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**THIS ACTION IS FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**ANNEX 3**

of the COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION on the financing of the Multi-Annual Action Plan for Global Challenges – Partnerships for 2022-2023

**Action Document for “Institutional capacity building through Technical Assistance and Information Exchange Instrument (TAIEX INTPA)”**

**MULTI ANNUAL PLAN 2022-2023**

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

## 1 SYNOPSIS

### 1.1 Action Summary Table

<b>1. Title</b> <b>CRIS/OPSYS</b> <b>business reference</b> <b>Basic Act</b>	Institutional capacity building through Technical Assistance and Information Exchange Instrument (TAIEX INTPA).  OPSYS number: ACT-61014  Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe).
<b>2. Team Europe Initiative</b>	Yes (this action may support capacity building needs in the context of Team Europe Initiatives in all sectors).
<b>3. Zone benefiting from the action</b>	The action shall be carried out in all INTPA partner countries covered by the NDICI-Global Europe Regulation (all third countries) as well as overseas countries and territories covered by the Decision on the Overseas Association including Greenland (DOAG)
<b>4. Programming document</b>	Multi Annual Indicative Programme for ‘Global Challenges’ Thematic Programme 2021-2027
<b>5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives / expected results</b>	‘Partnerships’ pillar, specific objective 2: Stronger economic governance and inclusive societies.  This action will reinforce partner countries’ administrative capacity through global EU expertise and knowledge transfer, in particular through the unique expertise provided through peer-to-peer instruments, organised globally (result 3).
<b>PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION</b>	
<b>6. Priority Area(s), sectors</b>	Objective 2: Stronger economic governance and inclusive societies Sector: 430 – Other Multisector

<b>7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</b>	Main SDG: SDG 17 Other significant SDGs: all other SDGs.			
<b>8 a) DAC code(s)</b>	43010 – Multisector aid			
<b>8 b) Main Delivery Channel</b>	European Commission – Development share of budget - 42001			
<b>9. Targets</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Climate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance			
<b>10. Markers (from DAC form)</b>	<b>General policy objective @</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Principal objective</b>
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Trade development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>RIO Convention markers</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Principal objective</b>
	Biological diversity @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>11. Internal markers and Tags</b>	<b>Policy objectives</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Principal objective</b>
	Digitalisation @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital connectivity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	digital governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	digital entrepreneurship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	digital skills/literacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	digital services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

	Connectivity @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital connectivity energy transport health education and research	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <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"/>	
	Migration @ (methodology for tagging under development)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reduction of Inequalities @ (methodology for marker and tagging under development)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Covid-19	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>BUDGET INFORMATION</b>				
<b>12. Amounts concerned</b>	Budget line(s) (article, item): 14 02 02 43.  Total estimated cost for the year 2022: EUR 1 000 000.  Total amount of EU budget contribution for the year 2022: EUR 1 000 000.			
<b>MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION</b>				
<b>13. Type of financing</b>	Project Modality.  <b>Direct management</b> through:  - Procurement.			

## 1.2 Summary of the Action

The overall aim of TAIEX INTPA as part of the institution building instruments, is to provide peer-to-peer technical assistance and capacity building to support partner countries in the harmonisation of their regulatory frameworks and sustainable policy reform and to share best practices in EU policy related fields, according to the demands of beneficiaries from partner countries and the strategic priorities of the EU, and in line with EU values. As a result, it contributes to strengthening inclusive societies and good governance in partner countries.

TAIEX provides short and medium-term, needs-driven and strategically oriented assistance and is complementary to and works alongside other programmes to help partner countries in reinforcing their institutions and supporting sustainable policy reforms.

TAIEX has a longstanding and successful track record deploying public expertise since 1996. The assistance is provided mainly by EU public sector experts, who share their knowledge and experience with beneficiaries through workshops, expert missions, study visits and work from home. The purpose of these activities is to share with EU partners experience, know-how and information on EU policies, EU legislation and its application in order to assist beneficiary institutions strengthening good governance.

In specific circumstances, when expertise from beneficiaries in a partner country is of particular significance to other partner countries and it provides an added value, experts from the relevant partner countries can take part in the activities to provide expertise in sustainable policy reforms and standards. This participation comes as an effective complement to the knowledge provided by the EU Member States' experts, which remains the

core of the activities of TAIEX, while developing a multi-stakeholder approach enriching the instrument with other forms of peer learning (trilateral or “*South-South*” cooperation).

TAIEX INTPA enhances a Team Europe approach to technical cooperation by providing a mechanism to quickly mobilise public expertise from all Member States, including those that may not have significant development cooperation structures, presence in partner countries or ODA programming. TAIEX INTPA can effectively contribute capacity building elements to Team Europe Initiatives.

By providing technical assistance through the public sector, TAIEX INTPA promotes European standards, norms and policy models in an increasingly contested context. As such, it enhances EU policy strategies and supports the EU Global Gateway Initiative through capacity building and enhancing reform and an enabling environment in critical EU priority sectors.

## 2 RATIONALE

### 2.1 Context

The Global Challenges Programme of NDICI-Global Europe aims at strengthening the EU as a global actor as well as delivering the UN 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement to help eradicate poverty, reduce inequalities and achieve sustainable development. The Global Challenges Programme reflects the key intertwined themes of the 2030 Agenda that shape the SDGs: People, Planet, Prosperity and Partnership.

The Annual Action Programme under the Partnership pillar of the Global Challenges Programme aims at strengthened global partnerships; recognising that progress towards the 2030 Agenda critically relies on them, as does our capacity to implement EU priorities. Global partnerships also contribute to the Global Gateway objectives of sustainable and trusted connections that work for people and the planet.

The action TAIEX INTPA especially contributes to strengthening partnerships and dialogue with partner country institutions in EU policy priority areas and support partner countries in building back better and implementing policy reforms underpinning sustainable development. TAIEX INTPA can potentially contribute to all targets set out in NDICI-Global Europe.

TAIEX INTPA can provide the capacity component and is complementary with other implementation tools to support impact, such as Twinning, budget support, procurement for infrastructure, grants or guarantees. It is flexible and builds on complementary peer learning methods involving, in specific circumstances and when most suitable, experts from beneficiary countries to encourage triangulation and fostering a multi-stakeholder approach.

TAIEX INTPA supports EU entities with demand-driven activities and strategically oriented initiatives and facilitates the delivery of appropriate tailor-made public sector expertise to address issues at short notice. Technical assistance through the TAIEX instrument comes in different formats and across all areas of EU policies. Partner administrations can benefit from TAIEX’s flexibility to help meet wider training needs in EU legislation, standards, policies and best practices through the organisation of workshops and seminars (face-to-face, online or hybrid), which can reach a significant number of officials. Narrower, more specialised needs can be met through the expert mission format. Study visits to EU Member States are a complementary institution-building tool, which allows beneficiaries to see first-hand best-practice models of EU legislation and standards implementation. More in depth requests can be treated by written input of TAIEX experts in the form of work from home. Moreover, if needed, this action will support raising awareness about the institution building instruments through procurement of services which contribute to increasing the visibility of specific TAIEX and Twinning activities.

The outburst of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 forced TAIEX activities to adapt and look for innovative solutions in order to continue the implementation of the instrument. By now, TAIEX has successfully undertaken a digital leap which includes new ways of working and implementing activities. Even after lifting all pandemic restrictions, a digital component (*e.g.* fully online or hybrid events) will continue to enrich the instrument, organising activities with the same high-quality features which will complement the in-person activities.

TAIEX INTPA can support the design and the implementation of Team Europe Initiatives, by supporting dialogue and exchange with partners on European models and standards and help bridge short term financing and knowledge gaps by quickly mobilising public expertise in specific areas. It is expected to foster the EU as a trusted partner, influential actor and a credible interlocutor globally. The use of public sector expertise contributes to implementing

a shift from traditional financial cooperation to policy-based cooperation enhancing EU policy objectives.

## 2.2 Problem Analysis

Sustainable development results require that partner countries take ownership of development objectives and show transparency and accountability to their stakeholders. To this end, capacity building and public institutional partnerships have proven to be key contributors. TAIEX, as public peer-to-peer capacity building tool, is best placed to meet these needs. In order to ensure the full support and ownership, TAIEX INTPA works mainly on demand of the beneficiary organisation in the partner country.

In addition, there is a need for the EU to promote globally and proactively European policy objectives and models as well as expertise. Strategic TAIEX INTPA events, requested by EU bodies, can best serve this purpose as communication flows effectively through institutional partnerships between EU Member States and partner country public organisations.

The instrument's flexibility means that assistance can be adapted and tailored to a beneficiary's specific needs – whether they require one-off expertise on a very precise policy area, or a series of assistance events in order to support them to achieve a broader and longer-term goal. Given TAIEX's assistance model, support actions can be put in place very swiftly in response to a specific and urgent beneficiary need.

In order to achieve meaningful improvements, as well as for wider public administration reforms, mobilisation of added value public sector expertise has to allow beneficiaries to also exchange among themselves. Therefore, in exceptional circumstances and when relevant, participation of experts from beneficiaries will complement the core of TAIEX activities implemented by EU public sector experts, fostering regional cooperation and contributing to a more effective assistance. New forms of peer exchange will build on a multi-stakeholder approach and provide meaningful experience in tackling similar challenges and/or implementing similar type of agreements.

The request for public sector expertise from partner countries may be low due to a lack of proper awareness of TAIEX and Twinning as the institution building instruments. In this regard, operational complementarity and synergies among instruments will contribute to a more effective capacity building strategy.

The priorities and objectives targeted by TAIEX have a strong international dimension and take part in overarching EU key priorities with strategic repercussions, building resilient and sustainable economies and influencing post-pandemic policies. In all of them, a proper and efficient functioning of strong and reliable public institutions is critical and the public expertise brought by TAIEX activities, essential.

The digital leap undertaken by TAIEX needs to be supported by increased on-line capacities and digital ways of working which require constant adaptation.

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

TAIEX INTPA targets national, regional and local public administrations of all non-Neighbourhood partner countries under NDICI-Global Europe Regulation. In addition, it also foresees strategic EU initiatives to pursue EU policy priorities.

TAIEX assistance is provided mainly by EU public sector experts who share their knowledge and experience with beneficiaries through workshops, expert missions, study visits and work from home. These activities target national administrations, the judiciary, parliaments, regional and local administrations, public and semi-public entities as well as representatives of trade unions and employers' associations and civil society organisations. When needed and in specific cases, experts from beneficiaries will take part in TAIEX activities, contributing to a multi-stakeholder approach in the peer sharing and providing added value in relation to the implementation of certain agreements and adaptation to particular policies.

TAIEX instrument interventions are closely coordinated with EU Delegations and Commission Headquarters and the European External Action Service. Each incoming TAIEX request is assessed whether it supports national and regional strategies and policy priorities. Therefore, all priorities targeted in the NDICI-Global Europe Regulation may be supported, including good governance, environment, stability and partnership.

To ensure high quality expertise, a network of National contact points in EU Member States and partner countries

assists in the implementation and takes part in the institutional building community to ensure the strategic implementation of TAIEX.

### 3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

#### 3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

The Overall Objective (Impact) of TAIEX INTPA is to strengthen capacity in partner country institutions and to create an inductive environment for policy reform to achieve SDGs implementation, based on agreed international standards and policy models and on strengthened partnerships, dialogue and exchange of experience with partner country administrations at operational level.

The Specific Objective (Outcome) of this action is contributing to the institution building of the beneficiary countries meeting their needs by delivering demand-driven peer to peer public expertise and assistance in line with the commitments and agreed priorities with the EU, as well as fostering the strategic priorities of the EU and EU values.

The Output to be delivered by TAIEX INTPA contributing to the corresponding Specific Objective (Outcome) is tailor-made and peer-to-peer technical assistance to the EU beneficiaries in the short and medium-term by sharing experience, know-how and information on EU policies, legislation, projects and public administration reforms and practices in the widest sense.

#### 3.2 Indicative Activities

At the request of beneficiaries from partner countries, TAIEX INTPA mobilises sectoral experts, mainly from EU Member States, and, if relevant, regional experts, to give the beneficiaries' public officials the possibility to exchange with their peers. The experts mobilised belong to the public administration (or assimilated institutions, such as mandated bodies) of EU Member States, and in specific circumstances of partner countries. Besides, senior experts having experience with the direct technical or political steer of public administrations and their reforms may also be invited to contribute, as can officials of EU institutions, agencies or international organisations. In exceptional cases, when required specific expertise is not available from Member States public institutions, it can be mobilised from private sector.

TAIEX experts share their knowledge and experience through seminars, workshops, expert missions, including peer-based assessment missions, study visits, and work from home; according to the needs of the beneficiary organisation and the scope and nature of the intervention. Assistance will continue to be delivered in-person when appropriate and possible, but the instrument will be enriched with digital activities building from the experience gained during the COVID-19 pandemic and benefitting from the digital leap undertaken. Therefore, in-person, digital and hybrid activities will be considered and combined to provide effective assistance and to better contribute to the aims of the instrument.

TAIEX Strategic is mobilised at the initiative of the European Commission, the European External Action Service and EU Delegations to support strategic EU policy objectives. TAIEX supports reform processes in all EU priority policy areas, assists in developing practices building on the EU best experience and aligning with the EU policies and standards, helps to introduce required changes in line with the priorities and commitments set between the partner countries and the EU.

#### 3.3 Mainstreaming

##### **Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls**

As per the OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. TAIEX promotes the European public policy model and EU values including, inter alia good governance issues and the Gender Action Plan III.

On the basis of the recommendations of a gender analysis performed recently, TAIEX INTPA will contribute improving gender mainstreaming by systematic review of relevant gender mainstreaming for approval of its

actions. Furthermore, gender issues remain high in TAIEX activities' agenda. TAIEX will continue to effectively promote equality, inclusion and combat discrimination as well as to take measures to achieve gender equal opportunities in all aspects of its activities.

### **Human Rights**

TAIEX promotes the European public policy model which is human rights based.

### **Disability**

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D0. This implies that disability is not a directly targeted issue although the organization of all TAIEX activities takes due regard to accessibility and the inclusion of participants and experts as needed. In addition, the content of the activities, when relevant for the partner countries, supports the beneficiary institutions by sharing good practices and knowledge in this area.

## **3.4 Risks and Lessons Learnt**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Risks</b>	<b>Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)</b>	<b>Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)</b>	<b>Mitigating measures</b>
Financial	Risk 1 Limited promotion by EU staff and demand from partner countries for TAIEX actions results in reduced budget consumption	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>	Awareness raising in partner countries and in head quarters through networks of focal points in INTPA, line DGs and EU Delegations with the support of DG NEAR.
Financial	Risk 2 Experts in the existing TAIEX database do not match the required needs for assistance and/or have limited availability	<b>Low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	Outreach activities that target the National Contact Points for TAIEX in each EU Member State or institution of origin.
Strategic	Risk 3 Beneficiaries may not submit enough/high quality requests for TAIEX assistance.	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Medium</b>	Pilot of establishing TAIEX National Contact Points in 5 beneficiary countries.  Information sessions and awareness raising through ongoing activities and other cooperation modalities in country.  Outreach to beneficiaries and EU Delegations to ensure that the quality of the applications does not endanger attaining the desired objectives and the

				implementation of activities.
Planning, process and systems	Risk 4 Activities in person will still be limited due to continued COVID-19 pandemic restrictions	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Low</b>	TAIEX activities adapted to the pandemic context and continued to be implemented using digital means and new methods. These methods and adaptations will continue with the intensity required and as appropriate.
Planning, process and systems	Risk 5 Possible overlap and complementarity with other support programmes	<b>Low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	Appropriate coordination at country and head quarters level, line DGs, among EU Delegations , EU MS in country and actors involved.

### Lessons Learnt:

Operating since 1996, TAIEX has a proven track-record in mobilising Member States expertise. Continuous efforts are made to adapt and improve the way TAIEX assistance is implemented. Improvements in the medium-term shall include, but not be limited to, increasing an environmentally-friendly approach to TAIEX assistance, wherever appropriate, and improved knowledge management.

In countries where the demand is generally low, measures have been and will continue to be envisaged, together with respective TAIEX National Contact Points and EU Delegations, in order to increase awareness of potential beneficiary institutions about the possibilities that TAIEX can offer.

After the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, TAIEX instrument adapted to the new reality and enforced new working methods and digital solutions which will continue to enrich the activities offered even after the pandemic restrictions will be lifted. This digital leap will contribute to a more effective assistance complementing in-person activities with other digital means (such as online and hybrid activities). It will result in a wider accessibility to the activities implemented and greening the instrument while maintaining the same high-quality features.

At the same time, the participation in certain circumstances of experts from partner countries will provide a new multi-stakeholder approach to TAIEX activities, while expertise from EU Member States remains the core of the assistance. Triangulation (or “South-South” cooperation) of experts will complement and enrich regional peer learning among partners who face similar challenges and processes.

## 3.5 The Intervention Logic

The underlying intervention logic for this action is that sharing European public sector expertise through TAIEX will further support partner countries to build their institutional administrative capacity and to undertake relevant public policy reform inspired by the European public policy model, thereby improving public policy and regulation in partner countries.

TAIEX events implement EU policy priorities, promoting EU values. They complement and are aligned with programmed country activities in partner countries; their capacity building element is used in synergy with other implementation tools.

A logical framework matrix is not applicable because TAIEX is technical assistance provided on demand.



## 4 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

### 4.1 Financing Agreement

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

### 4.2 Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 48 months from the date of the adoption by the Commission of this Financing Decision.

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

### 4.3 Implementation Modalities

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

#### 4.3.1 Direct Management (Procurement)

The TAIEX instrument will be implemented in direct management by the European Commission, from Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations headquarters.

The support services to roll out the instrument are procured. The implementation is done under the project modality and involves two service contracts (procurements). The first one is for the management of the IT platform of TAIEX (TMS); and the second one is for the logistics of TAIEX activities that will be implemented by a service provider which has to further procure all goods and services needed for events according to the relevant procedures laid down for external aid of the Commission (PRAG: <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/>).

### 4.4 Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

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

The Commission may decide that international organisations and other legal entities from countries listed in Article 28(1) of NDICI-Global Europe Regulation, different to partner countries, territories and regions in the Southern Neighbourhood may be eligible for participating in procurement and grant award procedures, if and where relevant. All supplies and materials financed by this action may originate from any country (Article 28(3) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may also 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).

Regarding procurements for TAIEX instrument (service contracts for the IT platform and for the logistics of the activities), the geographical eligibility is global.

TAIEX activities involve EU Member States public experts and potentially relevant regional experts if deemed necessary: they receive a financial compensation for their participation to TAIEX activities. In this regard, the geographical eligibility for this compensation is the EU Member States and, if applicable, the country of origin of the expert.

## 4.5 Indicative Budget

<b>Indicative Budget components</b>	<b>EU contribution (amount in EUR) 2022</b>
Procurement	1 000 000
<b>Evaluation Audit</b>	may be covered by another Decision
<b>Totals</b>	1 000 000

## 4.6 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

The European Commission is the contracting authority. Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) is in charge of TAIEX – as well as for Twinning - and responsible for both the analysis and assessment of requests and for the content of TAIEX short and medium-term assistance, including the identification of experts from EU Member States' public administrations and other institutions willing to engage in this type of peer to peer assistance. Throughout the implementation of TAIEX assistance excellent cooperation and coordination with all actors involved is key to the success of the instrument.

Requests for TAIEX actions are generated by beneficiaries and/or driven by the EU involved stakeholders. Incoming requests are reviewed on a continuous basis and decided upon following consultation with relevant European Commission services and the European External Action Service, including EU Delegations, in order to ensure complementarity with national programmes and other technical assistance instruments.

Upon confirmation of the incoming requests, DG NEAR is in charge of identifying the relevant public experts from EU Member States or other institutions (if relevant) to address the requests. This is done through the existing database of public experts of TAIEX. When the pool of registered experts is not providing the appropriate expertise, the established network of National Contact Point (NCPs) in the EU Member States is mobilised to identify the appropriate experts.

For the provision of the logistical means needed for TAIEX events, the European Commission concludes a contract with an external service provider. This service provider organises all logistical arrangements - including travel, accommodation, conferences and meeting organisations – and also related payment services that are required for the implementation of the action. This implementation approach has proved to be efficient and effective. In particular, it allows for a swift and effective response to incoming requests and evolving needs, whilst ensuring financial transparency, accountability and efficient management.

DG NEAR closely cooperates with Directorate General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) in promotion and implementation of TAIEX in INTPA partner countries. DG INTPA supports the process and quality of application and provides guidance in relation to security matters. Both DGs co-operate closely to ensure that TAIEX operate in line with their respective policies and priorities.

# 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 (for project modality) and the partner's strategy, policy or reform action plan list (for budget support).

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).

Following each event participants and experts receive an automatic feedback questionnaire in order to assess their overall impression of the assistance provided and of the logistics of the event. Furthermore, following expert missions, EU Member State officials are requested to submit short mission reports summarising the objective of their intervention and formulate recommendations. The beneficiary institutions also receive an evaluation form six months after the end of the TAIEX activity to comment on the impact of the intervention.

Under direct management of this action, the collection of data and analysis is carried out by the European Commission. To this effect, the necessary technical arrangements are set in place to collect and aggregate data from participants of the beneficiary entities and the experts of the EU Member States as described above.

On an annual basis, the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations is publishing an annual report that is made public through its website and shares flash reports with statistics on a bi-annual basis to the network of National Contact Points for TAIEX in EU Member States.

## 5.2 Evaluation

Having regard to the nature of the action, an evaluation will not be carried out for this action or its components.

However, the European Commission may, during implementation, decide to undertake such an evaluation for duly justified reasons either on its own decision or on the initiative of a partner. The evaluations should be carried out following the guidelines of the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations on linking planning/programming, monitoring and evaluation. The evaluation reports may be shared with the partners and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project.

When appropriate, the financing of the evaluation shall be covered by another measure constituting a Financing Decision.

Since its creation in 1996, the TAIEX instrument has been evaluated twice, in 2007 and in 2015. In 2021, a new evaluation process by independent consultants was launched as part of the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations multi-annual strategic evaluation work programme 2020-2024. This latest evaluation is expected to assess the TAIEX instrument during the period 2015-2020.

## 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.

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.

In addition, the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations will ensure the visibility of

the TAIEX INTPA in communications related to TAIEX events.

Implementing partners shall keep the Commission and concerned EU Delegation/Office fully informed of the planning and implementation of specific outreach and visibility activities before work starts. Implementing partners will ensure adequate visibility of EU financing and will report on visibility and outreach actions as well as the results of the overall action to the relevant monitoring committees..

In addition to TAIEX-branded and information material distributed during each event, new tools have been introduced over recent years to improve the communication and the dissemination of information:

- TAIEX website: compiles all relevant information on the functioning and on the implemented activities.
- Social media: through the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations accounts, key events are advertised (#EUTaiox).
- TAIEX annual activity report: presents an overview of the activities.
- Biannual “Flash Report”: with statistics which are sent to all TAIEX National Contact Points.
- Institution Building Days: the annual meeting gathers the National Contact Points from beneficiary partners and EU Member States.