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THIS ACTION IS FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

ANNEX 4

of the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the Multiannual Action Plan 2023-2025 in favour of the Republic of Sierra Leone

Action Document for Support measures for Sierra Leone

This document constitutes the multiannual work programme in the sense of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, and action plans in the sense of Article 23(2) of NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

1 SYNOPSIS

1.1 Action Summary Table

1. Title CRIS/OPSYS business reference Basic Act	<u>Support Measures for Sierra Leone</u> OPSYS number: ACT-62150 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe)
2. Team Europe Initiative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting (inter alia) TEI.
3. Zone benefiting from the action	The action shall be carried out in West Africa, Sierra Leone
4. Programming document	EU Multiannual Indicative Programme for Republic of Sierra Leone 2021-2027
5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives / expected results	Support measures are cross-cutting and aim at promoting a sustainable socio-economic development in the country and enhancing EU's interests and positions in Sierra Leone. It is linked to all priority areas of the MIP and shall promote "a stronger Europe".
PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION	
6. Priority Area(s), sectors	Support Measures
7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG: SDG 17 - Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development Other significant SDG(s): SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, SDG 15: Life on land, SDG 5: Gender Equality
8 a) DAC code(s)	15110 Public Sector Policy and Administrative management 99810 Sectors non specified
8 b) Main Delivery Channel @	European Commission - Development Share of Budget: 42000

9. Targets	<input type="checkbox"/> Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Climate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance			
10. Markers (from DAC form)	General policy objective @	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Trade development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Biological diversity @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Internal markers and Tags:	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Digitalisation @ Tags: digital connectivity digital governance digital entrepreneurship job creation digital skills/literacy digital services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Connectivity @ Tags: transport people2people energy digital connectivity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

	Migration @ (methodology for tagging under development)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reduction of Inequalities (methodology for marker and tagging under development)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Covid-19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BUDGET INFORMATION				
12. Amounts concerned	Budget line(s) (article, item): 14.020120 Total estimated cost: EUR 10 000 000 Total amount of EU budget contribution: EUR 10 000 000 The contribution is for an amount of EUR 7 850 000 from the general budget of the European Union for year N+1, and for an amount of EUR 2 150 000 from the general budget of the European Union for N+2, subject to the availability of appropriations for the respective financial years following the adoption of the relevant annual budget, or as provided for in the system of provisional twelfths.			
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION				
13. Type of financing	Direct management through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grants - Prizes - Procurement 			
14. Type of measure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cooperation facility <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Measures in favour of Civil Society and Local Authorities			

1.2 Summary of the Action

<p>The Action “support measures” is a flexible tool to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Facilitate the implementation of the Multi-annual Indicative Programme (MIP) 2. Increase awareness, understanding and perception of the EU and Global Gateway delivered as Team Europe 3. Promote Local Authorities (LA) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) as development actors. <p>The action will enhance the EU’s global agenda, values and positions in Sierra Leone and contribute to build “A Stronger Europe” in line with the Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy and the Global Gateway agenda. The action will serve the interests of the EU, and of its public, economic and cultural diplomacy - including through strategic communication actions towards the wider public.</p> <p>The action will facilitate a Team Europe approach and help to coordinate, design, implement and assess respective initiatives.</p>
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2 RATIONALE

2.1 Context

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sierra Leone remains a vulnerable and fragile country. Since the end of the civil war (1991-2002), several major setbacks limited Sierra Leone’s development and economic progress: 2014-2016 Ebola and iron ore price slump; 2019-2021 Covid-19; 2022 economic downturn due to the Russian aggression on Ukraine.

- **General Elections** are scheduled for June 2023 and **political tensions are increasing** between main political parties. The political landscape is characterised by a high degree of polarisation and deep regional divides and many of the factors that led to civil war still persist (interplay of poverty, marginalisation, greed and grievances).
- Sierra Leone introduced **positive reforms** such as the abolition of the death penalty and the repeal of the criminal libel law. It is an example of religious tolerance and contributed actively to peace building process especially in the ECOWAS region. Sierra Leone has just been elected as non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the period 2024-2025.
- **Poverty remains high** at 57% with more than 10% in abject poverty, affecting disproportionately rural areas, home to 75% of the poor, though there is a rapid migration of mainly poor youth to urban centres. Sierra Leone's **HDI score (0.45) is one of the lowest in the world** and positions the country at 182 out of 189.
- The **Sierra Leonean economy was severely negatively affected by the impact of the Russian aggression on Ukraine**, which obliged the government to adopt a supplementary budget in June 2022. GDP growth is now projected to reach only 2.1 % in 2023 (versus an initial forecast of 5.9% in December 2021) and **public finances are under high stress**.
- **Sierra Leone faces one of the highest food inflation rates in Sub-Saharan Africa (29.40% in 2022)**. In terms of food insecurity, Sierra Leone is among the most affected countries in the sub-Saharan region (19% of the population affected). **Protests and strikes against the rising cost of living turned violent on 10 August** in Freetown with six police officers and about 30 civilians killed.
- Sierra Leone faces complex, **interlinked, and persistent development challenges**:
 - Economic challenges of stagnation, unemployment and low productivity,
 - Social challenges of poverty, inequality, a sizeable precariat combined with population growth,
 - Weak Government effectiveness, patronage system, high levels of corruption and a fragile democracy,
 - Environmental challenges of an alarming loss of primary natural forest and forest degradation, biodiversity loss, degrading ecosystems and high climate change vulnerability.

With a view to sustain the prospects of a resilient, prosperous and peaceful future in the interest of Sierra Leone and the EU, the Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP) 2021-2027 will adopt a comprehensive approach combining: i) the promotion of an inclusive economic transformation towards sustainable green growth and economic diversification with, ii) fostering human development for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives, and iii) the promotion of good governance.

The MIP is based on the Medium-term National development Plan (MTNDP 2019-2023).and builds on the Team Europe Initiative “Green Pact with Sierra Leone”.

Support measures shall facilitate the implementation of the MIP, provide particular support for Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities, and help to build “A Stronger Europe” in line with the Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy.

Activities under the action are not explicitly identified and are not necessarily linked to a specific policy or programme of the EU but should contribute to gender equality and the GAP¹ III. Mindful of the shortcomings mentioned above and of the need to promote EU interests and positions in Sierra Leone, small-scale initiatives will be launched on an ad-hoc base to support the implementation of the MIP as well as EU public, cultural and economic diplomacy.

2.2 Problem Analysis

Short problem analysis:

Lessons from past cooperation initiatives – including the Technical Assistance Facilities- highlight the importance for the EU Delegation to count with a flexible instrument which allows for quick responses to the needs stemming from the specificities of programme implementation in a country facing a long-lasting situation of fragility and

¹ The EU Gender Action Plan III was adopted by 24 Member States through the Presidency Council Conclusion of the 16th December of 2020 (13947/20).

low level of development. In particular the low institutional capacity in the government sector and beyond is a hindrance to swift and effective responses. In this context, the promotion of decentralisation and participation – through Local Authorities and Civil Society Organisations- is critical for enhancing service delivery.

Likewise, the introduction of NDICI-Global Europe creates new opportunities for Sierra Leone and EU interests especially in the political and promotion of human rights sphere. However the new modality also implies a transition period during which needs not yet fully identified are likely to emerge. It is of critical importance that the partners and stakeholders are better aware of the new EU external approaches.

Identification of main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities) to be covered by the action:

The expected partners and stakeholders of the action are diverse and include: the EU, EU Member States, Sierra Leone’s central government bodies, sub-national governments, and Non-State Actors including business and civil society associations, business community.

The proposed action will provide the EU Delegation with a useful instrument for the implementation of the initiatives identified in the MIP, but also beyond in support to the EU strategic communication and economic diplomacy. The action will allow to react quickly, when windows of opportunities to foster EU external policy’s objectives arise. The specific activities are not identified ex-ante or linked to a specific policy or programme but should respect gender equality and the human rights-based approach.

The flexibility in the planning of the activities and hence the responsiveness of the instrument as well as the wide range of modalities which can be targeted will be critical to the efficiency of the support measures.

On the basis of a strategic plan, to be drawn up by the Delegation, support measures will implement activities aimed at increasing awareness and communication of EU values, interests, in particular Team Europe approach and actions including public outreach events and campaigns. The strategic plan will also integrate the political communication aspects financed under the Press and Information budget.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

The overall objective of the action is to promote a sustainable socio-economic development in the country, and to enhance the EU’s global agenda, values and positions in Sierra Leone.

The Specific Objectives of this action are:

1. To facilitate the implementation of the MIP
2. To increase awareness, understanding and perception of the EU and Global Gateway delivered as Team Europe
3. To promote Local Authorities (LA) and Civil Society Organisations’ (CSOs) as development actors.

The Outputs to be delivered by this action contributing to the corresponding Specific Objectives are:

- 1.1. Improved understanding of the context through analysis and research on areas relevant to the achievements of the objectives of the MIP and the TEI “Green Pact in Sierra Leone”
- 1.2. Enhanced formulation, implementation, monitoring, audit and evaluation of EU interventions
- 2.1. Enhanced EU visibility and appreciation through strategic communication on MIP interventions and public diplomacy on EU Global Agenda and Global Gateway
- 3.1. Local Authorities (LA) and Civil Society Organisations’ (CSOs) have enhanced capacity for advocacy, social accountability and decentralised policy implementation.

3.2 Indicative Activities

The initiatives of this proposed action will be aligned with the general and specific objectives described above but will be formally identified when the needs arise. The adaptable character of this facility is instrumental to its responsiveness. They should underpin and operationalise the EU's foreign policy in Sierra Leone.

The activities to be launched under support measures listed below are only tentative and not meant to be exhaustive.

Activities related to SO1:

- Research, studies and services on key technical topics related to MIP priority areas, including cross-cutting issues which are not included in the original programmes and projects they relate to
- Technical assistance and capacity development initiatives targeting the central government and agencies
- Initiatives aiming at strengthening the institutional capacity and financial sustainability of NSAs and local authorities
- Support for the participation of Sierra Leone - general government and NSAs - in EU and international initiatives
- Coordination, design, implementation, monitoring and assessment of TEI
- Preparation and promotion of the interventions of other EU instruments in the country (EFSD+, Erasmus+, Research, etc.) including feasibility studies, preparation of blending or private sector investments, promotion and networking activities
- Monitoring, Evaluation and Audits

Activities related to SO2:

- Strategic communication, public diplomacy and fight against disinformation in relation to the MIP and to the EU Global Agenda and Global Gateway
- Actions that promote the EU as preferred partner with shared interests and values.
- Cultural diplomacy activities (actions could take the form of campaigns, organisation and sponsoring of events of public outreach and visibility to targeted audiences)
- Training and scholarship programmes for the youth, for key players in Civil Society Organisations (CSO) or for public institutions staff

Activities related to SO3:

- Organisation of Call(s) for Proposals aiming at:
 - CSOs
 - Fostering an enabling environment for civil society to bring communities together for collective action, mobilizing society to articulate demands and voice concerns at local, national, regional and international levels. Specific attention will be put to ensure that women and youth civil society organizations are part of the process.
 - Promoting participation of civil society in national, sub-national and sectoral multi-stakeholder policy processes such as the design and implementation of national and sectoral development strategies; the Voluntary National Reviews for the 2030 Agenda; the updating and monitoring of Nationally Determined Contributions to the climate agenda in the context of the Paris Agreement; the renewal of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans in the context of a renewed international agreement on biodiversity, and other environment related targets and goals; the responses to pandemics and other key domestic and international policy processes.
 - Strengthening of CSOs' (including women and youth organizations) capacity to hold authorities accountable, be legitimate representatives of the interests of citizens groups (central to the achievement of the SDGs) and effectively perform their roles as independent actors of development, governance and public diplomacy.
 - LAs
 - Support to decentralisation, focusing on the establishment of a conducive legal and policy environment for decentralisation and on institutional and capacity development, so that Local Authorities enjoy a degree of autonomy to fulfil their functions.
 - Enhance Local Authorities' ability to contribute to good governance and consequently to achieve development goals at local level. Local elected officials and administrative staff have to overcome

capacity constraints, such as managing and mobilising public sector resources, leadership skills, public financial management, revenue raising and expenditure, transparency, participation and interaction with other actors.

- In view of accelerating urbanisation, EU will seek to promote sustainable strategies to promote non-discrimination and break down the barriers that exclude various groups from access to resources and opportunities offered by local development, with the view to promote social inclusion, territorial cohesion and environmental protection.

3.3 Mainstreaming

With reference to the National Indicative Programme and the Mid-Term National Development Plan (MTNDP 2019-2023) of the Government of Sierra Leone, cross-cutting issues such as good governance, environment and climate change, gender equality and other issues related to human rights are significant priorities. To ensure results, said cross-cutting issues will be mainstreamed in the identification, preparation and implementation of on-going and future EU interventions.

Environmental Protection & Climate Change

Outcomes of the EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) screening

The EIA (Environment Impact Assessment) screening classified the action as Category C (no need for further assessment).

Outcome of the CRA (Climate Risk Assessment) screening

The Climate Risk Assessment (CRA) screening concluded that this action is no or low risk (no need for further assessment).

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

As per OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls will be reinforced by adopting a multi-dimensional contextual analysis as regards gender. The action will support the collection of gender-disaggregated data, the qualitative monitoring of action design and implementation arrangements, and the assessment of the gender effects. This will allow narrowing the gender gap in economic opportunities. The action contributes to the EU Gender Action Plan III (GAP III, 2021-2025), more specifically “addressing the challenges and harnessing the opportunities offered by the green transition and the digital transformation” and “promoting economic and social rights empowering girls and women”.

Human Rights

The Action operationalises the human rights-based approach by ensuring that all rights are respected and that empowerment, participation, non-discrimination, accountability and transparency are promoted. It will capacitate "rights-holders" in claiming their rights and "duty-bearers" in meeting their obligations.

3.4 Risks and Lessons Learnt

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)	Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)	Mitigating measures
Strategy, planning and policies	Limited knowledge of the new EU external approach	M	L	Management guidance and follow up, policy dialogue with European partners

Implementation, monitoring, evaluation of policies	Low institutional capacity and government effectiveness	H	M	Use of well-target small scale intervention
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The new EU external approach, fostering a stronger Europe, is not understood or exploited by Delegation staff and European partners. Likewise, this action is a novelty. Adequate management guidance and follow up, as well as policy dialogue with European partners shall mitigate this risk.

Lessons Learnt:

Previous EU initiatives including Technical Cooperation Facilities (TCF) are instructive of the context and risk for this support measure. Within the stipulations of their financing agreement, successive TCF proved to be flexible, allowing the EU to respond quickly to the needs raised by the specificities of programme implementation in a country facing a long-lasting difficult situation and fragility. The demand-driven activities contributed to the funding of strategic studies and enhanced the smooth preparation and implementation of bigger cooperation programmes, and supported the achievement of results foreseen in the previous EDFs.

However, the need to consent with the National Authorising Officer (NAO) limited the scope of previous TCFs. In order to finance actions primarily in the EU’s interest and have full control of the initiative, no financing agreement with the host country will be signed. A 2-years multi-annual approach shall ensure continuity of the action.

Lessons learnt from previous technical cooperation and training projects in Sierra Leone include the difficulties in sustaining progress in a country that is at a low level of development. A significant obstacle to the success of EU-funded programmes lies in the generally very weak institutional capacities (and in the insufficient coordination in the public and private sectors).

Local Authorities and Civil society organisations are critical actors in development and should play a more important role in promoting accountability, transparency, and inclusion, as well as in service delivery particularly in rural areas. However generally speaking, there is a critical need to strengthen the capacity of LAs and CSOs if they are to engage in a structured dialogue with beneficiaries, central authorities and Development Partners.

Likewise, well-targeted small-scale interventions targeting specific public institutions could raise awareness and yield significant impact.

3.5 The Intervention Logic

<p>If</p> <p>The EU Delegation counts with a flexible instrument which design and nature allows for mobilising quick, small and well targeted interventions</p> <p>Then</p> <p>The activities under the Action will be complementary to the interventions of the MIP and will contribute to maximise their impact, reinforce EU strategic communication or strengthen the role of the EU as a strategic partner for Sierra Leone</p> <p>Because</p> <p>The context in which the interventions will take place is one of low capacity as well as significant exposure to risks and uncertainties at different levels (country or sectoral), the concrete initiatives to be put in place will be driven by needs which remain to be identified. By nature, these initiatives will be complementary but expected to have an important potential impact in relation to their budget.</p>
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3.6 Logical Framework Matrix (optional)

Results	Results chain (e): Main expected results (maximum 10)	Indicators (e): (at least one indicator per expected result)	Sources of data
Impact	Promote a sustainable socio-economic development in the country, and enhance the EU's global agenda, values and positions in Sierra Leone	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HDI 2. UN voting pattern 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.UN 2. UN
Outcome 1	Facilitate the implementation of the MIP	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Number of MIP interventions supported 2.Number of identification/ formulation studies contracted 3.Number of financing agreements signed 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Implementation reports and terms of reference 2.Signed contracts 3.Signed financing agreements
Outcome 2	Increased public awareness, understanding and approval of the EU and its role in Sierra Leone, the region and the world	2.EU visibility, awareness and brand recognition among target public	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1.Baseline survey 2.2.Media coverage – including social media-
Outcome 3	Promote the role of Local Authorities (LA) and Civil Society Organisations' (CSOs)	1.Voice and accountability	1. Worldwide governance indicators
Indicative output 1 related to outcome 1	1.1.Improved understanding of the context through analysis and research on areas relevant to the MIP (and the TEI)	1.1. Number of analysis and research completed	1.1. Research reports
Indicative output 2 related to outcome 1	1.2.Enhanced formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of EU interventions	1.2. Number of technical assistance missions contracted	1.2. Technical assistance reports
Indicative output 1 related to outcome 2	2.1 Strategic communication activities implemented, reaching new audiences	2.1 - Reach - Engagement - Follower growth	2.1 Communication report
Indicative Output 1 related to Outcome 3	3.1 Local Authorities (LA) and Civil Society Organisations' (CSOs) have enhanced capacity for advocacy, social accountability and decentralised policy implementation	3.1 Number of CSOs/LAs supported	3.1 Grant beneficiaries reports

4 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Financing Agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with the partner country.

4.2 Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 60 months from the date of adoption by the Commission of this Financing Decision.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this Financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

4.3 Implementation of the Budget Support Component: NA

4.4 Implementation Modalities

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures².

4.4.1 Direct Management (Grants)

Grants: (direct management)

4.4.1.1. Specific Objectives 1 “To facilitate the implementation of the MIP”

a) Purpose of the grant(s):

The purpose of the grants will be to support to entities not pertaining to the central government which fulfil the overall objective of this action, i.e. supporting the implementation of the MIP (and the TEI) in relation to Green Economy, Human Development and Governance. In particular, the grants may contribute to increasing access to modern energy, developing sustainable food systems, improving ecosystems and biodiversity management, supporting education, expanding social protection coverage, promoting democracy and accountability, and enhancing service delivery.

The grants will also seek to put into practice the EU Global Strategy and promoting EU values and positions in Sierra Leone. The following conditions will need to be met:

- Objectives and/ or activities/ mandates of the entity are aligned with the objectives of the MIP and of the EU Global Agenda;
- The demonstration by the entity of its operational capacity to deliver, of the transparency and sustainability of its operations.

b) Type of applicants targeted:

The possible beneficiaries of grants have not been identified at this stage. They may include:

- Non-State Actors
- Universities
- Public Bodies

4.4.1.2. Specific objectives 3 “To promote Local Authorities and Civil Society Organisations as development actors”

² www.sanctionsmap.eu. Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes.

The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

a) Purpose of the grant(s):

The purpose of the grant(s) is to achieve the specific objective 3 “To promote Local Authorities and Civil Society Organisations as development actors” and output 3.1. “Local Authorities and Civil Society Organisations have enhanced capacity for advocacy, social accountability and decentralised policy implementation”.

b) Type of applicants targeted:

- Civil Society Organisations
- Local Authorities
- Non-State Actors

4.4.2 Direct Management (Prize(s))

Purpose of the prize:

Prizes will be used for SO1 (Output 1.1) “To facilitate the implementation of the MIP” and SO2 (Output 2.1) “To increase awareness, understanding and perception of the EU and Global Gateway delivered as Team Europe.”

The type of participants targeted:

Legal entities and natural persons or groupings without legal personality (such as pupils or schools), local authorities, public bodies, international organisations, NGOs (for instance for environmental prizes), economic actors such as SMEs, profit or non-profit organisations (for instance for innovative approaches).

4.4.3 Direct Management (Procurement)

Procurement is considered for the three specific objectives:

1. To facilitate the implementation of the MIP
2. To increase awareness, understanding and perception of the EU and Global Gateway delivered as Team Europe
3. To promote Local Authorities (LA) and Civil Society Organisations’ (CSOs) as development actors.

A call for tender for the communication and Visibility contract, which is the substantial part of the budget for procurement, has been launched in 2023 with a suspensive clause, prior to the adoption of this Decision. This was justified because the present communication contract will end in the beginning of 2024. Therefore there is a need to already identify a future contractor by the first quarter of 2024. A call for tender takes about 9 months to be finalised, hence the need to launch it with a suspensive clause by August 2023.

4.5 Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply, subject to the following provisions.

The Commission’s authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

4.6 Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (EUR) Year N	EU contribution (EUR) Year N+1	EU contribution (EUR) Year N+2	EU contribution (EUR) TOTAL
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Objective 1): Facilitate the implementation of the MIP			2 000 000	2 000 000
- Direct Management (procurement)			1 000 000	
- Direct management (grant)			970 000	
- Direct Management (Prize(s))			30 000	
Objective 2): Promote a positive image of the EU and its values		3 850 000		3 850 000
- Direct Management (procurement)				
Objective 3): Promote Local Authorities (LA) and Civil Society Organisations' (CSOs) as development actors		4 000 000		4 000 000
- Direct management (grant)				
Grants – total envelope under section 4.4.1				5 000 000
Procurement – total envelope under section 4.4.3				4 850 000
Evaluation – cf. section 5.2			150 000	150 000
Audit – cf. section 5.3				
Total		7 850 000	2 150 000	10 000 000

4.7 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

The implementation of the action being direct management, the Delegation will be fully responsible for its overall management as well as that of the specific initiatives financed under this instrument.

In particular, the Delegation will be responsible for identifying, selecting, mobilising and monitoring the implementation of the initiatives. Standard procedures will apply accordingly to the implementation modality (procurement, grants and prizes).

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the action.

5 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

5.1 Monitoring and Reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

The Delegation will establish internal procedures for planning and monitoring the activities under this Action. Likewise the Delegation will report on a yearly basis on the activities implemented under this facility.

5.2 Evaluation

Having regard to the nature of the action, a(n) mid-term and ex-post evaluation(s) may be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants contracted by the Commission.

A mid-term may be carried out for problem solving and learning purposes, in particular with respect to public diplomacy.

An ex-post evaluation may be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular the fact that it is the first time the Delegation pools substantial funds into one contract.

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least 1 month in advance of the dates envisaged for the evaluation missions. The implementing partner shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities.

The evaluation reports may be shared with the partners and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination³. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, apply the necessary adjustments.

The financing of the evaluation may be covered by another measure constituting a Financing Decision.

5.3 Audit and Verifications

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

6 STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The 2021-2027 programming cycle has adopted a new approach to pooling, programming and deploying strategic communication and public diplomacy resources. Regional and global strategic communication and public diplomacy funds will be managed from headquarters.

At country level, action documents for specific sector programmes are no longer required to include a provision for communication actions promoting the programmes concerned. These resources will instead be consolidated in Cooperation Facilities established by support measure action documents, allowing Delegations to plan and execute multiannual strategic communication and public diplomacy actions with sufficient critical mass to be effective on a national scale.

To that end, Delegations have developed a short strategic communication and public diplomacy plan that reflect the objectives of the Delegation as a whole in this domain, initially covering the period up to the Mid-Term Review (MTR). The plans have been endorsed by a coordination mechanism comprised of the EEAS, DG INTPA, DG NEAR and FPI, and will be reviewed, modified and extended as appropriate as part of the MTR process.

The EU has developed a positive track record in Sierra Leone and is significantly known for its programming in infrastructure, support to elections and its fight against gender-based violence. Many people however view the EU simply as a donor rather than a strategic development ally and partner with the Government and people of Sierra Leone. As a result, people are unaware of its sterling work in human and civic right protection, private sector development or environmental action and other areas.

Against that backdrop, the Communication Plan of the Delegation in Sierra Leone, identifies a wide range of audiences targeted such as government institutions, CSOs, policy-makers, private sectors representatives, influencers, community based groups or regional bodies.

Depending on the targeted audience and the nature of the messages, different channels can be mobilised including: 1) traditional local and national media, 2) radio and TV, 3) digital and social media and 4) events.

The Communication Plan identifies five sector components which are priority areas of the current EU/ Sierra Leone Partnership with specific objectives:

- Governance: the objective is to popularise and provide information to targeted groups on activities that support democratic processes, National Electoral Reform, election observation, strengthening of the

³ See best [practice of evaluation dissemination](#)

legislative capacity, and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of civil service delivery, corruption and public finance management including budget transparency and oversight, supporting decentralisation. Informing on gender and equal rights initiatives is also an objective;

- Economy: the objective is to enhance visibility on trade and investment opportunities, success stories, innovative entrepreneurship;
- Social sectors: the objective is to inform on cooperation activities and especially why the EU is financing relevant programmes and what is the concrete outcome for final beneficiaries;
- Environment and climate change: the objective is to highlight and advocate EU/Government of Sierra Leone commitments to the conservation of forest ecosystems, environmental protection and the EU Green Deal awareness and the enhancement of climate change resilience;
- External advocacy: the objective is to project the EU as a reliable global actor through positive image branding and marketing of the EU. The EU's policies and positions should be explained and adherence fostered either directly by SL decision makers or through public opinion forming.

Appendix 1 REPORTING IN OPSYS

An Intervention (also generally called project/programme) is the operational entity associated to a coherent set of activities and results structured in a logical framework aiming at delivering development change or progress. Interventions are the most effective (hence optimal) entities for the operational follow-up by the Commission of its external development operations. As such, Interventions constitute the base unit for managing operational implementations, assessing performance, monitoring, evaluation, internal and external communication, reporting and aggregation.

Primary Interventions are those contracts or groups of contracts bearing reportable results and respecting the following business rule: ‘a given contract can only contribute to one primary intervention and not more than one’. An individual contract that does not produce direct reportable results and cannot be logically grouped with other result reportable contracts is considered a ‘support entities’. The addition of all primary interventions and support entities is equivalent to the full development portfolio of the Institution.

The present Action identifies as Primary Intervention:

Action level		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single action	Present action: all contracts in the present action
Group of actions level		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Group of actions	Actions reference (CRIS#/OPSYS#)
Contract level		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single Contract 1	Service contract
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Group of contracts 1	Service contracts
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Group of grants 2	Grants
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single Contract 2	Prize to natural person(s) or legal entity(ies)