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ANNEX

to the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of individual measure in favour India
for 2024

Action Document for “EU-India Trilateral Cooperation Programme”

Individual Measure 2024

This document constitutes the annual work programme within the meaning of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, within the meaning of Article 23 of the NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

1 SYNOPSIS

1.1 Action Summary Table

1. Title CRIS/OPSYS business reference Basic Act	EU-India Trilateral Cooperation Programme OPSYS number: ACT-62792 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe)
2. Team Europe Initiative	No. However, the Action is envisaged to follow a Team Europe Approach
3. Zone benefiting from the Action	The Action shall be carried out in India and Partner countries ¹
4. Programming document	Regional Multiannual Indicative Programme (RMIP) for Asia and the Pacific 2021-2027
5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives / expected results	Relevant specific objectives and expected results from the RMIP 2021-2027: Priority Area 2- Pursuing EU Interests with Key Partners <input type="checkbox"/> SO 1 – Support India’s sustainable modernisation objectives in line with the EU-India Strategy, implementation of the EU-India Roadmap 2025 and the EU-India Connectivity Partnership. <input type="checkbox"/> SO 2 – Support the external dimension of the European Green Deal with India. <input type="checkbox"/> ER 1: Effective implementation of the EU-India Roadmap 2025 and progress on implementation of the EU-India connectivity and sectoral partnerships. <input type="checkbox"/> ER 2: Improved environmental, energy and climate policies, regulations and practices, supporting India’s increased commitments and engagement under the Paris Agreement, the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) and other multilateral environmental agreements.

¹ Trilateral Cooperation activities may be implemented in agreed partner countries in Africa/ Latin America/Caribbean and Indo-Pacific region (South East Asia)

PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION				
6. Priority Area(s), sectors	Priority Area 1: Green Deals (DAC Code 232) Priority Area 2: Sustainable and Inclusive Growth (DAC Code 151) Priority Area 3: Governance, People, Peace and Security (DAC Code 152)			
7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG: SDG 17 - Strengthen the means of Implementation and revitalize the global Partnership for sustainable development goals. It is expected to contribute more specifically to SDG goals as follows: SDG 5 - Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls SDG 7 - Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all SDG 9 - Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation SDG 10 - Reduce inequality within and among countries SDG 13 - Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts			
8 a) DAC code(s)	DAC Codes: 15110 (15123 VC) - Public sector policy and administrative management – 66.5% 23181 - Energy Education/training – 33.5%			
8 b) Main Delivery Channel	Third country government - Channel ID 13000 40000 – Multilateral Organisations			
9. Targets	<input type="checkbox"/> Migration <input checked="" 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11. Internal markers and Tags:	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Digitalisation @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital connectivity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	digital governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	digital entrepreneurship	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	digital skills/literacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	digital services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Connectivity @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital connectivity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	energy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	transport	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	education and research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Migration @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reduction of Inequalities @	<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	<p>Budget line(s) (article, item): 14.020131-South/South East Asia</p> <p>Total estimated cost: EUR 3 000 000</p> <p>Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 3 000 000</p> <p>The contribution is for an amount of EUR 3 000 000 from the general budget of the European Union for 2024 , 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.</p>			
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION				
13. Type of financing	Indirect management with the entity(ies) to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 4.3.1			

1.2 Summary of the Action

Since, 2004, the European Union (EU) and India have agreed to an EU-India Strategic Partnership, implemented through successive action plans and roadmaps, of which the latest is the EU-India Strategic Partnership: A Roadmap to 2025. In 2018 the EU adopted its EU-India Strategy. In 2021 and 2022, the partnership was further strengthened through the signature of an EU-India Connectivity Partnership and then the creation of an EU-India Trade and Technology Council (TTC), the latter being implemented through three high-level, political dialogue Working Groups: (i) Strategic technologies, digital governance and digital connectivity; (ii) Green & clean energy technologies and (iii) Trade, investment and resilient value chains.

The EU is engaging strategically and cooperating with an actor that will, in all likelihood, have a greater singular impact to determine the fate of the SDGs and Paris Agreement than any other, and is likely to have an increasing influence with the “Global South”. This is in line with the creation of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), which demonstrate India’s desire to be an international player on sustainability issues.

Trilateral cooperation between the EU and India has been a long-standing objective between the two parties, reflected in the Roadmap and Connectivity Partnership. It enables the EU to support India to be a greater player in delivering the multilateral sustainability agenda, and helps to deliver Global Gateway priorities (particularly in the energy sector) and in a Team Europe approach.

Under this Action, both the EU and India will jointly support trilateral cooperation (with India contributing in kind, e.g. technical know-how), identifying, designing and enabling the implementation of activities of common interest addressing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Paris Agreement, in line with in-country or regional EU, Indian and third country priorities. As per good international practice in trilateral cooperation, it will be guided by the principles of ensuring the interests and development priorities of the beneficiary countries and implemented in close consultation and cooperation with them. The Action will focus on strengthening trilateral cooperation partnership, with a particular focus on transport, energy, digital and green transition. It will also aim to support the International Solar Alliance (ISA)² through strengthening its Solar Technology Application Research Centre (STAR-C)³ programme in third countries. This Action will also help to deliver trilateral cooperation objectives from the TTC with regard to Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) and interoperability between EU and Indian solutions in DPI. The Action will build on the ongoing programmes being supported by EU MS, i.e. Germany, active in trilateral cooperation in India, and France, supporting the ISA STAR-C programme.

1.3 Zone benefitting from the Action

This Action is envisaged to be implemented with India and benefit mutually agreed partner countries in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Indo-Pacific region, including South and South East Asia. India has provided a list of indicative projects in third countries⁴ that would play a role in guiding selection, yet the list is not exclusive and the EU may suggest or support other countries in the above-mentioned three regions and propose priorities in terms of sequencing.

2 RATIONALE

2.1 Context

India is a key strategic partner for the EU and its Member States. A mutual commitment to sustainability in third countries, is a key dimension in promoting Global Gateway externally and considered mutually beneficial.

² <https://isolaralliance.org/>

³ <https://starc-project.org/>

⁴ Africa: Malawi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Cameroon, Angola, DR Congo, Cote d’Ivoire, Gabon, Senegal, Liberia, Djibouti, Egypt; Latin America/Caribbean: Belize, Suriname, Argentina, Guyana; Indo-Pacific/Southeast Asia: Indonesia; South Asia: Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka

India is the world's fourth largest economy in purchasing power parity, and the fastest growing economy in the G20⁵. Geopolitically, India is in competition with China, trying to diversify its supply chains and strategic relations through the lens of a multipolar world, strengthening ties with the West, while maintaining strategic links with Russia and other partners. India provides development assistance beyond its neighbours, including trilaterally and in Africa. India has positioned itself as the voice of the “Global South”, particularly through its recent G20 chairmanship in 2023, while advocating for a more multi-polar international order.

The EU’s strategic interests are captured in the EU-India Strategy (2018), with key objectives being to support sustainable modernisation and for the EU to leverage its bilateral cooperation on to the global stage, including on global challenges. The EU-India Roadmap 2025 (supported by several sectoral EU-India partnerships) reflects the EU’s wide cooperation ambitions, while the EU-India Connectivity Partnership (2021) underlines the importance of sustainable connectivity, including through trilateral cooperation. Supporting this modality enables India to play a greater role in delivering the SDGs internationally.

The creation of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) demonstrate India’s desire to be an international player on sustainability issues. A trilateral cooperation action with India will help to jointly design and implement projects for furthering SDGs and related climate goals in third beneficiary countries as well as reinforce Team Europe support to ISA building on its earlier programme, which ended in 2023. ISA is a joint initiative of France and India, launched during COP21 with the aim of making an unprecedented effort to promote solar energy. The goal of ISA is to set the ground rules, norms and standards for solar energy, in order to obtain a rapid and massive deployment in countries that are rich in solar resources but where the risks are still seen as high. ISA is putting in place concrete tools, capacity-building measures and innovative financial instruments to support solar technology deployment. ISA’s STAR C (Solar Technology Application Resource Centre) programme aims to build the necessary human capacity and skills within ISA’s member countries to undertake energy transition on their own while also boosting economic growth and job creation. It is also important to highlight that the ISA has a strong commitment and advocates for equal opportunities and women’s empowerment within the renewable energy landscape. The EU support will bring sustainability and scalability of EU MS actions and enhance political cooperation between Europe and India. The EU MS have been demanding a prominent role of the EU to the ISA General Assembly in order to enhance the visibility of Team Europe to come with a common voice, similar to the role the EU is playing in CDRI.

EU’s potential support to the ISA has been welcomed during various coordination fora with the EU Member States (EU MS) in India. It is expected to strengthen the Team Europe approach through reinforcing the French contribution to the STAR-C programme, steering the EU MS position and speaking with one voice at ISA Annual General Assembly meetings. Team Europe support to the ISA STAR C programme will build the necessary human capacity and skills within identified partner member countries to take forward the energy transition on their own, while also boosting economic growth and job creation, building on specific EU MS expertise, experience and best practices in regard to the solar sector.

This Action will contribute to deepening the partnership with India and help deliver 1) Global Gateway, 2) the external dimension of the European Green Deal, 3) joint actions in third countries; (4) TTC deliverables. The aim will be to develop and facilitate EU-India collaboration in pilot third countries and suggest digitalisation for sustainable development or digital financial inclusion as one possible area, and also explore the development of new and innovative market-based mechanisms in priority sectors such as, clean energy, sustainable agriculture, green mobility, connectivity, social protection, nutrition, water and sanitation, education, women’s empowerment, health and other mutually agreed priority sector(s). The approach would be to pursue and incubate relatively small-scale pilot projects/initiatives, to strengthen recently completed pilots, which have the potential to scale up. The Action will help implement the EU’s Gender Action Plan III, notably its priorities on “addressing the challenges and harnessing the opportunity of the green transition” and “promoting economic and social rights and empowering girls and women”.

2.2 Problem Analysis

With the challenges involved in achieving the SDGs, innovative partnerships are needed. The EU and India have discussed this in policy dialogues over the last few years, recognising the need to join forces in third countries which have expressed their willingness to work in a tripartite framework to address those challenges. Least

⁵ 6.1% expected GDP growth for 2023(IMF projections January 2023).

developed, low, lower middle income, small island developing states as well as vulnerable and conflict-affected fragile states face a number of financial, technological, technological, human resource or institutional capacity issues that often prevent them from addressing climate adaptation or mitigation⁶, energy security, food security, water scarcity or uneven distribution, transport, connectivity, biodiversity, urbanisation as well as socio-economic challenges, be they of a national, regional or global nature.

Trilateral cooperation aims to produce better developmental results through the combination of different resources, skills and capacities from more than one partner. Finding solutions to development challenges can be assisted through the support to pilot projects which, through the demonstration of positive results, can then be scaled up. Setting up effective, interoperable digital public infrastructure in specific sectors, like the agrifood system, for instance, could help low income countries leap frog in terms of development, helping transform not just a third country's agrifood system, but also boost the development of, and access to, e-identity, e-payments, e-banking, e-commercialisation of food products as well as standards and certification.

Good principles of trilateral cooperation require starting work on a specific demand from the beneficiary country to ensure it addresses country needs. It involves a lot of hand holding and identifying the right institutional and technical partners to gradually build capacity, and systems. Partners most often need to come from both public and private sectors, often with civil society actors, in particular from the academia and research sectors.

With regard to the energy crisis in some countries in those regions, ISA Member Countries⁷ are devising new policies and regulations to reduce dependency on fossil fuels and consistently trying to foster an enabling environment for accelerated growth of solar energy. With limited number of trained professionals and the limited capacity of local governments to engage with partner countries in a trilateral framework, the proposed Action will aim to mitigate and address these challenges and help partner countries to build local capacities in the target sectors. The local capacities and capabilities will be enhanced through institutional strengthening for solar technology development. Supporting the ISA's STAR Centre programme will meet ISA Member Countries' capacity-building needs by building capable solar workforces, sensitising policy makers and financial institutions, incubating enterprises, standardising products and services, and creating knowledge repository on information related to solar energy. The STAR Centres also act as an interface between countries sharing solar energy development experiences, undertaking joint research, promoting development & demonstration, capacity building, and creating regional & global networks. This is seen as an ideal opportunity for the EU to enhance collaboration between leading European solar institutes and ISA to bring in the European solar technologies to be shared with existing STAR Centres and the new centres which will come up in the near future.

The project will also identify and address key entry points in the gender-energy nexus that provide climate solutions through renewable energy and energy-efficient, low-carbon technologies. As the dominant contributor to global emissions, the energy sector should play a central role in ensuring a just transition to a green economy which can only be achieved with full and equal participation, leadership and decision-making of women and girls⁸.

The **main stakeholders** (duty bearers and right holders) and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities)) to be covered by this Action include: the EU, EU MS, Government of India (Ministry of External Affairs, relevant line ministries and Indian Missions in the target countries), EU MS agencies, as well as ISA global office in Delhi and its country offices in the project locations, as applicable and their gender focal points. Target groups will include: government officers (decision makers, planners, regulators, on ground project staff and project evaluators); technicians (solar rooftop, mini grids, large scale solar parks and off-grid applications); financial Institutions (Risk assessors, bankers); industry associations; research and academic institutions as well as civil society organisations. By and large, the Action will engage with a diverse set of trusted and competent partners, from public, private and civil society sectors, in order to develop meaningful and sustainable solutions for the benefit of more resilient societies in the target countries.

⁶ Planned activities with ISA would focus more on mitigation, while activities in trilateral cooperation would involve more work on adaptation

⁷ <https://isolaralliance.org/membership/countries>

⁸ [Gender-equality-in-the-sustainable-energy-transition-en.pdf](https://unwomen.org/gender-equality-in-the-sustainable-energy-transition-en.pdf) (unwomen.org)

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

The **Overall Objective (Impact)** of this Action is to deliver on the EU-India Connectivity partnership and the EU's Global Gateway strategy, in third countries, in the framework of the UN 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement.

The **Specific Objectives (Outcomes)** of this Action are to:-

1. Strengthen EU-India trilateral cooperation partnership, with a particular focus on sustainable transport, clean energy, digital and green transition including from a human rights-based and gender equality approach.
2. Strengthen **ISA's Solar Technology Application Research Centre (STAR-C) programme** in third countries.

The Expected Outputs to be delivered:

- 1.1 A functional decision-making and implementation trilateral cooperation framework has been put in place in third countries to deliver positive results in the social, environmental and/or economic sectors.
- 1.2 Pilot trilateral cooperation projects in sectors including interoperable digital public services, clean energy, sustainable transport and green transition.
- 1.3 Identify a pipeline of project concepts with effective gender mainstreaming for potential investments by EU or International development financial institutions, or other financiers, for larger, deeper and more sustainable impact.
- 2.1 Enhanced an inclusive and gender-responsive Team Europe support provided to the STAR Centres in Asia, Africa and Latin America.
- 2.2 Contributed to the establishment of STAR Centres⁹ to become training and knowledge management centre(s).
- 2.3 Enhanced capacity of local government counterparts, researchers, engineers, technicians, private sector and other relevant stakeholders in solar related technologies
- 2.4 Strengthened technical and institutional collaborations of STAR Centres with EU Centres of Excellence.

3.2 Indicative Activities

1.1.1 Management of the trilateral cooperation framework

- Setting up, carrying out and reviewing the effectiveness of a two-level (steering and implementation) trilateral cooperation framework
- Promoting and sharing information about potential trilateral cooperation projects to be supported, highlight eligibility, region, country and sector priorities or criteria
- Identifying, assessing and selecting project proposals
- Assessing overall results of the projects actually implemented, with a particular emphasis on partnership, quality and sustainability criteria

1.2.1 Implementation of pilot trilateral cooperation projects

- Accompanying, supporting and monitoring project implementation, including conducting surveys, workshops, exposure visits, technology transfer, training, capacity development, setting up or reinforcing pilot services or systems

⁹ Locations/countries to be decided at the time of contracting.

- Ensuring social, environmental and financial sustainability factors as well as standards and/or interoperability are factored in
- Engaging with relevant stakeholders, taking particular attention to building trust among them
- Communicating about project results, including about partnership benefits, for each of the core partners/parties

1.3.1 Pipeline of projects for potential investments

- Informing local actors, public and private, about various types of investors, and some of their core requirements
- Bringing potential investors to check implementation results and financing needs for scale up
- Organising multi-stakeholder workshops focusing on both investments needs, and investors needs
- Helping develop bankable project proposals

2.1.1 Support overall operations and maintenance of the STAR Centres in Senegal, Bhutan and PNG, with particular attention to the Solar Academy in Senegal.

2.2.1 Collect, synthesize and disseminate solar energy related policies, information, best practices in selected countries to design solar energy-based training programmes.

2.3.1 Deliver training to government officers, technicians and engineers, financial institutions on technical and financial aspects of solar products, applications and services.

2.4.1 Undertake testing, benchmarking and standardization of existing training programmes/ modules against international standards, preferably European.

Other activities may include:-

- Conducting workshops, seminars, webinars, panel discussions and/or conferences;
- Conducting studies and surveys with gender and human rights-based approach;
- Organising exchange visits, and/or expertise/ peer-to-peer exchanges and/or business forum and Business to Government and Business to Business (B2G/B2B) meetings;

3.3 Mainstreaming

Environmental Protection & Climate Change

Outcomes of the SEA screening

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening concluded that key environmental and climate-related aspects related to trilateral cooperation pilot actions need be addressed during the design phase where the target country's targeted sector(s) will need to be analysed to study the trade-offs between different development options.

Outcomes of the EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) screening:

The EIA (Environment Impact Assessment) screening classified the Action as Category B (not requiring an EIA, but for which environment aspects will be addressed during design. Considering the proposed actions relate to mainly technical assistance and supporting the ecosystem for bankable projects, EIAs will be carried out as and when relevant and/or required by respective governments of the target countries for actions implemented by the EU.

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).

The Action is institutional by nature and is therefore not vulnerable to environmental degradation or climate-related risks. However climate resilience will be ensured and where relevant CRAs will be undertaken. It will ensure India's clean energy transition, promote digitalisation of public infrastructure and catalyse public and private investments through climate finance. GHG emissions could be expected from international/local experts' travels to/from workshops/events/seminars. The implementing partners, who will be recruited for the implementation of the Action, will be requested to ensure offsetting of the carbon emissions resulting from experts' travel operations.

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

As per the OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this Action is labelled as G1. This implies that gender equality and women empowerment is an important and deliberate objective, but not the principal reason for undertaking the Action. The Action will promote the participation of women from relevant ministries, private sector organisations and networks, as well as think tanks, research and innovation institutes and other types of CSOs in trainings, workshops and events to ensure equal opportunity is provided to women stakeholders to learn and contribute to the various policy discussions.

Human Rights

A human rights-based approach will be applied during the implementation of the Action, including key principles (participation, non-discrimination, accountability, and transparency) with particular attention to promoting the rights of women, girls, and vulnerable groups, people from different ethnic groups, and people with disabilities. The Action will incorporate the principle of leaving no one behind. By doing so, the proposed Action will aim at strengthening the respect, protection, and fulfilment of women's human rights.

Disability

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this Action is labelled as D0. This implies that even though significant actions are not foreseen to address this marker, all activities will be designed to ensure they are inclusive and accessible. This implies also that the Action will address the inclusion of socially marginalised groups with particular attention to persons with disabilities, in the green transformation process.

Reduction of inequalities

Inequality in many of the African countries is significant, as demonstrated, for instance, by the low ranking position in the Global Gender Gap Index 2023. Africa has a sizeable population as world's absolute poor, occupying low to very low ranking in the Human Development Index. Through trainings and capacity building activities, the Action is expected to help tackling inequalities and enhance economic opportunities for youth, women and vulnerable communities/populations.

Democracy

The situation of civil society, human rights and gender equality remains sensitive in India and S. Asia in general. Democratic participation and debate at national, sub-national and city level will in particular be a part of the partnerships engaging with urban local bodies and/or rural administrations. The Action will also potentially provide significant means and venues for implementing the EU Gender Action Plan (GAP III) and promoting women's economic empowerment in key areas of the EU's Global Gateway strategy – digital, energy and people to people connectivity.

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

Trilateral cooperation will enhance better regional cooperation for developmental causes. It will also help improve people's participation in democratic processes, promote peer-learning and establish institutional technical collaborations.

Disaster Risk Reduction

Where relevant, the activities under the proposed Action will adequately ensure considering disaster risks in particular from climate change-related hazards.

Other considerations if relevant

N/A

3.4 Risks and Lessons Learnt

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)	Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)	Mitigating measures
External environment	Risk 1: Unavailability of local trainers in third countries, making training expensive.	Medium	Low	Use of EU and/or India pool of trainers.
People and the organisation	Risk 2: Limited capacity of the local governments to engage with EU and India in the target sectors.	Medium	Medium	Provision of required trainings and technical assistance to build in-house capacity in partner countries.
People and the organisation	Risk 3: Limited interest of EU MS to engage with ISA through a Team Europe approach.	Low	Low	Regular interactions with EU MS to encourage them to contribute jointly to the ISA to offer a European package of support and strengthen the EU's visibility in the ISA member countries.
Planning, processes and systems	Risk 4: Delayed decision making process.	Medium	Medium	Agile project steering and planning.
Legality and regularity	Risk 5: Complications in agreeing on standards or interoperable systems.	Medium	Medium	Engagement with legal advisers, high level experts and/or high quality political negotiators.

Lessons Learnt:

As stated in the 3rd G20 Development Working scoping note on Trilateral Cooperation under the Brazil presidency, the success of trilateral cooperation depends on a collective and coordinated commitment. All partners must work together, based on mutual trust and solidarity, to create an environment conducive to effective collaboration. By combining resources, knowledge, and capacities in a complementary manner, the international community can unlock the full potential of trilateral cooperation, significantly boosting progress towards the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda, especially during this critical Decade of Action.

Trilateral cooperation complements other development partnerships and links well with current global debates on shifting power, localising and changing the development narrative. It goes beyond just complementing South-South

and North-South co-operation – bringing diverse constituencies together, drawing on strengths of different instruments, sharing in the spirit of solidarity, and broadening the knowledge and resource base.

The government of India (GoI) has attempted to implement trilateral or South-South Cooperation, but with diverging rates of success to date. Lessons learnt from several partners, mainly USAID or DFID/FCDO, but also JICA and, more recently, AFD and KOICA, demonstrate that actual implementation of trilateral cooperation is slow, small scale, and often weakly structured. Various partners have assessed the inexistence of an Indian government aid agency as a critical bottleneck from an implementation point of view.

Acknowledging the above-mentioned weaknesses, and building on an effective but ad-hoc approach set up in 2022 with Germany, through GIZ, the Indian Ministry of External Affairs set up a more structured governance and operational system with a view to responding to more requests from third countries. Indo-German trilateral cooperation, which has already resulted in successful individual projects, is still fairly new but its ongoing work is increasing trust, creating a better understanding of appropriate modalities on joint procedures and formats for collaboration, which ultimately leads to more effective implementation on the ground.

Under the ongoing ISA-UNIDO-French Government project “Structuring of an International Network of Solar Technology and Application Resource Centres” support is being provided to Senegal, Bhutan and PNG since 2022 with a EUR 1 M contribution from the French Government. Focus is on increasing the availability of solar training opportunities through local centres which are equipped with adequate training resources and successfully delivering trainings, building local capacities in solar energy. The overall aim is to promote accelerated deployment of certified solar energy courses thereby ensuring energy security.

3.5 The Intervention Logic

The international development cooperation landscape is going through significant changes. With growing economic and political strength, increasingly more and more developing countries have shifted from being recipients to active providers of development assistance. The increasing resources of countries like India, in terms of financial capabilities as well as development experience and expertise, and strong linkages with other developing countries, offer prospects for building mutually beneficial partnerships, and for India to be a significant part of the solution to achieving the SDGs.

India is an increasingly important geopolitical player. The EU and India can strengthen their ties by working together in third countries through innovative forms of development cooperation partnerships drawing from their respective strengths and working towards a common goal. Trilateral cooperation is expected to enhance mutual learning and experience-sharing, effectively mobilizing resources and networks of each party involved and bring greater development benefits to developing countries than each party acting alone. India is increasingly piloting trilateral cooperation with a number of traditional development partners and UN agencies, which offers practical lessons learned and experiences for the international development community

The Action intends to strengthen technical capacity, develop technical know-how and improve competence-based networks across EU, India and targeted third countries. It aims to implement pilots, establish trust-based relationships, transfer technology and know-how and develop capacities. The Action hence supports an incubator approach to lead to larger-scale projects. The trilateral cooperation approach is expected to enhance working relationship with the partner countries, promote better management of locally available resources, deploy innovative technologies and strengthen public-private partnerships across different regions. This is expected to lead to improving social, economic and environmental conditions of the target countries and regions, enhancing South-South cooperation, in particular in Africa. The Action is also relevant to the EU strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and the EU-LAC digital alliance. A strong Team Europe approach will be adopted in general, while the work with ISA in particular should build on specific EU MS expertise, experience and networks in regard to the solar sector.

In a nutshell, the Action aims at addressing global challenges locally, starting small and building trust, focusing on new pilots or recently piloted projects that need to be scaled up for sustainable impact, preparing the grounds for investments, for larger, deeper and more sustainable impact, socially, environmentally and economically. Besides, global challenges addressed locally, targeting weaker systems and services, populations groups and locations, can be expanded to other geographies, sub-nationally, nationally or regionally.

Technical outcomes (e.g. solar capacities built, interoperable digital services or systems strengthened, policies adapted or newly formulated, technical or technological know-how shared or acquired) as well as political outcomes (e.g. tri-partite trust built and strengthened; political, economic and/or cultural relations improved across country/institutional partners) is what can be gained through a collaborative, innovative and inclusive trilateral approach across governments, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector.

3.6 Logical Framework Matrix

PROJECT MODALITY

Results	Results chain (a): Main expected results (maximum 10)	Indicators (a): (at least one indicator per expected result)	Baselines (values and years)	Targets (values and years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
Impact	To deliver on the EU-India Connectivity partnership and the EU's Global Gateway strategy, in third countries, in the framework of the UN 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement	1 to be identified at a later stage 2 to be identified at a later stage	1 Tbi later 2 Tbi later	1 Tbi later 2 Tbi later	1 Tbi later 2 Tbi later	<i>Not applicable</i>
Outcome 1	Strengthened EU-India trilateral cooperation partnership, with a particular focus on transport, energy, digital and green transition	1.1 No. of trilateral actions agreed with India. 1.2 No. of actions fostering EU-India Connectivity partnership. 1.3 Number of proposed for adoption climate change adaptation and mitigation pilots that include gender equality objectives ¹⁰	1.1.1 To be set after AA is agreed 1.2.1 To be set after AA is agreed	1.1.1 To be set after AA is agreed 1.2.1 To be set after AA is agreed	1.1.1 Steering committee and Operational Committee reports 1.2.1 Steering committee and Operational Committee reports	EU and India will agree on an Administrative Agreement (AA) to formalise Trilateral Cooperation activities in third countries.
Outcome 2	Strengthened ISA's Solar Technology Application Research Centre (STAR-C) programme in third countries.	2.1 No. of countries supported by EU for STAR C programme of ISA. 2.2 Recognition of EU as a trusted ISA supporter.	2.1.1 0 (2025) 2.2.1 Yet to be recognised (2025)	2.1.1 at least 3 (2028) 2.2.1 Recognised (2028)	2.1 Project reports 2.2 General Assembly and other ISA reports or communications	ISA is keen to enhance its collaboration with the EU and project EU as the Team Europe voice in the ISA General Assembly.
Output 1 relating to Outcome 1	1.1 A functional decision-making and implementation trilateral cooperation framework has been put in place in third countries to deliver results in the social, environmental and/or economic sectors.	1.1.1 No. of pilots supported or scaled-up with the EU support in third countries	1.1.1 0	1.1.1 2	1.1.1 Project reports	The EU and India are committed to strengthen cooperation in third countries.
Output 2 relating to Outcome 1	1.2 Pilot trilateral cooperation projects in sectors including digital, clean energy, sustainable transport and green transition.	1.2.1 No. of pilot projects supported by the EU in the agreed sectors, including in interoperable digital public services. 1.2.2 No. of green jobs sustained/supported by the EU, disaggregated by age, sex and disability, if possible.	1.2.1 0 1.2.2 0	1.2.1 5 1.2.2 100	1.2.1 Project reports 1.2.2 Project reports	The EU and India mutually agree on actions to be supported through the trilateral framework.
Output 3 relating to Outcome 1	1.3 A pipeline of concepts for potential investments by EU or International development financial institutions, or other financiers, for	1.3.1 No. of countries supported by the EU to strengthen investment climate	1.2.1 0 1.2.2 0	1.2.1 2 1.2.2 5	1.2.1 Project reports 1.2.2 Project reports	EUFIs are committed to consider funding the pipeline

¹⁰ It includes Nationally Determined Contributions NDCs) and environment protection strategies and plans (including energy policies/ strategies), with gender strategies in line with the United Nations framework convention on climate change (UNFCCC) gender action plan (GAP III).

	larger, deeper and more sustainable impact is identified.	1.3.2 List of investment ready pipeline actions in partner countries.				projects identified by EU and India.
Output 1 relating to Outcome 2	2.1 Enhanced Team Europe support provided to the STAR Centres in Asia, Africa and Latin America.	2.1.1 No. of STAR Centres supported. 2.1.2 No. of youth/women/students trained in solar , disaggregated by age, sex and disability, if possible..	2.1.1 0 2.1.2 0	2.1.1 3 2.1.2 500	2.1.1 Project reports 2.1.2 Project reports	Bhutan, Senegal and PNG remain committed to institutionalise these STAR Centres in their respective countries.
Output 2 relating to Outcome 2	2.2 Contributed to the establishment of STAR Centres to become training and knowledge management centre(s).	2.2.1 No. of countries supported by the EU to set-up STAR Centres 2.2.2 No. of trainings offered in these STAR Centres.	2.2.1 0 2.2.2 0	2.2.1 2 2.2.2 10	2.2.1 Launch of the 2 STAR Centres with EU Support 2.2.2 Project reports	The targeted countries have expressed willingness to host STAR Centres in their respective countries.
Output 3 relating to Outcome 2	2.3 Enhanced capacities of local government counterparts, researchers, engineers, technicians, private sector and other relevant stakeholders in solar related technologies.	2.3.1 No. of trained stakeholders in the STAR Centres supported by EU , disaggregated by age, sex and disability, if possible.. 2.3.2 No. of new policies/ programmes announced by the beneficiary countries related to solar deployment.	2.3.1 0 2.3.2 0	2.2.1 200 2.2.2 5	2.2.1 List of trained persons. 2.2.2 Announcement of policies/ programmes at country level; stakeholders consultation on draft policies;	The targeted countries have expressed willingness to host STAR Centres in their respective countries.
Output 4 relating to Outcome 2	2.4 Strengthened technical and institutional collaborations of STAR Centres with EU Centres of Excellence.	2.4.1 No. of institutional collaborations supported with EU Centres of Excellence and ISA STAR Centres. 2.4.2 No. of modules/ trainings upgraded/ certified as per EU standards.	2.4.1 0 2.4.2 0	2.2.1 2 2.2.2 5	2.2.1 MoU signed . 2.2.2 Upgraded Modules/ content for trainings.	EU Centres of Excellence are keen to engage for ISA and the STAR C programme to establish long-term institutional partnerships.

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 48 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 Modalities

The Commission will ensure that the EU rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures¹¹.

4.3.1 Indirect Management with an entrusted entity

This Action may be implemented in indirect management with entrusted entity(ies), which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria:

Output 1:

- Experience in implementing/managing actions in a trilateral framework with India.
- Experience in implementing and managing connectivity actions, preferably in the Indian context, or where the trilateral cooperation actions will take place out of India, with established engagement with government counterparts in third countries.
- Having existing engagements with public and/or sector financial institutions, nodal agencies involved in accelerating investments in public infrastructure.
- Demonstrating an institutional commitment in mainstreaming gender, human rights, environmental and governance standards.

Output 2:

- Experience in working with International Solar Alliance to provide technical assistance for institutional strengthening.
- With existing portfolio of similar actions providing technical capacity building and fostering international collaborations between development and developed countries to promote the deployment of solar energy.

¹¹ 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.

4.3.2 Changes from indirect to direct management mode (and vice versa) due to exceptional circumstances (one alternative second option)

In case, due to circumstances outside of the Commission's control, it is not possible to implement the Action in indirect management with a pillar-assessed entity described under section 4.3.1, the alternative implementation modality to achieve the outputs 1 and 2 will be direct management via grants.

- Grants (direct management):

(a) purpose of the grant(s)

To support the partner countries in addressing the envisaged outcomes described in section 3.1.
Indicative global budgetary amount: EUR 3 000 000 (Outputs 1 and 2).

(b) Type of applicants targeted

Technical institutes, think tanks, public bodies, NGOs and non-pillar assessed organisations with experience and capacities in the sectors targeted by this Action.

4.4 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).

4.5 Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)
Implementation modalities – cf. section 4.3	
Objective 1: 1. Strengthened EU-India trilateral cooperation partnership, with a particular focus on transport, energy, digital and green transition.	
Indirect management with entrusted entity	2 000 000
Objective 2: Strengthened ISA's Solar Technology Application Research Centre (STAR-C) programme in third countries.	
Indirect management with entrusted entity	1 000 000
Evaluation – cf. section 5.2 Audit – cf. section 5.3	May be covered by another Decision
Totals	3 000 000

4.6 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

The EU Delegation will be involved in regular monitoring of the Action ensuring effectiveness and quality of the outputs. Dedicated steering committees chaired/ co-chaired by the EU, including with the relevant implementing partners, will be established for the two specific objectives, to act as advisory and reporting mechanism in order to provide the strategic and policy guidance needed to ensure smooth

implementation of the Action. For Specific Objective 1, an administrative agreement between the EU and India will facilitate implementation.

A **steering committee** should meet at least once a year, and more if needed, to select projects to be supported, review the agreed activities, outputs and achievements and provide advice on how to address obstacles and challenges identified during implementation. The composition of such committee will be further detailed during the contracting process, and will be comprised of relevant sections of the Delegation representing relevant Commission services as well as key partners involved (GoI, EU, relevant indirect management entities, at higher hierarchy/political level).

An **implementation committee** is to be set up and meet at twice a year, and more if needed, follow up of the steering committee decisions and to ensure effective and efficient implementation. The implementation committee follows and reviews the agreed activities, outputs and achievements in more detail and may address challenges of a more technical nature. The composition of such committee will be further detailed during contracting process, will comprise of entities, departments and services more directly responsible for or engaged with project implementation.

Participation of **EU headquarters and EU Delegations** in third countries where the activities are implemented will be encouraged through virtual platforms strengthening political and institutional interactions between EU, India, Team Europe partners and third countries where trilateral cooperation activities are agreed and implemented. Feasibility and relevance of setting up technical committees/sectoral groups will be considered to pursue detailed technical interactions between EU, EU MS and India. Existing technical committees under ongoing cooperation will be further enriched with these new planned actions.

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission should participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the Action and may sign or enter into joint declarations or statements, for the purpose of enhancing the visibility of the EU and its contribution to this Action and ensuring effective coordination.

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 achieve this, 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, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (Outputs and direct Outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the log frame matrix.

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).

Roles and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and monitoring: The implementing entity(s) for each of the designated outputs will be responsible for day-to-day monitoring and reporting based on the agreed indicators in the log frame. Adjustments to the agreed indicators will be subject to a discussion and approval of the steering committees. The contracting authority will be responsible for the approval of progress and final reports.

All monitoring and reporting shall assess how the Action is taking into account the human rights-based approach and gender equality based on the logical framework matrix indicators. Indicators shall be disaggregated at least by sex and age, as well as disability if possible. Reports shall be laid out in such a

way as to allow monitoring of the means envisaged and employed and of the budget details for the Action. The final report, narrative and financial, will cover the entire period of the Action's implementation.

5.2 Evaluation

Having regard to the nature of the action, a final evaluation may be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants contracted by the Commission or via an implementing partner.

It will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular the fact that the action is an effort to test innovative/pilot cases in a trilateral framework in partnership with one of the strategic partners of the EU. A joint evaluation with Team Europe partners (in particular France and Germany) may also be considered.

Evaluations shall assess to what extent the action is taking into account the human rights-based approach as well as how it contributes to gender equality and women's empowerment and disability inclusion. Expertise on human rights, disability and gender equality will be ensured in the evaluation teams.

Should the above evaluations be carried out, the Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least 3 months 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 dissemination. 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.

In line with the 2022 “[Communicating and Raising EU Visibility: Guidance for External Actions](#)”, it will remain a contractual obligation for all entities implementing EU-funded external actions to inform the relevant audiences of the Union's support for their work by displaying the EU emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials related to the actions concerned. This obligation will continue to apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, partner countries, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU member states.

However, action documents for specific sector programmes are in principle no longer required to include a provision for communication and visibility 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.