

## **India-UN Development Partnership Fund**

### *Programme Guidelines*

#### **I. Overview of the Facility**

The India-UN Development Partnership Fund is a dedicated facility within the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation (UNFSSC). It is supported and lead by the Government of the Republic of India, and implemented in collaboration with the United Nations system.

UNFSSC was established on 17 April 1996, following an invitation by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 50/119 of 5 December 1995 to create a voluntary fund to support South-South cooperation. UNFSSC is managed by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), benefitting from UNOSSC's substantive expertise, as well as its United Nations-wide mandate and activities. It is administered following the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) rules and regulations and United Nations Development Group (UNDG) guidelines and systems for inter-agency collaboration.

As enabled by the UNFSSC Terms of Reference, Section 1, Article 2, (c), the India-UN Development Partnership Fund supports specific projects agreed to with the Government of the Republic of India, in accordance with UNDP policies for subsidiary trust fund arrangements with specific donors and development partners.

Allocation of resources from this dedicated facility for specific projects is decided by the Board of Directors of the India-UN Development Partnership Fund. Projects supported by this facility advance the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through concrete initiatives in response to cooperation requests made by other developing countries. Projects benefiting small island developing states (SIDS), least develop countries (LDCs), and countries where India is concurrently accredited for its diplomatic relations are favored.

#### Summary Programmatic Parameters

- **Contributions:** At least USD 1 million per year.
- **Proposed project size:** USD 200,000 to USD 1 million. May also provide small grants.
- **Programmatic focus:** Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- **Geographic focus:** LDCs and SIDS and countries where India is only concurrently accredited.
- **Average project implementation timeframe:** 12 to 18 months/ or as agreed upon in the project document.

## **II. Partnership and Development Objectives: The Imperative of Accelerating SDGs Implementation**

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) set out priority objectives to reduce poverty and advance broad-ranging human development while enhancing environmental sustainability, thereby ensuring the future we want for all. The India-UN Development Partnership Fund supports projects that contribute to the implementation of at least one SDG in one or more countries of the Global South. Keeping a flexible geographic focus, the facility particularly welcomes proposals from small island developing states (SIDS), Least Developed Countries (LDCs), and countries where India only has concurrent diplomatic accreditation.

Small island developing states (SIDS) are particularly vulnerable developing countries, which face specific social, economic and environmental challenges. SIDS tend to confront similar constraints in their sustainable development efforts, such as a narrow resource base depriving them of the benefits of economies of scale; small domestic markets and heavy dependence on a few external and remote markets; high costs for energy, infrastructure, transportation, communication and servicing; long distances from export markets and import resources; low and irregular international traffic volumes; little resilience to natural disasters; growing populations; high volatility of economic growth; limited opportunities for the private sector and a proportionately large reliance of their economies on their public sector; and fragile natural environments. SIDS most significantly benefit from South-South cooperation with middle income countries, such as India, which faces similar development challenges but enjoys a larger economy and institutions that supported the development of solutions, technologies and practices.

The least developed countries represent the poorest and weakest segment of the international community. They comprise more than 880 million people – representing about 12 per cent of world population-- but account for less than 2 per cent of world gross domestic product. Their low level of socioeconomic development is characterized by weak human and institutional capacities, low and unequally distributed income, and scarcity of domestic financial resources. Their largely agrarian economies are affected by a cycle of low productivity and low investment, keeping LDCs in a poverty trap. International support, notably through innovative and cost-effective South-South cooperation, is needed for LDCs to overcome the trap and set the implementation of the SDGs on a virtuous track, enabling a multiplier impact on the improvements of the socioeconomic conditions of the world's poorest.

Given the internationally recognized need for cooperation with other countries for LDCs and SIDS to attain the SDGs, the India-UN Development Partnership Fund welcomes proposals for the benefit of these countries. In addition, this facility favors initiatives in countries where India has no direct diplomatic accreditation, but where it manages relations through concurrent accreditation (see Annex 1). India aims to further strengthen the ongoing cooperation with all developing countries, and the arrangements of the India-UN Development Partnership Fund will aid the Government of the Republic India in its efforts to reach out more effectively even to the countries where it does not have permanent diplomatic mission, and help strengthen collaboration with these countries.

### III. Project Cycle

The India-UN Development Partnership Fund will benefit from a broad partnership strategy and stakeholder engagement to best respond to the needs of, and capitalize on the comparative advantages of, various partners.

#### 1. *Submissions to the facility:*

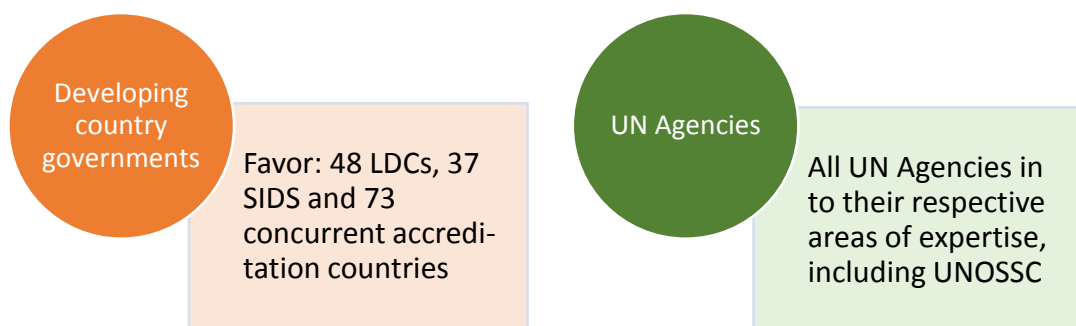
Proposals submitted to the facility may consist of a simple concept note (describing the strategy, key features and indicative budget of the initiative). The format and template for initial submissions remains flexible, and clarifications or further details might be requested by the Secretariat, or technical experts as needed.

Proposals may be presented by the governments of developing countries, in particular small island developing states, least developed countries, where India only has concurrent diplomatic accreditation.

#### 2. *Confirmation of proposals to receive funding:*

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#### *Actors that may submit proposals:*



The permanent co-chairs of the India-UN Development Partnership Fund approve proposals selected to receive support. Confirmation of their approval may be provided either during a Board meeting, or a meeting of the co-Chairs, or in writing via note verbal, letter, fax or email by the chair or experts.

#### 3. *Confirmation of the implementing agency:*

The Board will confirm the implementing agency. The Secretariat, the partner country or the Board can suggest a suitable implementing agency. The Secretariat will work with the identified implementing agency to help it develop detailed project document as per the extant norms, rules and guidelines of the United Nations System.

#### 4. *Formulation of project documents:*

The implementing agency leads the formulation of a project documents, which is conducted through a multi-stakeholder approach with active participation by the partnering government(s) and

engagement of beneficiaries, the United Nations system, and other applicable partners, which may include academia, civil society or other local or international actors.

Project documents follow the template, standards, required contents and internal approval processes of the implementing United Nations agency. In addition, they elaborate on the project's South-South cooperation approaches, outlining in particular commitments to:

- a) ***National ownership and leadership***, including the initiatives' alignment with national planning instruments, the role of government(s) in the steering of the project, government ownership over project outcomes and their commitment to the sustainability of development results. Project documents are accompanied by a letter of support from the partner government(s).
- b) ***Equality and horizontality***, outlining the initiative's approaches and commitments to peer-to-peer cooperation in the spirit of solidarity, mutual-support and collective self-enhancement across countries of the global South.
- c) ***Sustainability***, the project's strategy to ensure its outcomes have a lasting impact in the standards of living of beneficiaries and partner countries, as well as the mechanisms the project will put in place to have follow-on, multiplier effects after project closure.
- d) ***Development of local capacity***. Projects should utilize to the greatest extent possible local capacities. They should also seek to develop, promote and enhance local expertise, institutions and networks.
- e) ***South-South cooperation elements***: Projects are encouraged to incorporate South-South elements in their design and activities, for example: exchanges of good practices, knowledge-sharing, technology transfers, technical support, strengthening of Southern networks and platforms for collaboration, joint research or joint activities, and capitalizing on and promoting Southern expertise.
- f) ***Partner visibility***, providing the government of India with due credit for its role supporting the initiative, including at all public and media engagements, as well as through prominent display of the flag, logo or relevant partnership signage at all relevant occasions and opportunities.
- g) ***Concrete development impact***, specific and measurable results that focus on improving the lot of underprivileged groups.

The India-UN Development Partnership Fund follows the principle of non-conditionality. No conditions are attached to cooperation supported through this facility.

**Requests for small grants** from the Fund are also initiated by submitting a concept note describing the strategy, key features and indicative budget of the initiative. Small grants will follow the documentation requirements and approval processes of the implementing agency.

### 3. ***Approval of projects***

Project documents are approved by the Board of Directors at their annual meeting, or during extraordinary or ad hoc meetings. Projects may be approved by written consent conveyed through note verbale, email or message from all Directors in lieu of a meeting.

#### **4. Monitoring, reporting and oversight:**

The implementing agency will monitor project activities in line with its policies and procedures. Additional monitoring will be conducted by partnering governments, Indian representatives accredited in/for the partner country/ies and, where applicable, UNOSSC as fund manager and secretariat of the Board of Directors.

Projects will submit preliminary financial and narratives reports as follows:

<b>Frequency of formal reporting:</b>	
<b>Project size/budget</b>	<b>Frequency of reporting</b>
Above USD 1 million	Every 3 months
USD 500,000 to 1 million	Every 6 months
Under USD 500,000	Once a year

Within reasonable timeframes and frequency, additional progress up-dates may be requested as needed from project teams. Up-dates are submitted through the Secretariat. They may include best available financing delivery figures, description of progress and challenges in project implementation and pictures or other materials on project activities.

Projects and small grants may be independently evaluated at mid-term and/or completion, and audited, in accordance with the policies and procedures of the implementing agency. Where applicable independent evaluations and audits should be included in the initial project budget.

Projects financial and narrative reports will be summarized, analyzed and incorporated in portfolio-wide reporting for the India – UN Development Partnership Fund. In addition, these will be reflected in the reports of the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation.

#### **5. Project revisions and extensions:**

No cost project extensions for up to a period of six months are approved by the Secretariat. No cost project extensions exceeding six months from the initial completion date are approved by the Co-Chairs.

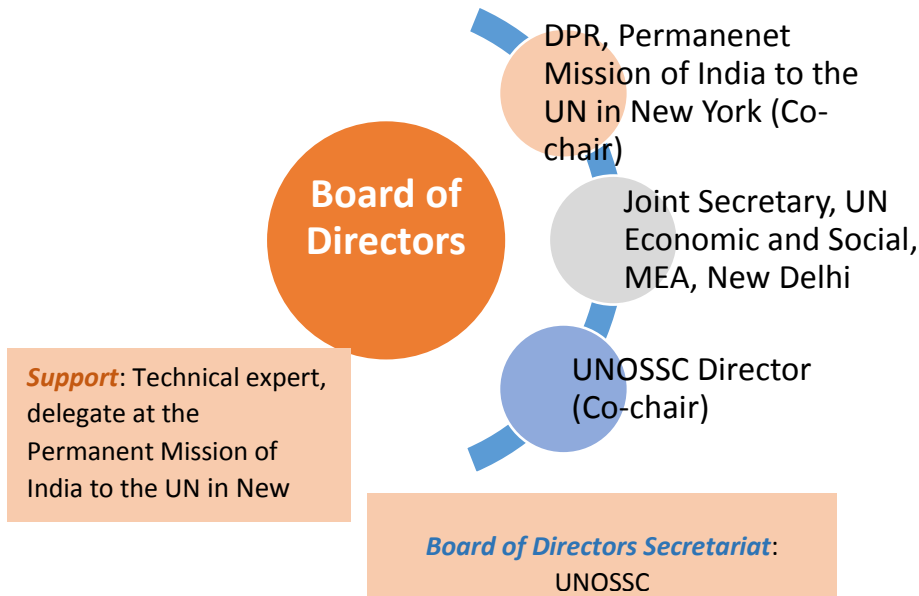
Revisions impacting over 5 percent of the project budget are approved by the co-chairs of the India-UN Development Partnership Fund.

## **IV. Governance Arrangements of the facility**

### **1. Board of Directors**

In agreement with the governance structures of the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation (UNFSSC), UNOSSC/UNDP delegates the governance of the India – UN Development Partnership Fund to a Board of Directors comprised of three Directors: the Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations in New York, the Joint Secretary - United Nations Economic and Social at the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi, and the Director of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC).

The Board is assisted by a technical expert at the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations in New York, and by the Board of Directors secretariat and fund management team at UNOSSC.



The Board of Directors will meet annually to approve proposals, provide overall directions to the facility and review progress on the implementation of projects and activities. The Board may convene for extraordinary or ad hoc meetings whenever new proposals or timely matters require their attention. Meetings of the Board of Directors might be physical or virtual through telecommunication technologies. In exceptional circumstances the Board may convey decisions through note verbal, email or message.

### 1. Project Steering Committees

All projects benefit from the strategic guidance of a Project Steering Committee, which provides oversight to the project’s activities at country level.

Project Steering Committees are comprised, at a minimum, of representatives of the partnering government, the UN system and the government of India. Committees may hold meetings in person, virtually, or through submission of written inputs. They always make decisions by consensus. They meet at least annually, and convene when items require their attention.

Project Steering Committees responsibilities include:

- Monitoring overall project implementation, reviewing reports, visiting projects, overseeing progress and challenges, and making recommendations;
- approving annual work plans, substantive revisions and no-costs extensions under one year;

- informing the India – UN Development Partnership Fund Board of Directors in New York of noteworthy developments and challenges impacting the project;
- contributing to partnership development for the implementation of the project; and
- participating in launching ceremonies, closing ceremonies, and public activities of the project.

## V. Board of Directors Secretariat and Fund Manager

The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) is the United Nations system-wide advocate, coordinator and facilitator of South-South cooperation. UNOSSC supports multilateral South-South policy-making processes; strengthens capacities of Member States to initiate, manage and implement South-South cooperation; and facilitates partner-led and -funded programmes. UNOSSC manages and serves as Board of Directors secretariat of a number of South-South cooperation funds in addition to the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation.

UNOSSC will provide the following services to the India – UN Development Partnership Fund:

### 1. Board of Directors' secretariat:

- ***Support the governance structure of the facility***, with programmatic and development expertise; advisory, focal point and liaison services; convening arrangements; administrative support; and document repository functions.
- ***Project cycle facilitation***: Marshall progress across the lifespan of projects: from sourcing of proposals, to quality assurance and programmatic improvements, to facilitating approvals, to monitoring and reporting implementation, to ensuring project completion. Coordinate the efforts of multiple stakeholders to ensure full alignment and successful partnerships, including through liaising with project teams, implementing partners, governments and the Fund Board.
- ***Monitoring, reporting and risk management***: Closely oversee implementation of the facility's project portfolio, continuously monitoring the advancement of activities in line with the strategic directions provided by the Board of Directors. Coordinate, consolidate and quality assure narrative and financial reporting. Incorporate the resources, activities and outcomes of this dedicated facility in various reports issued by the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation. Monitor risks, and inform the board about them where applicable. Contribute to project evaluations and audits.
- ***Communications, outreach and branding***: Develop and implement a world-class, impactful and carefully targeted visibility strategy that positions the India-UN Development Partnership Fund as a leader in South-South cooperation towards SDG implementation.
- ***South-South partnership brokerage***: Facilitate identification and engagement of Indian and other Southern-country institutions, experts and good practices to enable their cooperation.
- ***Knowledge-sharing***: Ensure knowledge-building and sharing of the experiences, accomplishments and good practices developed through the India-UN Development Partnership Fund, including through cross-portfolio and/or thematic publications, debates with academia and other researchers, and participation at conferences and events.

- **Periodic reviews** of the India-UN Development Partnership Fund to optimize its strategic impact and operational modalities.

## **2. Fund Manager:**

The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) is the Fund Manager of the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation (UNFSSC). Hence, UNOSSC will manage the India – UN Development Partnership Fund in full compliance with UNDP policies, procedures, rules and regulations; the terms of reference of UNFSSC; and United Nations Development Group (UNDG) guidelines for inter-agency collaboration.

Among other fund manager functions, UNOSSC will ensure receipt of contributions, monitor accounts receivable, oversee the correctness of allocations in line with approvals, set authorized spending limits, advance or monitor inter-agency disbursements, oversee expenditure reporting, recording and acceptance, confirm charging of indirect costs, request inputs for audits or contribute inputs for audits, and ensure closings of projects and of the facility upon its conclusion.

### **i- Contributions to the Facility**

Contributions to the Facility follow the framework established by the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation. They may be formalized by exchange of letters/note verbales.

### **ii- Applicable support costs:**

**Indirect cost-recovery rates:** In line with the UNDP Executive Board Decision DP/2013/9, a preferential rate for South-South cooperation will apply to contributions by the Government of India to the Fund, equal to the cost-sharing rate agreed between the government of India and UNDP, which is 3% currently.

**Direct costs:** UNOSSC will present to the Board of Directors at its annual meeting a proposed budget for activities advanced by the secretariat and fund manager. This will include mostly communications, outreach and oversight. Direct costs associated with the management of projects, incurred at local, regional or headquarters level, will be incorporated into project documents budgets.

## **VI. Project Implementation Arrangements**

The India-UN Development Partnership Fund implements projects through:

- ❖ **The network of UNDP offices**, including country offices and regional centers in 170 states and territories;
- ❖ **United Nations System agencies** specialized and technical expertise, as well as programmatic and implementation frameworks;

Following applicable United Nations Development Group (UNDG) and agency-specify procedures to determine suitable implementation modalities and qualifications of partners in the implementation of projects, project may be implemented through:



- ❖ ***National Implementation***, in compliance with UNDG regulations and benefiting from oversight by the United Nations system;
- ❖ ***Direct Implementation***, by the UN Agency;
- ❖ ***Public Sector entities from India***.
- ❖ ***Civil Society Responsible Parties***, complying with applicable capacity assessments requirements.

Implementation arrangements should favor at all time the development of local capacities, including expertise, experts, institutions and networks.