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ANNEX

of the Commission Implementing Decision on the on the financing of the support measure in favour of Guatemala for 2022

Action Document for Cooperation Facility under Support Measures

MEASURE

This document constitutes the annual work programme in the sense of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, and measures in the sense of Article 24(2) of NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

1 SYNOPSIS

1.1 Action Summary Table

1. Title CRIS/OPSYS business reference Basic Act	Cooperation Facility under Support Measures OPSYS number: ACT-60596 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (<u>NDICI-Global Europe</u>)/ Overseas Association Decision/European Instrument for International Nuclear Safety Cooperation Regulation
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 Guatemala
4. Programming document	Multi-annual Indicative Programme for Guatemala 2021-2027 ¹
5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives / expected results	The proposed measure will contribute to reaching Specific Objective 1 under section 2.3.1: Strong, accountable and transparent national, regional and local administrations are able to efficiently design and implement sustainability-oriented national policies and mobilise sufficient national resources to finance them.
PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION	
6. Priority Area(s), sectors	Not applicable
7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG (1 only): 17 (partnerships for the goals)
8 a) DAC code(s)	43010- Multi-sector

¹ C(2022) 9072, 14.12.2021

8 b) Main Delivery Channel	Private sector institution - 60000			
9. Involvement of multilateral partners	No			
10. Targets	<input type="checkbox"/> Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Climate <input type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance			
11. Markers (from DAC form)	General policy objective @	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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"/>
	BUDGET INFORMATION			
12. Amounts concerned	Budget line(s) (article, item): BGUE-B2021-14.020140-C1-INTPA EUR 4,050,000 Total estimated cost: EUR 4,050,000			

	Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 4,050,000
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION	
14. Type of financing	Direct management through: - Procurement
15. Type of measure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cooperation facility <input type="checkbox"/> Measures in favour of Civil Society

1.2 Summary of the Action

The proposed action will build on the achievements made under previous projects as similar facilities have been instrumental in assisting the Government of Guatemala in the diagnosis and the design of initiatives supported by the EU. The action falls under the priorities of Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP) support measures. It aims at strengthening the development cooperation between the EU and the Government of Guatemala. The action will contribute to advance the implementation of the Team Europe Initiatives² since it will provide support to the preparation, implementation, management and monitoring of EU programmes. The action responds to the need to ensure a rigorous identification, formulation and implementation of the Multiannual Indicative Programme for Guatemala 2021-2027³, especially as regards AAPs 2023 and 2024. The Cooperation Facility will also be used for thematic studies and impact assessments of projects, to provide support for developing public policies and policy dialogue, to provide short-term technical assistance and to support aid efficiency initiatives such as donor coordination and labour division.

The action will as well contribute to improving public awareness, understanding and perception of the EU's role in the country, particularly on the priority areas identified. There is a need for the general public to better understand the dimensions of EU-Guatemala collaboration. Strategic communication and public diplomacy activities will be designed to raise awareness, understanding and approval of the EU-Guatemala cooperation, including through large-scale national campaigns. These activities will target general public audiences, particularly but not exclusively in the 18-35 age cohort. In addition, Public Diplomacy initiatives should aim at reinforcing and developing trusted channels of engagement and fostering networks that can support the achievement of shared priorities by involving key target audiences and partners such as youth, students, academics, influencers, business, civil society and the cultural sector.

The Specific Objectives of this action are to provide support to the effective preparation/formulation, implementation and management of the EU-Guatemala cooperation, and to increase public knowledge and perception of the EU cooperation with Guatemala through strategic communication and public diplomacy activities, while enhancing the capacities of the Government and relevant stakeholders to efficiently implement national development objectives and effectively participate in EU programmes.

More specifically, the Cooperation Facility will aim at:

- Supporting the preparation, implementation, audit and evaluation of the EU cooperation, including via technical assistance.
- Facilitating the coordination among Team Europe actors and initiatives at country level.
- Supporting the implementation of the EU-Member States civil society road-map, the Gender Action Plan of the EU Delegation in Guatemala 2021-2025 and the Human Rights and Democracy country strategy (2021-2024 cycle).
- Supporting policy dialogues: events, conferences, studies, fellowships, exchange platforms to support sector dialogues leading to policy reforms and engagement with governments and other stakeholders.

² "Green Deal" and "Alliance for Sustainable growth and jobs creation" TEIs. Spain (EUR 1.6 million in joint co-financing), Germany (to be determined in joint co-financing) and Sweden (EUR 5 million in parallel co-financing) have confirmed their financial contribution to the "Green Deal" TEI.

³ C(2021) 9072, 14.12.2021

- Supporting the participation of the country in EU Programmes and cooperation with EU Agencies, where relevant. In this regard, improving participation of Guatemala in Horizon Europe programme by strengthening cooperation between academia, research centres and private sector and alliances with EU partners will be a key objective of the Facility.
- Strategic communication, covering political communication and public-facing campaigns, designed to raise awareness of the EU's role and impact in the country and, as relevant, wider region.
- Public diplomacy initiatives allowing to engage durably with our target audiences and partners (beyond the life cycle of specific cooperation projects), which is key to build trust, enhance the understanding of the EU, support the implementation of our policy priorities and, ultimately, facilitate future cooperation across policy areas (incl. sectoral diplomacies such as economic diplomacy, climate diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, science diplomacy).

2 RATIONALE

2.1 Context

Guatemala has a multi-party political system with important weaknesses. As a result, many political parties are built upon personalised interests and therefore, have short life spans. Political actors have increasingly gained control and influence over the judicial organs and the Constitutional Court after the closure in 2019 of the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG). This has represented a negative impact in the separation and balances of powers further undermining democratic checks and balances.

Regarding human rights, the institutional framework has been weakened as the Government of Guatemala merged three key entities related to human rights into a new Presidential Commission for Peace and Human Rights (COPADEH), whose scope, responsibilities, functioning and budget have not yet been defined. Within the overall deterioration of human rights in the country, women and girls are particularly at risk. LGBTI rights are not recognised with even new legal initiatives detrimental to the cause. Indigenous groups constituting about half of the population are widely discriminated. This is reflected in social interaction, in work environments and indirectly by government decisions to focus the social investments, health initiatives, key services etc. in urban rather than rural areas, where the majority of the indigenous people live.

As from the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, Guatemala still faces challenges related to the sanitary crisis, which affected the living conditions of most citizens. Nevertheless, in an international context of high uncertainty, Guatemala's macroeconomic fundamentals remain stable. In fact, according to the latest International Monetary Fund (IMF)'s Article IV Staff Report (19 May 2021)⁴, the economy's 1.5% contraction in 2020 fares well in global and regional comparison. Resilient remittances and an unprecedented fiscal impulse of 2.3% of GDP and monetary policy support have mitigated the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, a 4.5% rebound in economic growth is projected for 2021. Inflation is under control ($4 \pm 1\%$) and public debt, although it increased from 26.5% to 31.6% of GDP to finance the aforementioned policy support, is deemed sustainable (projected at 34% of GDP on average during 2021–26). Accordingly, the fiscal deficit increased to 4.9% in 2020, but is foreseen to come down to a more manageable 3.4% in 2021 and to decrease further in the medium-term to gradually attain the historical mark of 2% by 2026. Moreover, the exchange rate of the national currency (Quetzal) against the USD has remained stable.

Low fiscal revenues continue to be a significant obstacle for Guatemala and hinders its ability to react to all types of shocks and natural hazards (World Risk Report 2020)⁵. For 2022, tax revenues are expected to increase to 11.7% of GDP, which is still very low considering Guatemala's deep social and economic inequalities.

⁴ <https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2021/05/04/mcs050421-guatemala-staff-concluding-statement-of-the-2021-article-iv-mission>

⁵ <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/worldriskreport-2020-focus-forced-displacement-and-migration>

2.2 Problem Analysis

Short problem analysis: The Secretariat of Planning and Programming of the Presidency (SEGEPLAN) is in charge of monitoring its execution and evaluating the achievement of the objectives and goals of public policies and cooperation interventions. Unfortunately, SEGEPLAN lacks resources to play this role in a proactive manner and ensure effective inter-institutional coordination among Government institutions and with the donors' community. As a result, the content and quality of public policies and their implementation have so far failed to achieve the intended results and the SDGs are still a long way from being achieved.

Institutional weaknesses are not limited to SEGEPLAN but affect the entire public administration of Guatemala and other important actors when it comes to designing or executing EU cooperation.

Likewise, although there is a lot of interest on the part of Guatemala in increasing its participation in EU programmes such as Horizon Europe or Erasmus+, the absence of a well-developed ecosystem of actors and the lack of experience in setting up consortia or developing quality projects prevents greater participation of Guatemalan institutions in these or other programmes.

On the other hand, in Guatemala, fake news and disinformation can negatively influence the perception of citizen about EU actions in the country. Until 2021, the EUDEL in Guatemala did not have a fully-fledged Political Section, thus limiting communication and public diplomacy actions. The situation has been reversed in 2021 therefore reinforcing the future impact of strategic communication and public diplomacy initiatives. Despite the organisation of an important number a communication / public diplomacy events during the last MIP 2014-2020, those were concentrated on the geographical cooperation by mean of resources allocated in the framework of cooperation programmes. No resources were allocated to plan long term public diplomacy initiatives engaging with a selection of local target audiences, influencers and multipliers. Moreover, communication and visibility plans of the geographical and thematic programmes were not integrated in a long-term strategic communication and public diplomacy plan.

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

- The Secretariat of Planning and Programming of the Presidency (SEGEPLAN) in its role of National Coordinator of Cooperation and responsible for the content, quality and coordination of public policies.
- The Secretariat of Science, Technology and Innovation (SENACYT), responsible for promoting the generation and use of science, technology and innovation, building collaboration spaces between the academic, public, private and civil society sectors.
- Public and private universities interested in participating in Erasmus+ and with research and/or innovation programs in the design or execution phase.
- Private sector with research and/or innovation programs in the design or execution phase.
- There is a wide universe of stakeholders, according to the target audience defined in a long-term Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy among others: youth and civil society, policy think tanks and academia, media, private sector, public institutions, wider public, to be reached via targeted campaigns.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

The Overall Objective (impact) of this action is to contribute to the implementation of the Government of Guatemala's National Development Plan⁶.

⁶ <https://observatorioplanificacion.cepal.org/es/planes/plan-nacional-de-desarrollo-katun-nuestra-guatemala-2032>

The Outcomes corresponding to the two components of the Action are as follows:

1. Public Sector Institutional Strengthening: To build capacity for a more effective and efficient implementation of public policies to enhance results, impact and visibility of MIP 2021-2027 priority areas, as well as support the participation of the country in EU Programmes and cooperation with EU Agencies, where relevant.
2. EU Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy: To expand and reinforce EU awareness, understanding and support in the country, including by promoting the Global Gateway flagships and the Team Europe approach and initiatives.

The Outputs to be delivered by this action contributing to the corresponding outcome 1 are:

- 1.1 A well-structured and strategic capacity building process and public values chain facilitated.
- 1.2 Improved participation of Guatemala in EU programmes such as Horizon Europe or Erasmus+ by strengthening cooperation between academia, research centres and private sector and alliances with EU partners.
- 1.3 Preparation, implementation, audit and evaluation of the EU's cooperation and Team Europe Initiatives.

The Outputs to be delivered by this action contributing to the corresponding outcome 2 are:

- 2.1 A strategic communication and public diplomacy plan designed, implemented and monitored according to clearly defined key performance indicators.

3.2 Indicative Activities

Activities related to Output 1.1:

- Provision of long-term and short-term technical assistance specific studies, activities of dissemination, peer-to-peer training to support the processes of reform and modernization of the State, and the capacity of the government to improve decision making, analyse and prioritise public policies. Focus on result-oriented planning, budgeting and reporting, enhanced transparency, and domestic revenue mobilisation in complementarity with budget support actions in Guatemala.
- Technical assistance to the beneficiary on drafting political statements on international commitments.
- Support local authorities through technical assistance and capacity building.
- Support to increase the quality of statistical information and analysis.
- Contribution to the realization of independent recurrent assessments such as the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA), the Tax Administration Diagnostic Assessment Tool (TADAT), the Public Investment Management Assessment (PIMA) (integrating gender and climate modules when available), and technical assistance to support and monitor the resulting actions plans.

Activities related to Output 1.2:

- Provision of trainings to mainstream gender approach into public value chains, policy making, planning and budgeting.
- Contribution to the realization of Green PEFA assessment and support and monitor the resulting action plan.

Activities related to Output 1.3:

- Technical Assistance to support the drafting of documents to be formulated in the framework of MIP 2021-2027.

- Trainings and specific studies to facilitate Joint Programming / coordination among Team Europe actors at country level and support actualisation and implementation of Joint Programming since 2019.
- Technical Assistance to support authorities in formulating Budget Support actions and activities under the EFSD+.

Activities related to Output 2.1:

- Design and roll out at national level of (a) major public campaign(s) aimed at ordinary citizens, with the objective of measurably increasing the profile, awareness, understanding and approval of the EU's partnership with the country. All such campaigns will be data-driven, rigorously tracking hard KPIs that will allow content to be constantly adjusted in line with evidence of the material and approaches that resonate most successfully with the audience.
- Political communication designed to promote understanding and awareness of the Union's values, interests and specific policies, in particular Global Gateway priorities and enabling sectors, through Global Gateway flagships and relevant Team Europe initiatives.
- Strengthen networks and long-term relationships with key target audiences and partners (e.g. youth, students, academics, think tanks, civil society organisations, business, creative industries), including leveraging existing EU programmes, in order to facilitate future cooperation across policy areas.
- (if/as required) Conduct research to ensure strategic communication and public diplomacy activities are data-driven and measurable. This may include audience analysis and perception surveys, media landscape, as well as monitoring and evaluation activities to measure impact of activities undertaken.

3.3 Mainstreaming

Environmental Protection & Climate Change

Outcomes of the EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) screening (relevant for projects and/or specific interventions within a project)

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).

Outcome of the CRA (Climate Risk Assessment) screening (relevant for projects and/or specific interventions within a project)

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 the Action will ensure in its activities with a rights based and gender mainstreaming approach. Particular emphasis will be placed on mainstreaming gender across the three priority areas and youth participation at all levels of the interventions. The Action will also ensure that themes such as climate change, inclusive and sustainable economic development, decent jobs creation, the promotion and respect of human rights and digitization are also taken into account in the formulation and implementation of other programmes foreseen in the framework of MIP 2021-2027.

Human Rights

In order to achieve the MIP 2021-2027 objectives, the EU needs to engage in broad partnerships with the government, the civil society, the private sector and the development community, underpinned by innovative approaches and financing models. The promotion of human rights of the most excluded as well as the promotion of gender equality, will be at the core of all EU interventions. The support measures will play a role of fundamental vigilance so that all interventions will duly take into account the promotion and respect of human rights. For that, the implementation and follow-up of the Human Rights and Democracy Strategy formulated in 2021 will be a key instrument.

Disability

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D0.

Democracy

Not applicable.

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

Not applicable.

Disaster Risk Reduction

Not applicable.

3.4 Risks and Lessons Learnt

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)	Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)	Mitigating measures
Planning, processes and systems	Guatemala suffers from weak governance and insufficient financial and technical resources for the implementation of sector policies.	Medium	High	The EU will reinforce policy dialogue in the three priority areas of MIP and in public financial management and domestic revenue mobilization. The EU and Member States will establish strategic partnerships with national institutions and other donors to support increased transparency and the allocation of sufficient resources to key sectors. Finally, the EU will promote structured, high profile, political dialogue with the institutional counterparts to follow up on agreed priorities or results.
Planning, processes and systems	Competing priorities and limited human resources at SEGEPLAN cause difficulties to connect public and private stakeholders	Medium	High	Increased efforts for multi sector approaches through inter-ministerial coordination; ensure active engagement with the intended beneficiaries/stakeholders to properly understand the feasibility and interest/commitment/availability for each of the activities. Special efforts will be made to ensure the effective participation of priority groups, including women, youth, children, indigenous peoples and people with disabilities.

Lessons Learnt:

The Public Administration Support Facility (PASF) currently under its final evaluation, aimed at institutional strengthening of public finances, coordination and monitoring of public policies, and participation of Guatemala in

the EU-Central America Association Agreement⁷ has shown that well-targeted and demand-driven assistance achieves process improvement, capacity building and prepares the public administration for a more active participation in EU cooperation actions. In this regard, the first component of the action will follow the same approach as PASF, offering the main stakeholders targeted technical assistance and support based on their weaknesses and needs to achieve the expected results.

Regarding Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy:

- Through the communication & visibility contract under the PASF programme, the EUD built a strong corporate image essentially oriented to cooperation priorities.
- Analysis and discussions pointed out the need to have a more articulated, professional and structured Public Diplomacy, aimed at elaborating strategies and initiatives not only restricted to cooperation activities but integrating the political dimension. The latter has become a necessity to promote the EU image and values.
- Visibility has been essentially linked to specific cooperation programmes or projects.

The proposed Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy component will facilitate a more solid and articulated strategy and a closer integration of Commission and EEAS actions.

3.5 The Intervention Logic

The underlying intervention logic for this action is to support the EU-Guatemala partnership. It will enable the EU to contribute to a more effective and efficient implementation of the EU's cooperation and communication strategies.

The intervention logic is based on:

- Providing long and short-term Technical Assistance and studies and implementing a continuous policy dialogue from the start of the implementation, in a timely, orderly, result-oriented, and concerted manner with the Government, CSOs and other key stakeholders.
- Articulating the EU Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy within the EUD (Cooperation Section and Political Section) and outside (EUD and Member States) on a long-term strategic horizon.
- Then: the action will contribute directly to strengthen the EU Cooperation by building capacity for a more effective and efficient implementation of public policies so that the three priority areas of the MIP reach maximum results, impact, and visibility and improving gender sensitive strategic plans and budgets.
- The EU's role as a key cooperation actor and a key interlocutor on policy and political aspects for authorities will be durably consolidated.

3.6 Logical Framework Matrix

Given the nature of this Action a Logical Framework Matrix is not required at Action level.

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.

⁷ <https://trade.ec.europa.eu/access-to-markets/en/content/eu-central-america-association-agreement>

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 36 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 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 measures⁸.

4.3.1 Direct Management (Procurement)

Procurement contracts are foreseen to contribute to achieving the Public Sector Institutional Strengthening outcome.

One contract is foreseen to contribute to achieving the EU Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy outcome. A tender under a suspensive clause will be launched in October 2022 prior to the adoption of this Financing Decision. This is justified because the former communication & visibility contract has ended and it is essential to maintain the continuity of strategic communication actions and strengthen public diplomacy, especially from the second half of 2023, after the presidential elections foreseen for August 2023 and the nomination of the new government.

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	
1. Objective Public Sector Institutional Strengthening composed of	1,999,998
Procurement (direct management) – cf. section 4.3.1	

⁸ 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.

2. Objective EU Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy composed of	2,050,002
Procurement (direct management) – cf. section 4.3.1	
Procurement – total envelope under section 4.3.1	4,050,000
Evaluation – cf. section 5.2 Audit – cf. section 5.3	may be covered by another Decision
Strategic communication and public diplomacy	-
Contingencies	-
Totals	4,050,000

4.6 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

A matrix of key indicators for the follow up and monitoring of the project will be designed at intervention level for each of the service contracts, this will include impact indicators to monitor the implementation and the communication and public diplomacy strategy for EU Delegation 2023-2027.

Periodic reports on implementation and joint supervision missions will be the key mechanisms of the monitoring process. Regular technical meetings and an annual joint review will provide for monitoring arrangements. 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).

5.2 Evaluation

Having regard to the nature of the action, a final evaluation(s) will not be carried out for this action or its components.

In case an evaluation is not planned, the Commission may, during implementation, decide to undertake such an evaluation for duly justified reasons either on its own decision or on the initiative of the partner.

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

Considering today's contested information environment (marked by disinformation) and the importance of building coalitions with citizens and non-state actors to advance EU policy priorities, developing trusted channels of engagement through strategic communication and public diplomacy has become an essential element of our foreign policy. These activities will aim to ensure that awareness, understanding and perception of the EU's partnership with the country (and wider region) is commensurate with the scale and ambition of our sustained engagement.

Strategic communication activities will cover public campaigns and political communication. This includes day-to-day communication on political and policy priorities, including Global Gateway flagships and Team Europe initiatives, as well as brand awareness campaigns directed at the general public. Activities will also include social media impact monitoring, a mid-term review of the strategy's impact and specialized training for EU staff. As individual programmes will no longer have dedicated visibility actions, there will be a coordinated approach for the promotion of targeted messaging and communication for development cooperation initiatives, also across programmes and implementing partners when relevant.

Dedicated long term Public diplomacy initiatives allowing to engage durably with our target audiences and partners (beyond the life cycle of specific cooperation projects) are key to build trust, enhance the understanding of the EU, support the implementation of our policy priorities and, ultimately, facilitate future cooperation across policy areas (incl. sectoral diplomacies such as economic diplomacy, climate diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, science diplomacy). There will be dedicated funds to support visibility and communication initiatives portraying EU's cooperation work in Guatemala and for EU public diplomacy initiatives.

In line with priorities of the EU in the country, target audiences identified include journalists, editors and bloggers, opinion leaders, pro-democratic civil society groups and leaders, young people, women, indigenous people and afro-descendent groups, people with disabilities and beneficiaries of EU development cooperation – who are often the preferred voices to testify about cooperation impacts in our communication activities. In order to coordinate and implement these activities, in some cases other partners have been identified: policy makers; national institutions at a technical level; diplomatic community and international organisations; NGOs and CSOs (both national and international); business community and academia.

This proposed action will support an update of the current communication and public diplomacy strategy on the basis of lessons learned so far and an ongoing external evaluation, so that it is fine-tuned to the current context. It will also promote international values and principles as well as EU commitments to inclusive and sustainable economic growth, environment and climate change adaptation/mitigation and inclusion and equality.