains, grasslands, and grazing commons—and qualify as Socio-Ecological Production Landscapes (SEPL) due to the presence of:

- Traditional ecological knowledge and sustainable practices;
- Community governance and customary tenure systems;
- Multifunctional landscapes integrating production, conservation, and cultural heritage.

SGP's targeted investments in such areas can help:

- Enhance biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services;
- Support sustainable livelihoods, particularly among vulnerable and marginalized groups;
- Strengthen ecosystem connectivity and community collaboration through regional and strategic projects;
- Foster resilience to climate change and land degradation.

Accordingly, the **UNDP SGP Central Programme Management Team** has shared an information note with SGP country teams, including National Steering Committee members, encouraging SGP National Coordinators to:

- Prioritize rangelands and other pastoral landscapes that meet OP8 criteria;
- Support proposals aligned with IYRP objectives—especially for gatherings, capacity-building, and community-based rangeland conservation/restoration;
- Collaborate with IYRP Global Alliance partners as grantees and co-implementers;
- Coordinate with GEF Operational Focal Points to promote funding synergy, visibility, and scaling of successful results.

In the short term, SGP can support:

- Global, regional, and national gatherings of IYRP Global Alliance constituents (pastoralists, supporting NGOs).

In the long term, SGP can support:

- Enhancing socio-ecological resilience;
- Community-led rangeland conservation and restoration;
- Climate adaptation and biodiversity-friendly practices;
- Empowering pastoralist communities and organizations;
- Advocacy and governance initiatives;
- SEPLS documentation and landscape assessments;
- Knowledge-sharing events;
- Collection and verification of national data;
- Compilation and dissemination of good practices.

Next Call for Projects

UNDP country offices have already invited—or will soon invite—organisations to submit proposals.

You can check your country's eligibility for SGP grants and find contact information for SGP National Coordinators at this link: <https://sgp.undp.org/where-we-work-153.html>

We, as the Global Secretariat of the IYRP Global Alliance, strongly encourage our constituents (pastoralist and supporting organisations) that are eligible for SGP funds to get in touch with their SGP National Coordinators and explore how to apply for funds to support global, regional, and national gatherings in the short term and how to develop strategic collaborations in the long term.