

How to Apply for GEF Funding

The course was presented by Mr. Frank Pinto, the Executive Coordinator of the UNDP-GEF and Mr. Delfin Ganapin, the Global Manager of the GEF Small Grants Programme.

Mr. Pinto gave a presentation on the overall framework of the GEF¹ and provided essential information on how to apply for the GEF funds. Among GEF's seven focal areas², the highest share of GEF grants is presently attributed to biodiversity projects, followed by those related to climate change. GEF funding totals 6.12 billion dollars and co-financing amounts to 20 billion dollars. The GEF acts as a co-financer mechanism providing new and additional funds to address global environmental issues. Mr. Pinto further elaborated on the project cycle for GEF funding along with the eligibility criteria to receive funding. He stressed that GEF funding is only provided to those projects that would complement national programmes and policies while maximizing global environmental benefits. In fact, GEF funding is intended only for incremental costs and not for full costs of the projects it funds. Local community involvement and government involvement has increased over the years as has private sector participation, including multinationals and new sources like private foundations. Mr. Pinto touched on the latest efforts of GEF to address the needs of Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States.

Mr. Ganapin explained the rationale and importance of the Small Grants Programme (SGP). SGP's special features relate to the size of the grants, the eligibility criteria and the application process for funding. The approval process for SGP is much shorter and the size is usually limited to under \$50,000 with the exception of selective "strategic projects" (up to \$150,000)—such as those of trans-boundary nature. The SCG gives priority to community-based initiatives and the grants are given only to community-based organizations (CBOs) or local NGOs. Proposals are submitted to the designated National Coordinator, but the application process is less cumbersome than it would be if applying for GEF. As long as a project proposal addresses SGP's three main objectives: solving local environmental problems, poverty reduction, and local empowerment, the SGP application process is non-competitive. The process is friendly to often marginalized groups like indigenous and illiterate communities by allowing video presentation of project proposals and finger printing of documents. The minimal requirements include: designating a responsible party (does not have to be an organization); establishing a bank account; and contributing, even if in kind, to co-financing.

¹ e.g. GEF's different funding categories include: full-size projects (grant of \$1 million and up); medium-sized (up to \$1 million); Project Development Funds – PDF (PDF-A: up to \$25,000; PDF-B: up to \$350,000; PDF-C: up to 1 million).

² 1) Biodiversity; 2) Climate Change; 3) International Waters; 4) Ozone Depletion; 5) Land Degradation; 6) Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs); 7) Cross-cutting areas of Adaptation.