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THIS ACTION IS FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

ANNEX II

to the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the multiannual action plan of the thematic programme Civil Society Organisations for years 2025 - 2027

Action Document for Support to Civil Society in Partner Countries

MULTIANNUAL ACTION PLAN 2025-2027

This document constitutes the multiannual 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	Support to Civil Society in Partner Countries OPSYS number: ACT-62807 (INTPA) and ACT-62862 (Neighbourhood) Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe)
2. Team Europe Initiative	No
3. Zone benefiting from the action	The action shall be carried out worldwide
4. Programming document	Multiannual Indicative Programme: Civil Society Organisations Thematic Programme 2021-2027 ¹
5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives / expected results	<i>“PRIORITY 1: An inclusive, participatory, empowered, and independent civil society and democratic space in partner countries; and an inclusive and open dialogue with and between Civil Society Organisations.”</i>
PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION	
6. Priority Area(s), sectors	Governance, Peace and Security, Human Development (DAC: 151 Government & Civil Society-general)
7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG (1 only): 17 Other significant SDGs (up to 9) and where appropriate, targets: 13, 16
8 a) DAC code(s)	15150 - Democratic participation and civil society - 95% 15170 - Women's rights organizations and movements, and government institutions: 5%

¹ Within the maximum contribution of the European Union, the authorising officer responsible may adjust the allocation to the respective budgetary years subject to the availability of the commitment appropriations.

8 b) Main Delivery Channel	20000: Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Civil Society			
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance			
10. Markers (from DAC form)	General policy objective @	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment @	<input 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"/>
	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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Internal markers and Tags:	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Digitalisation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital connectivity digital governance digital entrepreneurship digital skills/literacy digital services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Connectivity @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	digital connectivity energy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	

	transport health education and research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Migration @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reduction of Inequalities @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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: 14.020220 Civil Society Organisations</p> <p>The contribution is for an amount of EUR 428 189 429 from the general budget of the European Union</p> <p>2025 for an amount of EUR 146 207 265 from the general budget of the European Union</p> <p>2026 for an amount of EUR 139 972 269 from the general budget of the European Union</p> <p>2027 for an amount of EUR 142 009 895 from the general budget of the European Union</p> <p>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	Direct management through grants and procurement			

1.2 Summary of the Action

<p>This Action is funded by the Civil Society Organisations (CSO) Thematic Programme 2021-2027, under the Multiannual Action Plan 2025-2027. The Action intends to contribute to Specific-Objective 1.3: <i>Support CSOs as actors of good governance and development in partner countries</i> and to the achievement of the related result 1.3: <i>CSO ability to engage as actors of good governance and development at country level is improved</i>.</p> <p>The Action rolls out the EU support to country-level CSO initiatives aimed at implementing priorities reflected in the NDICI-Global Europe, Annex III CSO Thematic Programme and the subsequent Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP) for the same. In line with the policy of geographisation, a majority of funds under the CSO MAAP 2025-2027, amounting to around EUR 428.2 million, are allocated under the Action to support civil society in partner countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Americas and the Caribbean, and in Neighbourhood countries and Russia². As a result, for the whole 2021-27 period, the country allocations will represent 90 % of Priority I (excluding DEAR and Support Measures).</p> <p>Activities funded under the Action will support a broad range of civil society actors including and prioritising, but not limited to, women and youth organisations. In the framework of the Country Roadmaps for EU and Member States engagement with civil society (so called, Civil Society Roadmaps), all initiatives under the Action will aim at contributing to strengthening civil society partner's institutional and operational capacity</p>
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² Neighbourhood countries and Russia will receive 15% of the overall support to civil society in partner countries.

through a comprehensive approach;³ enabling and ensuring their participation; and on **improving the environment** in which they operate. Particular attention will be paid to CSOs' capacities to benefit from the digital transformation.

This Action is aligned with the 2012 Communication on "The roots of democracy and sustainable development: Europe's engagement with Civil Society in external relations" as well as the DAC Recommendation on Enabling Civil Society in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance.⁴ It will contribute to all EU priority areas, such as Good Governance, gender equality, climate, environment and energy or sustainable jobs and growth. The main sector for funding initiatives will accordingly be Government & Civil Society. It will also contribute to meeting EU's commitment to preserve and broaden an enabling space for an active, organised, transparent and strengthened civil society, in accordance with the **Samoa Agreement** with African, Caribbean and Pacific States.

Support to, and dialogue with, CSOs should also take place in the context of the 360° approach **of the Global Gateway's Strategy**⁵, where green, clean, and climate-proofed investment in hard infrastructure goes together, among others, with compliance with social, environmental and governance standards, in order to **ensure that the initiatives reach local communities**, mitigate risks and strengthen sustainability and biodiversity protection.

The Action will strongly **complement and reinforce country and regional programmes, particularly Global Gateway flagships**, through support for CSOs working in EU priority areas, and through its focus on improving the environment in which CSOs operate. This will enable them to participate in an informed way in dialogue with the EU and national and local actors, representing and voicing the concerns of **people, including those in vulnerable and marginalized situations**, and contribute to combating inequalities and boost inclusivity in our partner countries. The Action will furthermore strengthen CSOs ability to implement and analyse initiatives funded under the country and regional programmes thereby contributing to their successful implementation.

1.3 Zone benefitting from the Action.

The Action shall be carried out in:

Americas and the Caribbean

Argentina, Barbados and Easter Caribbean (Barbados, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, Sta Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines), Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela.

Asia and the Pacific⁶

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Fiji and 13 Pacific islands countries (Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu), Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan, Korea (DPRK - North), Kyrgyz Republic, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar/Burma, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Maldives, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Yemen.

³ Including institutional and operational capacities in the areas of governance; accountability; program, project, and financial management; research and analysis, advocacy; sector-specific capacity building; access to funding.

⁴ <https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/Instruments/instruments/OECD-LEGAL-5021>

⁵ Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and the European Investment Bank. The Global Gateway. JOIN (2021) 30 final. Brussels, 1.12.2021. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52021JC0030>

⁶ out of which Russia and North Korea are not included in the list of ODA recipients.

Sub-Saharan Africa

Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Sao Tome & Principe, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius and Seychelles, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Neighbourhood and Russia

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, Russia, Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, West Bank & Gaza.

2 RATIONALE

2.1 Context

The EU is a longstanding global champion for civil society as development and good governance actors in its own right by promoting its **independence, strengthening its capacity and supporting its participation in policy-making**, as well as an **enabling environment** for Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in partner countries.⁷ CSOs are indeed key actors in **protecting and promoting democracy, rule of law and human rights**, which are fundamental values of the European Union. They play key role **for conflict prevention**, resilience, peace and security in fragile and/or conflict-affected contexts and are furthermore often the basis of resilience at community level. They are key partners in **devising and implementing policies and programmes that meet people's needs, reduce inequalities, and fulfil the central commitment of the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind**. CSOs also advocate policies, societal choices and nature-based solutions that support a low-carbon resilient development in harmony with the planet's sustainability, contributing to the implementation of the Paris Agreement, and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF).

However, in a global context marked by **widespread challenges to democratic values and principles**, as well as rise of anti-rights movements, the ability of civil society to play its multiple roles continue to be hampered. Since the adoption of the Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP) for the CSO programme (2021), there has been a continued worsening of the geopolitical environment coupled with a growing narrative openly **questioning the rules-based order, multilateralism, fundamental rights and democracy**. A large majority of the world population still live in countries where civic freedoms are severely constrained and there is a risk that a growing number of countries worldwide embrace non-democratic models, further restricting freedoms of assembly, association and expression, limiting the ability of CSOs working notably on democracy and good governance to operate.

It remains therefore **key for the EU to maintain and/or strengthen its partnerships with accountable and transparent organisations** which **share the commitment** to sustainable development, the fight against climate change, biodiversity protection, and to the fundamental values **of peace, freedom, equal rights, human rights, dignity, gender equality and democracy**. The evolved global context since the adoption of the MIP has therefore reinforced the relevance of the objectives and priorities pursued under the NDICI-Global Europe regulation and

⁷ Definition as per NDICI-GLOBAL Europe: Civil society organisations embrace a wide range of actors with multiple roles and mandates which includes all non-State, not-for-profit independent and non-violent structures, through which people organise the pursuit of shared objectives and ideals, whether political, cultural, religious, environmental, social or economic. Operating from local, national, regional and international levels, they comprise urban and rural, formal and informal organisations.

reflected in CSO MIP to foster *an independent, empowered, inclusive and participatory civil society* as an essential component of democratic societies, that is able to deliver on good governance and sustainable development goals to ensure human well-being, a healthy planet, and economic prosperity for all people.

Against this background, support for CSO at country level will, overall, maintain the approach adopted under the Multiannual Action Plan 21-24. Activities will support an **informed, independent, inclusive and constructive local CSOs** participation in policy dialogue and advocacy with EU partner countries stakeholders, and EU Delegations. Such an EU support to CSOs is even more important in the context of the **Global Gateway Strategy**, the EU's contribution to narrowing the global investment gap worldwide by supporting high quality green and clean infrastructure, respecting the highest social, environmental and governance standards, in line with the EU's values and standards, that are shared by civil society.⁸

2.2 Problem Analysis

Short problem analysis:

In order for CSOs to contribute effectively to policy dialogue, as well as the design, implementation and monitoring of EU and national development policies, plans and programmes, including the EU humanitarian response, they **need to be empowered and allowed to participate** in policy-making processes in a meaningful and structured way. Additionally, they must be able to operate in an enabling environment in all of EU partner countries.

However, **inclusive and participatory dialogue and policymaking is often flawed** in partner countries. It requires political will and leadership, adequately structured mechanisms for consultation and accountability, space for interaction and participations as well as operating rules and legal frameworks, specific skills and analytical capacities and competences on the side of public authorities/duty bearers and accessibility to the right to information. In the absence of the above, the impact of CSOs' participation in policy dialogue is very limited.

CSOs themselves also often facing **capacity constraints** that limit their ability to significantly influence and contribute to dialogue, policies, legislation, development plans and budgets, and access to the right information. Such capacity constraints can be considered as a major cross-cutting challenge faced by CSOs, affecting their efforts to operate effectively in their various areas of work. Besides, CSOs face internal capacity constraints including in relation to their **own governance and accountability**, which can substantially hamper their credibility and effectiveness.

On the other hand, **the ability of civil society to act freely as actors in their own right is continuously diminishing, with very few positive examples of the opposite**. Civil society actors, including human rights and environment defenders are increasingly threatened in the exercise of their activities. This shrinking space for civil society is part of a general authoritarian pushback against democracy. It has had a serious negative impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights and poses a significant obstacle to civil society organisations at large to operate as actors of good governance and development.⁹ Regimes across the world now use an array of tactics ranging from legal, administrative, and financial regulations to defamation and violence, hate speech, and disinformation etc.¹⁰ State and non-state actors alike use intimidation, harassment, threats or attacks to silence individuals and

⁸ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/stronger-europe-world/global-gateway_en

⁹ The repression of civic freedoms has been particularly acute for LGBTIQ+ people, environmental rights defenders and women's rights defenders.

¹⁰ Noticeable negative developments include increasingly strict approval and licensing procedures for CSOs; requiring funds to be channelled through government-controlled intermediaries; punitive taxes and administrative fees; and arduous and

organisations. According to the Civicus Monitor, in 2023, 28 countries or territories had closed civic space, 50 with repressed civic space and 40 with obstructed civic space, meaning that 118 out of 198 countries and territories are experiencing severe restrictions in fundamental freedoms. In comparison, 43 countries have narrowed civic space and just 37 have an open rating. It means almost **a third of the world's population** lives in countries with **closed civic space**, which is the **highest percentage since 2018**, when CIVICUS began systematically tracking civic space conditions around the world.

In other words, **strong EU support to civil society remains paramount** for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), defending democracy, human rights and the environment, and meeting EU's ambitions worldwide, including when it comes to the success of the EU's **Global Gateway Strategy**.¹¹ As a value driven initiative, the Global Gateway communication recognises that “without proper **transparency, good governance** and **high standards** projects can be badly chosen or designed, left incomplete or be used to fuel **corruption**”. The Global Gateway strategy adheres “to the **rule of law**, upholding **high standards of human, social, and workers' rights**”. It seeks to “ensure affordable and equal access to the services and benefits [...], notably **for women and girls** and those at risk of disadvantage or **exclusion**.” In support of these elements, civil society it is *de facto* a key ally for the success of the Global Gateway. Equally important, the Global Gateway approach emphasises the role of local communities that, together with business and partners “**must have their full say** through proper public consultations and civil society involvement.” In this context, it is important to underline that civil society participation is viewed as **an opportunity** to mitigate political, environmental, social and reputational risk by raising attention to unforeseen consequences and ensuring greater acceptance among a wider range of stakeholders. Additionally, civil society participation will help to support **better impact and long-term enhanced sustainability**, hence contributing to quality investments. It means that working with CSOs can help the EU to further reinforce its position as a global value-driven leader in sustainable development and responsible business conduct. CSOs are therefore key stakeholders to help the Global Gateway strategy **upholding its ambitions, values and principles, in its investment priorities** that are digital, health, education and research as well as **climate and energy**, and transport.

As a matter of fact, a strong civil society in partner countries remain essential for the success of the **EU's climate policy, and the Paris Agreement implementation**, not only by raising citizens awareness regarding the danger of climate change or promoting behavioural changes, but in particular by holding governments across the world accountable so that they meet their commitments and also strengthen their ambitions. This is even more relevant since current policies presently in place around the world (as of December 2023) are projected to result in about **2.7°C warming above pre-industrial levels** (by the end of the century) while Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) alone will limit warming to only 2.5°C, well above the ambition of the Paris Agreement.¹² Likewise, CSOs play a key role in supporting the successful implementation of the KMGBF that aims to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by advocating with partner countries for ambitious commitments and its actual implementation, in particular in the framework of **National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans**.

discriminatory administrative requirements. Youngs, R. and A. Echague, “Shrinking space for Civil Society: the EU response”, European Parliament, Policy Department, Directorate-General for External Policies, April 2017, p. 9.

¹¹ The Global Gateway strategy is the EU's contribution to narrowing the global investment gap worldwide, expected to reach EUR 13 trillion by 2040. It focuses on physical infrastructure – such as fibre optic cables, clean transport corridors, clean power transmission lines - to strengthen digital, transport and energy networks. It will mobilise up to €300 billion in investments in global infrastructure between 2021 and 2027, in a Team Europe approach involving EU Member States, European and national financial institutions, and the private sector, in order to leverage investments in EU partner countries. It is based on the following key principles: democratic values and high standards; good Governance and transparency; equal partnerships; green and clean infrastructures; security and catalysing private sector investment.

¹² <https://climateactiontracker.org/global/temperatures/>

This Action seeks to address the above-mentioned challenges by **supporting a wide spectrum of local civil society**¹³ through **capacity-building in EU priority policy areas**, its meaningful **participation** in policy-making, and the promotion of an enabling **environment**, in partner countries. Under the Action, EU Delegations should pay particular attention to **local women and youth organisations as well as seek to empower CSOs through digital technologies, taking into account the related risks**. However, specific initiatives and actions corresponding to these priorities will be **decided by EU Delegations** in the respective partner country, in dialogue with civil society partners. Given the **actor-based nature** of the Civil Society thematic programme, **service delivery** through CSOs should only happen under certain circumstances (in fragile and conflict-affected countries and/or in severely restricted environment for CSOs, i.e., where no other type of support is feasible or highly limited etc.) and/or towards specific objectives (support that can be regarded as catalytic and/or innovative etc.).

A key tool regarding support to CSOs remains **the EU country roadmaps for engagement with civil society (CSO country roadmap)** that serve as Team Europe (EU and EU MS) country strategies to engage meaningfully and continuously with civil society. It builds on the various instruments of the EU and MS in a country, as well as like-minded donors, leveraging them to advance towards longer term goals of civil society strengthening. It is a strategic tool to ensure complementarity between initiatives supporting civil society, as well as an effective and meaningful inclusion of civil society in **the priority areas of the Commission**¹⁴, and **specifically those identified by the EU Delegations, including within Team Europe Initiatives**.

Over the MAAP 21-24, **third generation CSO Country Roadmaps** have been adopted for 98 countries (88 in the non-Neighbourhood/10 in the Neighbourhood). It led to : i) Deeper knowledge of the civil society landscape at country level and enhanced dialogue in priority areas identified; ii) An increased coordination of efforts in a Team Europe approach: 97% of the new Roadmaps were elaborated and adopted jointly with EU MS and 15% included other like-minded donors; iii) Stronger links with Gender Action Plan (GAP) III and CSOs engaged in the field of human rights and democracy, as well as (more recently) with the Youth Action Plan. **Over the MAAP 25-27**, EU Delegations will be invited to **update their CSO roadmaps** in order to take into account recent **political developments** in the partner countries.

EU Delegations should finally aim to step up their engagement with civil society through “**structured dialogues**” organised in a planned, regular, timely, predictable and transparent manner in order to build a more **efficient, strategic and close relationship** with CSOs, that will benefit EU’s overall actions success in the partner countries.¹⁵

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

¹³ They include, but are not limited to: Nongovernmental organisations, organisations representing indigenous peoples, women's and youth organisations, diaspora organisations, migrants' organisations, local traders' associations and citizens' groups, cooperatives, employers' associations and trade unions (social partners), organisations representing economic and social interests, organisations fighting corruption and fraud and promoting good governance, civil rights organisations and organisations combating discrimination, local organisations (including networks) involved in decentralised regional cooperation and integration, consumer organisations, environmental, teaching, cultural, research and scientific organisations, churches and religious associations and communities, philosophical and non-confessional organisations, the not-for-profit media and any non-governmental associations and independent foundations, including independent political foundations.

¹⁴ https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/policies_en

¹⁵ The concept of structured dialogue refers to the approach followed in the process of engagement and is used in contrast to the term “ad-hoc consultations” or “one-off consultations”, where the EU seeks a specific input. In Structured Dialogue, stakeholders are invited to provide their input in a **well-planned set-up (through terms of references)**, and they receive feedback of the outcomes of the consultations as well as information about the overall process.

The direct beneficiaries are, at country level, the **civil society organisations and their networks and/or platforms**. Civil Society is highly heterogeneous and encompasses a wide range of actors with multiple roles and mandates which includes all non-State, not-for-profit independent and non-violent structures, through which people organise to pursue shared objectives and ideals, whether political, cultural, religious, environmental, social or economic. Under this action, priority will be given to a wide range of **local CSOs, in particular women and youth organisations**, and, among them, organisations representing the most marginalised voices, in accordance with the overarching priorities of the CSO Thematic Programme 2021-2027.

The final beneficiaries are all citizens and inhabitants (women and men, boys and girls) of the different EU partner countries. They will benefit from CSO work on advocacy for more inclusive and effective socio-economic development, respect for human rights, accountability and good governance and, to a more limited extent, through direct implementation of aid by CSOs.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

The Overall Objective (Impact) of this action is *to strengthen CSOs as independent actors of good governance and development in their own right*.

The Specific Objective [Outcome] of this Action is accordingly:

1. *Strengthen local civil society Organisations' (CSOs) engagement as actors of good governance and development at country level through increased enabling environment and stronger participation in policy-making in partner countries.*

The Outputs to be delivered by this action contributing to the corresponding Specific Objective (Outcome) are:

1.1 contributing to Specific Objective 1: Strengthened capacities of local CSOs' to engage in policy dialogue at national level and in dialogue, implementation and analysis of EU and national development plans and programmes.

1.2 contributing to Specific Objective 1: Improved capacity and ability of local civil society partners to uphold and promote an enabling environment in respective partner country.

1.3 contributing to Specific Objective 1: Strengthened capacity of local CSOs to engage in gender equality and youth inclusion and strengthened capacity of local women's and youth partner CSOs.

1.4 contributing to Specific Objective 1: Strengthened capacity of local CSOs to engage in climate action (adaptation and mitigation), including environmental protection and the green transition.

3.2 Indicative Activities

Activities related to Output 1.1 can include, but are not limited to, activities contributing to:

- Initiating and contributing to national policy dialogue on civil society and civil society contribution to governance and development;

- Enabling civil society participation in and contribution to policy dialogue and decision-making processes at all levels;
- Supporting civil local society contributions to regional and international dialogue fora, processes and platforms;
- Supporting CSOs organizational capacity related to internal governance; programme, project and financial management; advocacy etc.;
- Supporting CSOs sector-specific technical knowledge or expertise;
- supporting CSOs research, analysis and advocacy capacity;
- Supporting CSOs effectiveness, accountability and transparency;
- Supporting local CSOs networks and platforms to promote coordination, collaboration and exchange;
- Supporting CSOs contribution to actions aimed at preventing, addressing and mitigating risks and vulnerabilities, including those related to conflict, and in building communities resilience in relation to crises and promote peace and conflict prevention in fragile and conflict affected countries;
- Supporting the organisation of a more regular and strategic **structured dialogue** with CSOs, including regarding **Global Gateway strategy / projects and environmental, social and governance standards**.

As explained before, activities aimed at empowering civil society through digital technologies should be paid particular attention.¹⁶ This includes but is not limited to:

- Supporting CSOs capacity to benefit from digital tools in the conduct of advocacy and in the implementation of their daily activities;
- Support CSOs in raising awareness of public authorities and citizens regarding the possible opportunities and challenges posed by the digital transformation, and support CSOs in advocating for strong policies, legislation and regulatory frameworks aimed at addressing those challenges and harnessing the opportunities of digitalization, in line with the EU's human-centric approach;
- Supporting CSOs awareness of digital threats as well as their digital security through training and secured digital infrastructure;
- Support and strengthen CSOs capacity to reduce the digital gender gap and other gaps related to age, disability, location, social and economic status, discrimination and migration/refugee status (IDPs, refugees, etc.).

Activities related to Output 1.2 can include, but are not limited to:

- Technical and legal support to strengthen CSO partners capacity and ability to uphold, preserve and promote an enabling environment;
- Support for civil society advocacy related to an enabling environment, including support to strengthen the positive narrative of civil society and counter defamation, hate speech, digital harassment and cyber violence on social media platforms;
- Support for local and national civil society networks and platforms and civil society participation in multi-stakeholder dialogue fora aimed at strengthening alliances for civil society with other actors including media, private sector, think tanks, academia, trade unions, cooperatives, etc. including ensuring accessibility of meetings and platforms to enable diverse organisations to participate;

¹⁶ In coherence with the D4D Hub Civil society and academia advisory group that aims to give a voice to marginalised and vulnerable groups and help hold governments and the private sector accountable, as well as to provide evidence to help the D4D Hub members shape a digital transformation that works for people and for the planet. The Digital for Development (D4D) Hub is a strategic platform that aims to strengthen digital cooperation between the European Union and its Member States (Team Europe) and partners in Africa, Asia-Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the EU neighbouring countries. Its joint mission is to promote a human-centric approach to the digital transformation by fostering multi-stakeholder collaboration, boosting investments, facilitating dialogue, and increasing coordination.

- Engage in dialogue with partner country governments and raise public awareness on the value of an inclusive and independent civil society, the importance of civil society participation and the need to respect, protect, and promote civic space;
- Counter mis- and disinformation, harassment, discrimination, physical violence (eg on human rights and environmental defenders) and anti-democratic narratives targeting civil society.

Activities under this output should be done following consultation with EU headquarters in order to ensure **complementarity with the EU system for an Enabling Environment** (EU SEE). The EU SEE aims at monitoring civic space and taking early action to support an enabling environment for civil society in more than 80 countries across Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and the Pacific, the Americas and the Caribbean, and Neighbourhood. Through a chain of actions encompassing monitoring, early warning and flexible support it aims to bolster civil society's response in preventing and proactively responding to legal and policy developments and other events that may impact their ability to operate.¹⁷

Activities related to Output 1.3 can include, but are not limited to, activities contributing to:

- Initiating, contributing to, and supporting policy dialogue on youth and gender equality and women's rights. Additionally, enabling the active participation of youth, youth organizations, women and women's organizations in decision-making processes at all levels;
- Supporting capacity building and training for youth and women's organizations, and for CSOs working specifically on youth inclusion and gender equality;
- Strengthen the rights of young people, including of those more marginalised, such as girls, young with disabilities or belonging to other marginalised groups, and their empowerment and involvement in public affairs, including by promoting their participation in their economy, society, and decision-making, notably through their active engagement in youth organisations;
- Strengthening the capacity of CSOs to carry out gender-responsive budgeting and planning;
- Involving men and boys' associations, women's organisations, faith-based organisations, youth organisations, and media in the transformative process of engendering social change, in particular by challenging stereotypes.

Activities related to Output 1.4 can include, but are not limited to, activities contributing to:

- Strengthening the capacity of CSOs to advocate, promote and contribute to climate and environment action and the green transition.
- Strengthening the capacity of CSOs to support communities exposed to the impacts of climate change and biodiversity loss to promote nature-based, low-carbon, and green solutions in line with sustainable and resilient development pathways.
- Supporting CSOs to ensure that society has access to transparent and credible information on climate and environmental issues, including by promoting public access to information on climate change, environment and natural resources.

¹⁷ The EU SEE consists of three components:

1. A Monitoring system led by civil society providing insights in real time and leading to an Index. (HIVOS leading)
2. An Early Warning alert, issued by civil society monitors which will allow the EU, other donors and where relevant, the authorities to engage to support civil society in acting early to head-off threats to civil society operations. (HIVOS leading)
3. Financial support through a Flexible Support Mechanism for local civil society groups to organise proactively to advocate for continued enabling environment, to develop systems for resilience (digital security, financial and audit) and if needed to protect organisations and individuals (through core support). It aims to reach groups such as those in rural areas or headed by women and vulnerable groups. (OXFAM leading)

- Supporting and protecting environment and natural resource defenders and climate action champions and advocates, contributing to local, national, regional, and global climate and environmental policy development and implementation.
- Supporting civil society action to promote sustainable lifestyles, responsible production and consumption and a just transition to resilient, climate-neutral and sustainable economies and societies.
- Supporting the participation of CSOs in the Global Gateway strategy, flagship initiatives and projects / investments related to climate change and the green transition, as well as in the promotion of high environmental and social standards in line with the EU ambition.

Under each of the 4 outputs, EU Delegations should seek to **implement the indicative activities within the framework of the Global Gateway Strategy**, notably through dialogue dedicated to Global Gateway projects, in order to ensure a consistent articulation between various EU's interventions as part of a 360° approach, and ensure **lasting benefits for local communities, including their livelihoods**. Local and regional authorities, along with their networks, can serve as valuable partners in strengthening advocacy power of such dialogues, as these authorities host the majority of CSOs, are often primary recipients / implementers of Global Gateway projects and ultimately voice the needs and interests of local communities.

Likewise, EU Delegations will, as far as possible, **consider** how the above-mentioned activities, could be implemented in the **field of climate change mitigation and adaptation as well as biodiversity protection and the green transition**. This could be done through activities aimed at building technical knowledge and advocacy skills of CSOs regarding climate change and biodiversity policies or supporting CSOs to engage with partner countries' authorities to hold them accountable regarding their commitment to the Paris Agreement or the KMGBF.

Activities conceived and implemented by local CSOs from EU partner countries should be given priority, in order to support and benefit from their local knowledge, empower them, invest in their development and sustainability, and facilitate their access to funding.

3.3 Mainstreaming

Environmental Protection & Climate Change

An **analysis of the CSOs roadmaps** shows that more than half of the EU Delegations have mainstreamed Green Deal related aspects in their engagement with CSOs. Besides, a Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) facility's review (based on a sample of interventions) indicated that, between 2020 and 2023, the interventions financed under the CSO programme **took well into consideration opportunities for environmental protection**. When relevant, they actively contributed to **climate change mitigation and adaptation** through appropriate measures. Therefore, activities implemented by EU Delegations under the current action should not only continue take into consideration environmental protection and / or climate change related aspects in the design of the action, but also explore new opportunities and synergies to enhance climate and biodiversity contributions.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening concluded that no further action was required. The EIA (Environment Impact Assessment) screening classified the action as Category C (no need for further assessment). The Climate Risk Assessment (CRA) screening concluded that this action is no or low risk (no need for further assessment)

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

As per OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that gender equality is a significant objective of the Action. This will be attained through integrating the objectives of the third EU Gender Action Plan (GAP III), with a specific focus on the goal outlined in the NDICI-Global Europe on **enhancing funding to women's organisations and other relevant organisations working on gender equality**¹⁷ as well as to **strengthen strategic dialogue on gender equality and women's empowerment with CSOs including women organisations** through the framework of the Civil Society Roadmaps, where the inclusion of women's organisations is highly prioritised.

Human Rights

CSOs are vital to the attainment of human rights and democracy in all EU partner countries and their contribution to these areas is a core pillar of the CSO Programme through its focus on CSOs as actors of good governance. The action shall in all partner countries adhere in full to the implementation of the **Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA)**¹⁸ to development, encompassing all Human Rights as well as EU's commitment to promote and protect human rights and democracy as enshrined in the **Joint Communication and EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy for 2020-2024**.¹⁹ Specific rights of indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, as well as minorities should be carefully considered.

Disability

Civil society is a vital actor in **promoting and defending the rights of marginalized people** facing particularly harsh discrimination. As per the EU Strategy of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2021-2030), the EU will continue to support CSOs to ensure that representatives of persons with disabilities can participate in all relevant processes through specific and inclusive structured dialogues, at EU, partner countries and global level. As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D1. This implies that the action will be of relevance for the inclusion of persons with disabilities as organizations specifically representing, and/or as part of their mandate targeting, the rights of people with disabilities. However, it should be noted that there is no specific output/expected result or indicator for such organizations under this Action. Their inclusion is recommended but decision will be at the discretion of each EU Delegation.

Reduction of inequalities

As recognised by the European Commission Staff Working Document "Implementation of the new European Consensus on Development – Addressing inequality in partner countries" civil society plays "a very important role in the fight against inequality and discrimination, for example as advocates for legislation that promotes equality, as "watch-dogs" demanding social accountability to their governments, participating in budget processes and monitoring private sector compliance with social and environmental standards, through research/investigation and disclosure of information, and by supporting workers' rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining, as in the case of **trade unions** organisations."²⁰ Promoting participation and institutional accountability makes policies also more inclusive, it increases transparency and helps to break the cycles of political capture as well as wealth and power accumulation, all of which are crucial in addressing inequality. Besides, CSOs are key stakeholders in the fight against tax avoidance and tax evasion and they can provide valuable help in identifying

¹⁸ https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/document/download/54c77670-4179-49f0-9af3-d1b18ff2d41f_en?filename=swd-2021-human-right-based-approach_en.pdf

¹⁹ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:e9112a36-6e95-11ea-b735-01aa75ed71a1.0002.02/DOC_3&format=PDF

²⁰ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-10350-2019-INIT/en/pdf>

and carrying the voice of the most vulnerable or marginalised people. In other words, the CSO Programme focus on supporting CSOs participation in policy-making, in particular by fostering an enabling environment, and promoting good governance, positions civil society a natural ally in the fight against various forms of inequalities.²¹ EU Delegations are therefore strongly encouraged to explore how the interventions dedicated to CSOs, defined by contextual analysis, can contribute to reduce inequalities in the partner countries. While CSOs are key partner in the fight against inequalities, it is up to the EU Delegations to include this dimension in the design of their action at concrete country level. As a result, this action document is labelled as I-0 even though specific projects implemented by CSOs could be labelled I-1 or I-2 depending on the nature of the action on the ground.

Democracy

Democracy promotion is at the heart of the action as it aims at supporting civil society's capacity to uphold good governance and hold authorities accountable by promoting its participation in overall policy-making processes as well as promoting an enabling environment for CSOs in partner countries. Indeed, improving transparency and involving citizens in policy- and decision making enhances democratic legitimacy and trust. As recognised by the European democracy action plan, a vibrant democracy relies on citizen engagement and an active civil society, not only at election time, but continuously.²² Engaged, informed and empowered citizens that can freely express their views, including through their freedom of association, are the best guarantee for the resilience of democracies which relies, among other things, on strong, free and pluralistic media organisations.

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

Civil Society is a vital actor for conflict prevention, resilience, peacebuilding and security in fragile and conflict-affected contexts and are furthermore often the basis of resilience at community level, and vital partners in risk reduction as well as in response to crisis. Support for civil society under the action is expected to further strengthen civil society capacity in this regard, as well as to include civil society in policy dialogue on relevant EU policies and initiatives. Support for service delivery through CSOs, though limited under the CSO thematic Programme, is expected to be warranted in fragile contexts and crisis. A conflict sensitive approach will be consistently applied and recommendations from existing or ongoing conflict analyses and ensuing conflict sensitivity recommendation should be taken into account.

Disaster Risk Reduction

N/A

Other considerations if relevant

N/A

3.4 Risks and Lessons Learnt

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)	Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)	Mitigating measures

²¹ As explained in particular in the reference document titled "Addressing income inequalities through development cooperation" specifically the volume 3, "Guidelines for mainstreaming the reduction of inequality in interventions" that provide many examples of how EU Delegations can partner with civil society to design actions aimed at reducing inequalities. <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/f7afdb18-20d6-11ec-bd8e-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-search>

²² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0790>

3: People and the organisation	Risk 1: Weak and/or uneven stakeholder engagement in policy dialogue with public authorities.	M or H (depending on the country)	M	EU Delegations to support CSO capacity building initiatives and/or support CSOs with specific training and assistance on this matter as well as to create structured dialogue spaces to enhance trust and competencies.
2: Planning, processes and systems;	Risk 2: Weak organisational capacity to implement actions under the Action.	L	H	Activities under the action shall specifically support strengthening CSO organisational capacities. EU Delegations to organise demand-driven capacity development training in favour of CSOs in order to improve their project cycle management capacities.
1: External environment;	Risk 3: Risks for CSO Networks, Platforms and their partners who are participating in dialogue and implementation of activities under the Action, with particular regard to those addressing sensitive issues.	M to H (depending on the country)	H	The risk will be especially considered by the Contracting Authority when launching and implementing the Calls for Proposals and continuously monitored throughout implementation. Apply conflict sensitivity assessments when required, mitigating the risk of exacerbating tensions and divisions as well as protecting the security and safety of CSOs representatives. EU political dialogue with relevant actors to underline vital role of civil society.
1: External environment;	Risk 4: Environment not conducive for CSOs working on gender equality and human rights issues; Weak capacity of women's organisations and restricted possibility to engage in dialogue on human rights and gender equality with public	M to H (depending on the country)	M	Support CSO awareness raising towards general public and authorities on gender equality and human rights issues and the importance of supporting women's organisations and CSOs working on gender equality and human rights. Priority to be given to support of women's organisations and CSOs working on gender equality.

	authorities; limited financial capacities of women's organisations.			
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Lessons Learnt:

The CSO Thematic Programme under NDICI-GLOBAL EUROPE, including the Action at hand, builds on the achievements and lessons learned of the CSO-LA (Civil Society Organizations and Local Authorities) programme 2014-2020. Several studies and reports, assessments, exchanges of best practices and independent evaluations²³ have allowed lessons of relevance to the Action at hand to be drawn from the implementation of the previous programme. These include:

- *There is a need to limit priorities and focus on the **programme's unique added value** for increased complementarity, efficiency, and attainment of results.*

Whilst in parts effective and attaining results, the CSO-LA programme had too many dispersed priorities involving too many actions without a unified approach and impact, often with CSOs acting more as traditional implementers of aid rather than as actors of good governance. It is thus important that the programme focusses more on clearer priorities and added value. The CSO Thematic Programme, including the Action at hand, should therefore have a stronger focus on the **three core priorities of the EU's CSO policy**, intending to strengthen civil society capacity, participation and environment to enable them to function as independent actors of good governance and development in their own right. This is at the heart of the Action. Through a focus on capacity strengthening, and inclusion in dialogue, of CSOs active in the EUs prioritised sectors in respective partner country, as well as an increased focus on EU prioritized target groups such as women and youth organizations, greater complementarity to geographic programmes will be achieved, which will serve to strengthen the EUs overall development impact in partner countries.

Service delivery through civil society partners is included under the programme but will, in accordance with lessons learnt, be more limited and selective under the Action at hand.

- *There is a need to broaden the definition of and support for **CSO capacity building**.*

Whilst there is evidence that the programme contributed to capacity building of CSO partners in terms of building skills in programme, project, and financial management, it was weaker on supporting CSO's internal governance, research and advocacy skills, and in sector-specific technical capacity building. This should be addressed by adhering to a broader **more comprehensive definition of capacity building** under the Action, including institutional and operational capacities in the areas of governance; accountability; programme, project, and financial management; research and analysis, advocacy; sector-specific capacity building; access to funding, as per relevance in respective partner country.

- *There is a need to focus more on reaching and supporting **national and local CSOs**, as well as **women's and youth organisations**.*

Despite the mandate of the programme to work with a wide spectrum of CSOs, and despite a clear policy directive as per the 2012 communication "The roots of democracy and sustainable development: Europe's engagement with Civil Society in external relations" to work more with national and local CSOs in partner countries, the CSO-LSA

²³ Evaluation of the Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities thematic programme (2014-2019): https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/publications/evaluation-civil-society-organisations-and-local-authorities-thematic-programme-2014-2019_en

Programme still primarily cooperated with a more limited spectrum of **international, traditional CSOs**. Support to local (grass-root) Civil Society organisations remained limited,²⁴ and funds were not sufficiently reaching youth and women's organisations that are priorities for the Commission. This will accordingly be a clear priority of the Action at hand. Whilst EU Delegations are free to work with and support a broad range of CSO actors, efforts should be made to ease access to funding, as well as to inclusive and accessible dialogue for and **with national and local CSOs**, and women's and youth organizations.

- *There is a need to adapting to increasing challenges to, and focus more on supporting, an **enabling environment** for civil society.*

Last, but not least, the space for civil society has shrunk significantly since the onset of the last CSO-LA programme in 2014. Civic freedoms are reportedly under threat in more than 100 countries and CSOs are regularly the subject of violent crackdowns or physical attacks. It is therefore essential that, in complementarity with the Human Rights and Democracy Programme, the CSO Programme integrates this increasing challenge and the constraints it entails by continuing to reinforce and further adapt its support to creating and maintaining an enabling operating environment for CSOs in all partner countries. Whilst this was not a standalone priority under the CSO-LA programme, it was and will continue to be a core element of all CSO Roadmaps, and a priority for CSO support under the Action in all partner countries.

- *There is a need to strengthen EU Delegations engagement with CSOs in the framework of **structured dialogues**.*²⁵

Since 2021, EU Delegations have sustained a steady volume of civil society consultations, yearly reaching out to more than 8000 CSOs worldwide, with a noticeable improvement **in the quality and strategic nature of these engagements over time** (with grassroots and community-based organisations accounting for 50% of the CSOs consulted in 2023).²⁶ While **ad-hoc consultations still dominate** across the spectrum of EU programmatic areas, indicating a flexible yet reactive approach, there is a significant trend towards increased regular, meaningful and strategic consultations, which in **few cases** takes the form of **Structured Dialogue**, particularly at the level of political dialogues with the Head of Delegation and on the CSO Roadmaps. It is crucial to **continue promoting and refining the Structured Dialogue approach**, ensuring its suitable and pertinent application in conducive environments.

- *There is a need to **continue efforts** regarding engagement with CSOs in the context of **Global Gateway projects**, in particular when it comes to organisations representing **local communities**.*²⁷

The engagement of CSOs across Global Gateway initiatives is **on the rise**, with a particularly strong presence in the **Climate and Energy sector**. CSOs actively involved in issues directly related to Global Gateway initiatives, as well as **women's organisations, youth groups, and private sector organisations**, are increasingly participating in these consultations. However, **further efforts are necessary** to transition towards more **regular, meaningful and strategic** consultations, ensuring the inclusion of organisations that represent **citizens' groups and communities** directly affected by Global Gateway projects.

²⁴ OECD Peer Review 2018, Ch. 5 Fig 5.1. Internal analysis shows that 33% of INTPA funds in support for Civil Society were contracted to local Civil Society organisation during the period 2014-18, the DG NEAR evaluation finds that the share of local CSOs is above 50% for the period 2007-2018.

²⁵ Civil Society Roadmap Facility, CSO-LA/2020/421-629, "An assessment of EU Delegations engagement with CSOs in consultations and dialogue in 2023"

²⁶ Out of the 101 surveyed EUDs

²⁷ Civil Society Roadmap Facility, CSO-LA/2020/421-629, "An assessment of EU Delegations engagement with CSOs in consultations and dialogue in 2023"

3.5 The Intervention Logic

The underlying intervention logic for this action is as follows:

The Action intends, through the specific activities as decided on and implemented by EU Delegations in respective partner country (on the basis of their country allocations), aims to *strengthen the capacity of local CSOs to engage in policy dialogue at national level and in dialogue, implementation and analysis of EU and national development plans and programmes [Output 1.1]. Activities under each country allocation, as decided by respective EU Delegation, will be tailored to improve the capacity of local civil society partners to uphold and promote an enabling environment in their respective partner country [Output 1.2]. Through the specific focus on women and youth, activities will also serve to specifically strengthen the capacity of local CSOs to engage in gender equality and youth inclusion as well as strengthen the capacity of local women's and youth partner CSOs themselves [Output 1.3]. The activities focusing on climate change, and biodiversity will strengthen the capacity of local CSOs to engage in climate action, environmental protection and the green transition [Output 1.4].*

A core assumption for the successful implementation of the activities and the achievement of subsequent outcome is that relevant civil society organisations, networks and platforms are willing to engage in dialogue as well as capacity-building activities in the field of Commission's priorities and policy areas. These areas include reducing inequalities, promoting human rights and democracy, supporting human development, fostering gender equality, enhancing peace and security and addressing issues of jobs and growth, migration, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and biodiversity protection. This encompasses the engagement of civil society within the framework of **Global Gateway**.

If these Outputs are delivered and the assumptions at the level of Outputs hold true, this will ensure the realisation of the objective to *strengthen local civil society Organisations' (CSOs) engagement as actors of good governance and development at country level 1. through increased enabling environment and stronger participation in policy-making in partner countries. [Outcome 1].*

A core assumption for the attainment of this Outcome is that 1) EU Delegations are keen to discuss and act upon analysis and recommendations provided by CSOs in partner countries, 2) the enabling environment for civil society is sufficiently open in partner countries to allow local CSOs to engage in advocacy activities with the authorities; 3) the partner countries authorities are **open to discuss and act** upon the recommendations provided by the CSOs.

If the Outcome is achieved and the assumptions at this level hold true, this will in turn contribute to the long-term objective of the Programme to *strengthen CSOs as independent actors of good governance and development in their own right [Overall Objective/Impact].*

3.6 Logical Framework Matrix

This indicative logframe constitutes the basis for the monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the intervention.

On the basis of this logframe matrix, a more detailed logframe (or several) may be developed at contracting stage. In case baselines and targets are not available for the action, they should be informed for each indicator at signature of the contract(s) linked to this AD, or in the first progress report at the latest. New columns may be added to set intermediary targets (milestones) for the Output and Outcome indicators whenever it is relevant.

- At inception, the first progress report should include the complete logframe (e.g. including baselines/targets).
- Progress reports should provide an updated logframe with current values for each indicator.
- The final report should enclose the logframe with baseline and final values for each indicator.

The indicative logical framework matrix may evolve during the lifetime of the action depending on the different implementation modalities of this action.

The activities, the expected Outputs and related indicators, targets and baselines included in the logframe matrix may be updated during the implementation of the action, no amendment being required to the Financing Decision.

PROJECT MODALITY (3 levels of results / indicators / Source of Data / Assumptions - no activities)

Results	Results chain (@): Main expected results (maximum 10)	Indicators (@): (at least one indicator per expected result)	Baselines (values and years)	Targets (values and years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
Impact	To strengthen CSOs as independent actors of good governance and development in their own right through increased enabling environment and stronger participation in policy-making in partner countries	1. Number of partner countries where the political leadership recognize the value of, and enables, the participation of civil society in policy and legislative making processes.	1. TBD	1. 122	1. CSO Programme 21-27 Evaluation – EU SEE Index / Network / Survey for EUDELs	<i>Not applicable</i>
Outcome 1	1 Local civil society Organisations' (CSOs) engagement as actors of good governance and development at country level has been strengthened	<p>1.1 Number of government policies developed or revised with civil society organisation participation through EU support** (GERF)</p> <p>1.2 Number of grassroots civil society organisations benefitting from (or reached by) EU support** (GERF)</p> <p>1.3 Share of youth and women's organisations out of total number of organizations benefitting from EU support.</p> <p>1.4 CIVICUS rating in partner countries (Extent to which improvement took place)</p>	<p>1.1. N/A</p> <p>1.2. N/A</p> <p>1.3. N/A</p> <p>1.4 (28 countries closed, 50 repressed, 40 obstructed, 43 narrowed and 37 open in 2023)</p>	<p>1.1 240</p> <p>1.2 10 000</p> <p>1.3 10%</p> <p>1.4 To some extent</p>	<p>1.1 Global Europe Results Framework Annual Reporting Exercise</p> <p>1.2 Global Europe Results Framework Annual Reporting Exercise</p> <p>1.3 CSO Programme 21-27 Evaluation - Survey for EUDELs</p> <p>1.4 Civicus Monitor</p>	<p>1) EU Delegations are keen to discuss and act upon analysis and recommendations provided by CSOs in partner countries, 2) the enabling environment for civil society is sufficiently open in partner countries to allow local CSOs to engage in advocacy activities with the authorities; 3) the partner countries authorities are open to discuss and act upon the recommendations provided by the CSOs.</p>

Output 1 related to Outcome 1	1.1 <i>Capacities</i> of local CSOs' to engage in policy dialogue at national level and in dialogue, implementation and analysis of EU and national development plans and programmes has been strengthened	1.1.1 Number of initiatives under the Action which specifically promoted the inclusion of CSOs in public policy formulation. 1.1.2: Number of capacity development initiatives funded under the Action that improved core CSO capacities. 1.1.3 Number of EUDEL that have adopted and or updated a CSO roadmap in dialogue with CSOs. 1.1.4 Number of EUDEL that have involved CSOs in Global Gateway Flagships	1.1.1 N/A 1.1.2 N/A 1.1.3 97 1.1.4 TBC	1.1.1 122 1.1.2 122 1.1.3 110 1.1.4 TBC	1.1.1 - 1.1.4: OPSYS – internal reporting	Relevant civil society organisations, networks and platforms are willing to engage in dialogue as well as capacity-building activities in the field of Commission's priorities and policy areas, including the reduction of inequalities, human rights and democracy, human development, gender equality, peace and security as well as issues of jobs and growth, migration and climate change
Output 2 related to Outcome 1	1.2 Local civil society partners capacity and ability to uphold and promote an enabling environment in respective partner country has been improved	1.2.1 Number of initiatives funded under the Action that strengthened CSO capacity to respond to changes in, upholding and promoting an enabling environment.	1.2.1 N/A	1.2.1 60	1.2.1 OPSYS – internal reporting	
Output 3 related to Outcome 1	1.3 <i>Capacity</i> of local CSOs to engage in gender equality and youth inclusion, and capacity of local women's and youth partner CSOs, have been strengthened	1.3.1 Amount of funding under the Action directed towards a) women's rights organisations and movements [GAP III] and b) youth organizations. 1.3.2 Number of EU Delegations that include a) women and b) youth organisations in their regular/structural dialogue with civil society.	1.3.1 a) TBD b) TBD 1.3.2 a) 99 (2022 – INTPA countries) b) 96 (2022 INTPA countries)	1.3.1 a) TBD b) TBD 1.3.2 a) 122 b) 122	1.3.1 – 1.3.2 OPSYS – internal reporting – EUDEL Survey	

Output 4 related to Outcome 1	1.4 Capacity of local CSOs to engage in climate action, environmental protection and support the green transition, have been strengthened.	1.4.1 Number of EU Delegations that include in their action a) climate change mitigation and/or adaptation; and b) biodiversity protection.	1.4.1 a) TBD b) TBD	1.4.1 a) TBD b) TBD	1.4.1 – OPSYS – internal reporting – EUDEL Survey	

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 120 months from the date of adoption by the Commission of this Financing Decision.²⁸

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer in duly justified cases.

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 measures²⁹.

4.3.1 Direct Management (Grants)

Grants: (direct management)

(a) Purpose of the grant(s)

All initiatives under the Action should contribute through the Overall Objective of this Action, (corresponding to the overarching Overall Objective of the CSO Thematic Programme) that is to *strengthen CSOs as independent actors of good governance and development in their own right*, and to the Specific Objective (Outcome) of this Action that is to *Strengthen local civil society Organisations' (CSOs) ability to engage as actors of good governance and development at country level*, as well as to the achievement of outputs 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 (section 3.1 and section 3.2 above).

(b) Type of applicants targeted

Non-profit making CSOs and/or their associations. **Priority** will be **given** to supporting **CSOs and/or their associations from partner countries** in order to strengthen their capacity, in line with the overall objectives of the Action. Should it be considered more effective, EU Delegations could envisage broadening the eligibility to applicants from other eligible countries (mentioned below). In those cases, projects proposals should be based on local initiatives and genuine involvement of CSOs from partner countries should be ensured at all stages.

²⁸ The implementation period planned was estimated taking into account the date of contractualization of the grants (up to 2028), the possible duration of the grant (up to five years), and possible extensions (up to one year).

²⁹ 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.

The eligibility of Co-applicant and affiliated entities is restricted to all types of non-profit making CSOs and/or their associations, and Local Authorities and/or their associations when this is justified for the benefits of CSOs, originating from the countries described below.

Support should give priority to local CSOs or, when not possible, at least promote partnership between international CSOs and local CSOs in order to benefit from the latter's local knowledge and strengthen its capacities.

(c) Justification of a direct grant

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, grants may also be exceptionally awarded without a call for proposals to eligible beneficiaries, non-profit making CSOs and their associations. Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, and in accordance with article 198 of the Financial Regulation (2024/2509), the recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified because if the country is in a crisis situation referred to in Article 2(21) of the Financial Regulation at the date of the FD, the crisis situation may offer a justification for direct award of grants during the crisis situation; other exceptional and duly justified emergency not due to delays on the part of the Commission; beneficiary is in a legal or factual monopoly situation or is identified as beneficiary in the basic act on which this Decision is based; the action has specific characteristics requiring a specific type of beneficiary for its technical competence, specialisation or administrative power or nature of the action with regard to Article 27(3) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation. In these cases, priority will be given to Civil Society Organisations and their associations originating from the EU partner country where the action takes place in line with the overall objectives of the CSO Thematic Programme.

The part of the action under the budgetary envelope reserved for grants may, partially or totally and including where an entity is designated for receiving a grant without a call for proposals, be implemented in indirect management with an entity, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the criteria defined in section 4.4. below.

4.3.2 Direct Management (Procurement)

For in-country interventions, EU Delegations may be able to spend up to 5% of the respective annual operational country allocation for accompanying the implementation of this priority of the thematic programme. Those accompanying measures must cover activities of direct benefit to the organisations/partners targeted by the country programme, such as consultation sessions, information sessions on Calls for Proposals, local mapping studies, training seminars and workshops related to the programme, reasonable accommodation and accessibility measures, capitalisation studies, programme evaluations at country level and/or other activities focusing on the strengthening of actors. These accompanying measures will contribute to achieving all the objectives and outputs of the Action at hand. The type of tenders and contracts will be determined in each case by the European Union's standard procedures for the implementation of external actions. Support measures do not cover activities or expenditure aimed at helping EU Delegations to manage the programme, such as technical assistance for the evaluation of proposals, projects' audits or follow-up of the programme.

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

If implementation through direct management with civil society cannot be implemented due to circumstances outside of the Commission's control, in exceptional and duly justified cases required by the local in-country

context and the nature of the action, country allocations may be implemented by indirect management with an international organisation and/or an EU Member State organisation for the benefit of civil society, after consultation of headquarters.

The entity will be selected by the Commission services using the following criteria: (i) its competence and expertise in the required field; (ii) its capacity to work with local civil society ensuring their genuine involvement; (iii) its added value; and (iv) its operational capacity.

4.5. Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

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

NDICI-Global Europe Regulation – Article 28

1. Participation in procurement, grant and prize awards for actions financed under... the Civil Society Organisations thematic programme... shall be open to international organisations and to all other legal entities, including civil society organisations, who are nationals of and, in the case of legal persons, who are also effectively established in, the following countries:

(a). Member States, beneficiaries listed in the relevant Annex to the IPA III Regulation and contracting parties to the Agreement on the European Economic Area;

(b). Neighbourhood partner countries and the Russian Federation when the relevant procedure takes place in the context of the programmes referred to in Annex I [of the NDICI-Global Europe regulation in which it] participates;

(b). developing countries and territories, as included in the list of ODA recipients published by the OECD Development Assistance Committee, which are not members of the G-20 group, and overseas countries and territories;

(d). developing countries, as included in the list of ODA recipients, which are members of the G-20 group, and other countries and territories, when the relevant procedure takes place in the context of an action financed by the Union under the Instrument in which they participate;

(e). Countries for which reciprocal access to external funding is established by the Commission; that access may be granted, for a limited period of at least one year, whenever a country grants eligibility on equal terms to entities from the Union and from countries eligible under the Instrument; the Commission shall decide on the reciprocal access and on its duration after consultation of the recipient country or countries concerned;

(f). Member countries of the OECD, in the case of contracts implemented in a LDC or a highly indebted poor country, as included in the list of ODA recipients.

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 realization of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

The list of targeted countries and respective indicative budget allocations is provided below:

Countries	2025-2027	2025	2026	2027
Argentina	2.365.000,00		1.182.500,00	1.182.500,00

Barbados and Easter Caribbean	670.000,00	446.666,67	223.333,33	
Belize	384.000,00	256.000,00	128.000,00	
Bolivia	5.063.000,00		2.531.500,00	2.531.500,00
Brazil	6.491.000,00		3.245.500,00	3.245.500,00
Chile	2.277.000,00		1.138.500,00	1.138.500,00
Colombia	7.517.000,00	3.758.500,00		3.758.500,00
Costa Rica	1.200.000,00	800.000,00	400.000,00	
Cuba	2.287.000,00		1.143.500,00	1.143.500,00
Dominican Republic	1.734.000,00	1.156.000,00	578.000,00	
Ecuador	4.221.000,00		2.110.500,00	2.110.500,00
El Salvador	2.342.000,00		1.171.000,00	1.171.000,00
Guatemala	3.713.000,00	2.475.333,33	1.237.666,67	
Guyana	503.000,00		167.666,67	335.333,33
Haiti	4.072.000,00	2.714.666,67	1.357.333,33	
Honduras	3.141.000,00	2.094.000,00	1.047.000,00	
Jamaica	1.069.000,00	712.666,67	356.333,33	
Mexico	4.598.000,00		2.299.000,00	2.299.000,00
Nicaragua	2.566.000,00	1.710.666,67	855.333,33	
Panama	900.000,00	600.000,00	300.000,00	
Paraguay	1.574.000,00		524.666,67	1.049.333,33
Peru	3.910.000,00	2.606.666,67	1.303.333,33	
Suriname	333.000,00	222.000,00	111.000,00	
Trinidad and Tobago	334.000,00	222.666,67	111.333,33	
Uruguay	1.177.000,00	784.666,67	392.333,33	
Venezuela	5.243.000,00	3.495.333,33	1.747.666,67	
Americas and the Caribbean	69.684.000,00	24.055.833,35	25.662.999,99	19.965.166,66

Countries³⁰	2025-2027	2025	2026	2027
Afghanistan	6.500.000,00	3.250.000,00		3.250.000,00
Bangladesh	6.915.000,00	3.457.500,00		3.457.500,00
Bhutan	1.884.000,00	1.256.000,00	628.000,00	
Cambodia	4.813.000,00		2.406.500,00	2.406.500,00
China	2.798.000,00		1.399.000,00	1.399.000,00
Fiji and 13 Pacific islands countries	3.000.000,00		1.500.000,00	1.500.000,00
India	9.976.000,00		4.988.000,00	4.988.000,00
Indonesia	9.507.000,00		4.753.500,00	4.753.500,00
Iran	3.887.000,00		1.943.500,00	1.943.500,00
Iraq	1.882.000,00	1.254.666,67	627.333,33	
Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan	1.644.000,00	1.096.000,00	548.000,00	
Korea (DPRK - North)	506.000,00	337.333,33	168.666,67	
Kyrgyz Republic	2.702.000,00		1.351.000,00	1.351.000,00

³⁰ There is no EU Delegation in Korea (DPRK - North) and Iran.

Laos	3.345.000,00		1.672.500,00	1.672.500,00
Malaysia	4.937.000,00	3.291.333,33	1.645.666,67	
Mongolia	2.339.000,00		1.169.500,00	1.169.500,00
Myanmar/Burma	7.000.000,00	3.500.000,00		3.500.000,00
Nepal	4.935.000,00		2.467.500,00	2.467.500,00
Pakistan	6.152.000,00		3.076.000,00	3.076.000,00
Papua New Guinea	1.984.000,00		661.333,33	1.322.666,67
Philippines	5.187.000,00	3.458.000,00	1.729.000,00	
Sri Lanka and Maldives	3.049.000,00		1.524.500,00	1.524.500,00
Tajikistan	1.671.000,00		557.000,00	1.114.000,00
Thailand	5.355.000,00		2.677.500,00	2.677.500,00
Timor-Leste	2.101.000,00		700.333,33	1.400.666,67
Uzbekistan	1.869.000,00	1.246.000,00	623.000,00	
Vietnam	4.470.000,00		2.235.000,00	2.235.000,00
Yemen	8.400.000,00	4.200.000,00		4.200.000,00
Asia and the Pacific	118.808.000,00	26.346.833,33	41.052.333,33	51.408.833,34

Countries	2025-2027	2025	2026	2027
Angola	3.884.000,00		1.942.000,00	1.942.000,00
Benin	2.147.000,00		715.666,67	1.431.333,33
Botswana	529.000,00	529.000,00		
Burkina Faso	5.229.000,00	3.486.000,00	1.743.000,00	
Burundi	4.842.000,00	3.228.000,00	1.614.000,00	
Cameroon	4.176.000,00	2.784.000,00	1.392.000,00	
Cape Verde	1.614.000,00	1.076.000,00	538.000,00	
Central African Republic	3.582.000,00	2.388.000,00	1.194.000,00	
Chad	2.439.000,00	1.626.000,00	813.000,00	
Comoros	1.114.000,00	742.666,67	371.333,33	
Congo	3.960.000,00		1.980.000,00	1.980.000,00
Côte d'Ivoire	3.597.000,00		1.798.500,00	1.798.500,00
Democratic Republic of the Congo	9.510.000,00	4.755.000,00		4.755.000,00
Djibouti	962.000,00	465.000,00	497.000,00	
Equatorial Guinea	1.713.000,00		571.000,00	1.142.000,00
Eritrea	459.000,00	306.000,00	153.000,00	
Eswatini	890.000,00	593.333,33	296.666,67	
Ethiopia	5.829.000,00	2.914.500,00		2.914.500,00
Gabon	2.000.000,00		666.666,67	1.333.333,33
Sao Tome & Principe	583.000,00		194.333,33	388.666,67
(The) Gambia	2.170.000,00	1.446.666,67	723.333,33	
Ghana	4.269.000,00		2.134.500,00	2.134.500,00
Guinea	3.027.000,00		2.018.000,00	1.009.000,00
Guinea-Bissau	3.754.000,00		2.502.666,67	1.251.333,33
Kenya	6.226.000,00	3.113.000,00		3.113.000,00
Lesotho	1.324.000,00	882.666,67	441.333,33	

Liberia	1.584.000,00		528.000,00	1.056.000,00
Madagascar	3.138.000,00	2.092.000,00	1.046.000,00	
Malawi	4.651.000,00	2.325.500,00	2.325.500,00	
Mali	7.729.000,00	3.864.500,00		3.864.500,00
Mauritania	2.270.000,00	1.513.333,33	756.666,67	
Mauritius and Seychelles	2.054.000,00	1.369.333,33	684.666,67	
Mozambique	5.730.000,00	3.256.008,58	2.473.991,42	
Namibia	979.000,00	652.666,67	326.333,33	
Niger	2.500.000,00	1.666.666,67	833.333,33	
Nigeria	6.018.000,00	3.009.000,00		3.009.000,00
Rwanda	4.350.000,00		2.900.000,00	1.450.000,00
Senegal	5.176.000,00		3.450.666,67	1.725.333,33
Sierra Leone	4.202.000,00	2.801.333,33	1.400.666,67	
Somalia	3.894.000,00	2.596.000,00	1.298.000,00	
South Africa	3.734.000,00		2.489.333,33	1.244.666,67
South Sudan	4.468.000,00	2.978.666,67	1.489.333,33	
Sudan	7.699.000,00	3.849.500,00		3.849.500,00
Tanzania	5.757.000,00	2.878.500,00		2.878.500,00
Togo	2.453.000,00	1.635.333,33	817.666,67	
Uganda	5.324.000,00	3.549.333,33	1.774.666,67	
Zambia	4.930.014,65		3.366.270,57	1.563.744,09
Zimbabwe	7.000.000,00	3.500.000,00		3.500.000,00
Sub-Saharan Africa	175.469.014,65	73.873.508,57	52.261.095,33	49.334.410,75

Countries	2025-2027	2025	2026	2027
Armenia	3.000.000	1.000.000	1.000.000	1.000.000
Azerbaijan	2.500.000		1.250.000	1.250.000
Belarus	5.000.000	2.000.000	1.000.000	2.000.000
Georgia	4.000.000	1.600.000	1.000.000	1.400.000
Moldova	2.500.000	1.000.000	500.000	1.000.000
Ukraine	8.028.414,35	3.016.089,75	2.325.840,35	2.686.484,25
Russia	11.000.000	4.400.000	3.000.000	3.600.000
Algeria	1.400.000	465.000	470.000	465.000
Egypt	5.000.000	2.500.000	2.500.000	
Israel	3.000.000		1.000.000	2.000.000
Jordan	2.000.000	500.000	500.000	1.000.000
Lebanon	1.500.000		750.000	750.000
Libya	2.500.000	850.000		1.650.000
Morocco	2.300.000	1.300.000	1.000.000	
Syria	3.300.000	1.300.000	1.000.000	1.000.000
Tunisia	2.200.000		2.200.000	
West Bank & Gaza	5.000.000	2.000.000	1.500.000	1.500.000
Neighbourhood and Russia	64.228.414,35	21.931.089,75	20.995.840,35	21.301.484,25

TOTAL	428.189.429,00	146.207.265,00	139.972.269,00	142.009.895,00
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4.6. Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR) 2025-2027
Implementation modalities – cf. section 4.3	
Objective 1, Outputs 1, 2, 3, 4: composed of	428 189 429
Grants (direct management) – cf. section 4.3.1	A minimum of 95 % of Objective 1
Procurement (direct management) cf. section 4.3.2	A maximum of 5% of Objective 1
Evaluation – cf. section 5.2 Audit – cf. section 5.3	May be covered by another decision
Totals	428 189 429

4.7 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

The Directorate General for International Partnership (HQ) are responsible for the overall management of the CSO thematic programme and ensure overall coherence in the implementation of the programme. The EU Delegations will be responsible for launching the call for proposals. This involves: (i) drafting the guidelines for grant applicants; (ii) managing the calls for proposals; (iii) contracting the projects and (iv) monitoring the selected projects. Exceptionally, some calls for proposals may be launched and managed by European Commission Headquarters. In addition, the action will benefit from the results-oriented monitoring, implemented by independent experts, which includes project reviews and support for reporting on results.

The Commission may undertake additional project-monitoring visits: (i) through its own staff; or (ii) through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews.

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, as well as the degree of achievement

of its results (Outputs and direct Outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe 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).

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. 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 document at hand covers a very wide number of countries through country allocations, with very different socio-political contexts from one country or region to the other.

The evaluation reports may be shared with the partners and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination³¹. 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 will adopt 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.

³¹ See best [practice of evaluation dissemination](#)

Appendix 1 REPORTING IN OPSYS

A Primary Intervention (project/programme) is a coherent set of activities and results structured in a logical framework aiming at delivering development change or progress. Identifying the level of the primary intervention will allow for:

Articulating Actions or Contracts according to an expected chain of results and therefore allowing them to ensure efficient monitoring and reporting of performance;

Differentiating these Actions or Contracts from those that do not produce direct reportable development results, defined as support entities (i.e. audits, evaluations);

Having a complete and exhaustive mapping of all results-bearing Actions and Contracts.

Primary Interventions are identified during the design of each action by the responsible service (Delegation or Headquarters operational Unit).

The level of the Primary Intervention chosen can be modified (directly in OPSYS) and the modification does not constitute an amendment of the action document.

The intervention level for the present Action identifies as (tick one of the 4 following options);

Action level (i.e. Budget Support, blending)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Single action	Present action: all contracts in the present action
Group of actions level (i.e. top-up cases, different phases of a single programme)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Group of actions	Actions reference (CRIS#/OPSYS#): <Present action> <Other action(s)>
Contract level		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single Contracts	It is not possible at this stage to define how many contracts and primary interventions will be implemented as contractualization will be managed by EU Delegations, and therefore grants are yet to be awarded through Call of Proposals.
Group of contracts level (i.e. series of programme estimates, cases in which an Action includes for example four contracts and two of them, a technical assistance contract and a contribution agreement, aim at the same objectives and complement each other)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Group of contracts 1	<foreseen individual legal commitment (or contract) 1> <foreseen individual legal commitment (or contract) 2> <foreseen individual legal commitment (or contract) #>