

COUNTRY ENGAGEMENT MODALITIES

OF THE
GLOBAL MECHANISM
OF THE
UNITED NATIONS
CONVENTION
TO COMBAT
DESERTIFICATION



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Acronyms	5
Foreword	7
Executive Summary	9
1. Introduction and Institutional Context	11
Introduction	11
Institutional context: the shifting structure of international development financing	12
The GM's objectives	13
2. Operational Modalities	17
The matrix approach	17
The GM's organizational structure	18
The pillars of GM operations	19
GM products, services and partnerships	20
The Integrated Financing Strategy	21
3. Principles of Country Engagement	23
Long-term engagement countries	23
Small-scale targeted activities	24
Country ownership	24
Transparency and accountability	24
Subsidiarity and complementarity	25
Value addition	25
4. Engagement Process	27
Preparation of the country programme	27
Summary of the steps in country programme preparation	27
Country programme implementation and operational arrangements	29
Conclusions	33

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Annotated outline of the country scoping note (CSN)	35
Introduction	35
Country context	35
National development agenda	35
Aid architecture	35
Strategy and approach to resource mobilization	35
Annexes	35
Annex 2: Annotated outline of the programme document.....	37
Introduction	37
Situational analysis.....	37
Country programme	37
Programme management and monitoring and evaluation.....	38

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CACILM	Central Asian Countries Initiative for Land Management
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity (UN)
CEM	country engagement modalities (GM)
CO	corporate objective
COP	Conference of the Parties (to the UNCCD)
CRIC	Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (UNCCD)
CSEA	Consolidated Strategy and Enhanced Approach (GM)
CSN	country scoping note
CSO	civil society organization
CST	Committee on Science and Technology (UNCCD)
DIFS	Designing Integrated Financing Strategies (GM training programme)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FC	Facilitation Committee (GM)
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GM	Global Mechanism (of the UNCCD)
ICARDA	International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFI	international financial institution
IFS	Integrated Financing Strategy (GM)
LTEC	long-term engagement country (GM)
MDP	Multi-Donor Platform (GM)
MDG	Millennium Development Goal

M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
NAP	National Action Programme (UNCCD)
NCSA	national capacity self-assessment
NFP	National Focal Point (UNCCD)
OPEC	Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
PDAE	Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness
PRSP	poverty reduction strategy paper
RBM	results-based management
SLM	sustainable land management
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNDAF	United Nations Development Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WANA	Regional Programme for Sustainable Development of the Drylands of West Asia and North Africa
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development

FOREWORD

Although desertification and land degradation are widely recognized as global challenges, the flow of financial resources to address these challenges is insufficient or inefficiently used, thereby undermining the efforts of the international community to eradicate poverty and promote the sustainable use of natural resources.

The Conference of the Parties (CoP) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) adopted the *Ten-Year Strategic Plan and Framework to Enhance the Implementation of the UNCCD for 2008-2018* at its 8th session in Madrid in September 2007. Following the guidance provided and adopted by the *Ten-Year Strategic Plan and Framework*, the Global Mechanism (GM) of the UNCCD has revised its *Comprehensive Strategy and Enhanced Approach* and set out a *Four-Year Strategic Work Plan* in order to contribute to the achievement of the main vision formulated by the plan: "... to forge a global partnership to reverse and prevent desertification/land degradation and to mitigate the effects of droughts in affected areas in order to support poverty reduction and environmental sustainability".

Through this approach, the GM identifies effective ways of mobilizing domestic and international resources at the national level, thus responding to the changing resource allocation procedures for development and poverty reduction, outlined in milestone documents such as the *Monterrey Consensus* and the *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*.

The GM has central responsibility for contributing to Operational Objective 5 of the *Ten-Year Strategic Plan and Framework*: "... to mobilize and improve the targeting and coordination of national, bilateral and multilateral financial and technological resources in order to increase their impact and effectiveness". In this context, the GM is providing technical support to country Parties to promote actions leading to the creation of an environment conducive to investments in sustainable land management (SLM), and the elaboration of integrated financing strategies (IFSs) that assist countries in identifying and mobilizing substantial financial resources for UNCCD implementation.

This document, entitled *Country Engagement Modalities (CEM)*, provides guidance to GM partners and staff on how the GM works operationally at the country level. It gives an overview on the principles of engagement under the leadership of country Parties and outlines the process for the elaboration and implementation of country support programmes that are implemented in conjunction with other development partners such as the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD), the GM's host institution.

The CEM is a living document that will be periodically updated on the basis of experience consolidated at the country level. I am convinced that the CEM provides a useful framework for the GM to deliver efficient and effective technical support to country Parties, thereby contributing to the mobilization of substantial financial and technical resources for SLM and UNCCD implementation.

Christian Mersmann
Managing Director
Global Mechanism of the UNCCD

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The GM is a subsidiary body of the UNCCD mandated “... to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of existing financial mechanisms ...[and]... promote actions leading to the mobilization and channelling of substantial financial resources to affected developing country Parties to the Convention”.

On the basis of this mandate and taking into account the new international financial architecture characterized by increased country leadership, country-driven identification of development priorities and improved donor coordination and harmonization, the GM works to fulfil its strategic objective of supporting actions to mainstream SLM into national development policies and frameworks, as the foundation for increasing financial flows and investments.

The GM’s country engagement strategy is based on four, equally-important pillars:

- building partnerships with a multitude of stakeholders involved in SLM;
- contributing to mainstreaming to ensure political commitment;
- engaging in policy processes to foster an enabling environment for effective UNCCD implementation; and
- reaching out to partners with the appropriate communication tools to disseminate information.

Irrespective of whether the GM is working in long-term engagement countries (LTECs) or developing small-scale targeted country activities, its efforts focus on country ownership, transparency and accountability, subsidiarity, complementarity and value-addition.

Country support programmes are an integral part of the GM’s activities and contribute to the expected outputs of its Four-Year Strategic Plan. Essentially, a GM country programme provides a framework that specifies the objectives, expected results and main activities supported by the GM at the country level and agreed to

by the national government, the GM and all other strategic in-country partners.

The GM's CEM document targets country Parties, donors, GM staff and other collaborating institutions and agencies. It promotes a systematic and harmonized approach to engaging at the country level. The GM views this approach as an essential prerequisite for operationalizing development initiatives in the light of current financing trends.

Following a presentation of the institutional setting, the document describes the principles of GM engagement and how these principles are applied in practice. It concludes with a step-by-step outline of the engagement process, including the preparation and implementation arrangements for the GM's country support programmes. The annexes contain guidelines for preparing a country programme and provide samples of documents to be developed in preparation for and during the country engagement process.

1

INTRODUCTION
AND INSTITUTIONAL
CONTEXT

INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa was adopted in Paris on 17 June 1994 and entered into force on 26 December 1996. Signed by more than 190 countries, the UNCCD aims to “... combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought in countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa, through effective action at all levels, supported by international cooperation and partnership arrangements, in the framework of an integrated approach which is consistent with Agenda 21, with a view to contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in affected areas” (Article 2).

The following institutions have been established to support UNCCD implementation:

- the Conference of the Parties (COP);
- the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC);
- the Committee on Science and Technology (CST);
- the Secretariat of the UNCCD; and
- the GM.

To enhance implementation of the UNCCD, the eighth session of the COP (COP.8) adopted the *Ten-Year Strategic Plan and Framework to Enhance the Implementation of the Convention for 2008-2018* (the Ten-Year Strategy). The Ten-Year Strategy aims “... to forge a global partnership to reverse and prevent desertification/land degradation and to mitigate the effects of drought in affected areas in order to support poverty reduction and environmental sustainability”.

The GM was established by Article 21 of the Convention and was institutionalized by COP.1 in 1997. The GM is a subsidiary body mandated “... to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of existing financial mechanisms...[and]...promote actions leading to the mobilization and channelling of substantial financial resources” to affected developing country Parties to the UNCCD. In October 1998, the GM became operational. It is hosted by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in Rome, in accordance with

COP.1 decisions that the GM should be housed in an existing organization and draw upon its expertise and comparative advantage.

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT:

THE SHIFTING STRUCTURE OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCING

The UNCCD is one of the environmental conventions negotiated following the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.¹ Its implementation is embedded in processes related to the international development financing architecture, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), the United Nations International Conference on Financing for Development (the Monterrey Consensus) and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (PDAE).

The eight MDGs, adopted at the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000, provide a global framework of time-bound, measurable goals and targets for combating poverty, hunger, diseases, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against women by 2015. MDG 7 - "...ensure environmental sustainability..." - aims to integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes, and to reverse the loss of environmental resources.

In 2002, the WSSD developed an implementation plan focusing on achieving the MDGs and addressing environmental issues such as loss of biodiversity, depletion of fish stocks, desertification and the adverse effects of climate change.

The Monterrey Consensus, also developed in 2002, which focuses on the financial means for achieving the MDGs, has agreed to six areas of financing for development:

- mobilizing domestic financial resources;
- mobilizing international resources, including foreign direct investment and other private flows;
- promoting international trade as an engine for development;
- increasing international financial and technical cooperation;
- reducing external debt; and
- addressing systemic issues: enhancing the coherence and consistency of the international monetary, financial and trading systems that support development.

The PDAE was signed in 2005 by more than 100 countries, international organizations and civil society organizations (CSOs) to emphasize their commitment to enhancing aid effectiveness. It is based on five principles:

- ownership;
- alignment;

¹ Chapter 12 of Agenda 21, adopted at UNCED, is entitled "Managing Fragile Ecosystems: Combating Desertification and Drought". The other so-called Rio Conventions are the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

- harmonization;
- managing for results; and
- mutual accountability.

THE GM'S OBJECTIVES

The mandate of the GM under the UNCCD is confirmed by the Ten-Year Strategy, which states that "... the GM has a central responsibility in contributing to [Operational Objective 5], given its mandate to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of existing financial mechanisms and to mobilize and channel substantive financial resources" (paragraph 18). The Ten-Year Strategy also reaffirms that the GM should have a prominent role in:

- advising countries on ways to develop integrated investment frameworks for leveraging resources to increase the impact of their interventions;
- exploring new and additional sources of finance; and
- supporting the development of financing platforms to improve harmonization and alignment between donor institutions and hence their effectiveness.

Several COP decisions recognize the GM's role in supporting the mainstreaming of SLM issues into national development programming and budgetary processes. For example, the GM has been called on to assist the mobilization of technical and financial resources at the international and national levels in favour of country Parties' realignment of their national action programmes (NAPs) with the Ten-Year Strategy (Decision 3/COP.8).

With a view to promoting links and synergies with other conventions, the GM has also been requested to assist developing countries in tapping new and additional financial resources by exploring, for instance, the complementarities with other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs).

Given its mandate and taking into account the international financing architecture, the strategic objective of the GM is to mobilize resources to support implementation of the Convention through building effective partnerships between national and international stakeholders. The GM's three corporate objectives are to:

- support country Parties' actions to mobilize and improve the targeting and coordination of national, bilateral and multilateral financial and technological resources for SLM;
- contribute to advocacy and awareness raising to increase financing for SLM; and
- contribute to the financial and socio-economic drivers of SLM, ensuring that they are taken into account in relevant policy and planning processes at all levels as a foundation for increased financial flows and investments for SLM.

Expected accomplishments for each corporate objective are defined by the GM's *Four-Year Strategic Work Plan* (2008-2011) and are fully aligned with the Ten-Year Strategy (see Table 1). The *Four-Year Strategic Work Plan* is the implementation framework for the GM's *Comprehensive Strategy and Enhanced Approach* (CSEA), which was adopted during COP.7 in Nairobi in 2005.

In order to meet its overall objectives and expected accomplishments, the GM:

- provides technical backstopping in the development of comprehensive IFSs that blend public, private and innovative sources of financing;
- offers strategic advisory services to broaden access to financing from non-traditional sources, for example through compensation for environmental services, the synergistic implementation of MEAs, adaptation to climate change, trade, the private sector, forestry and civil society;
- cooperates with national donor partners and multilateral organizations and financing institutions and enters into partnerships to facilitate harmonization and alignment with national UNCCD priorities;
- develops knowledge products with partners, particularly analyses of finance-related aspects of land degradation such as economic policy, public expenditure and portfolio reviews, institutional mapping and budgetary processes;
- builds national counterparts' capacity to navigate resource mobilization processes effectively, including national budgetary processes and new and innovative funding sources and mechanisms;
- organizes expert consultations and other meetings; and
- cooperates with the UNCCD Secretariat to establish working modalities for contributing jointly to the achievement of operational objectives, with joint responsibilities assigned relating to advocacy, awareness raising and education, and policy frameworks.

While the COP is the Convention's supreme governing body, the GM's approaches, strategies and interventions are guided by the Facilitation Committee (FC) established by Decision 25/COP.1 as a demand-driven advisory body to the GM mandated to foster systematic institutional linkages between the GM and international organizations with relevant technical and financial expertise to support the GM's operations. COP.3 subsequently invited the FC members to enhance their support to the GM by exploring new financial resources and by mobilizing additional financial resources from their institutions (Decision 9).

The FC members are: IFAD; the UNCCD Secretariat; the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); the World Bank; the African, Asian and Inter-American Development Banks and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Secretariat, and the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA).

The GM draws on the advantage of being located at IFAD, which is the global agency at the forefront of tackling land degradation and reducing rural poverty in countries most affected by desertification, and the world's second largest investment fund for SLM. IFAD's New Strategic Framework and Operating Model, which was established to strengthen the integration of its country engagement into overarching development programming and partnerships at the country level, is proving to be an effective framework for increased cooperation between the two organizations at the policy and country levels.

TABLE 1: EXPECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE GM (2008-2011)

Corporate objectives (COs)	Expected accomplishments
<p>CO 1:</p> <p>Support country Parties' actions to mobilize and improve the targeting and coordination of national, bilateral and multilateral financial and technological resources for SLM.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Affected country Parties' increased knowledge and use of IFSs, leading to the development of integrated investment frameworks for SLM financing. ▪ Increased mainstreaming of SLM into developed country Parties' development cooperation programming frameworks, leading to their support of affected developing country Parties' initiatives to reverse and prevent desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought. ▪ Increased inter-governmental and inter-agency collaboration to increase finance flows to and investments in SLM. ▪ Increased understanding and use of innovative sources of finance and financing mechanisms to combat desertification, land degradation and drought. ▪ Increased South-South and North-South cooperation in support of measures to facilitate affected country Parties' access to technology and finance.
<p>CO 2:</p> <p>Contribute to advocacy and awareness-raising to increase financing for SLM.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strategic communication of opportunities for increasing financial flows and investments for SLM, including synergies with climate change adaptation and mitigation, and biodiversity conservation. ▪ Forums of substantive and political relevance to SLM, including those pertaining to agriculture, trade and adaptation to climate change, are informed on issues related to financial flows and investments for SLM, increasingly address land degradation issues and take decisions facilitating increased investments in SLM. ▪ Increased engagement of CSOs and the scientific community as stakeholders in promoting investments in SLM and in building evidence for increasing such investments.
<p>CO 3:</p> <p>Contribute to the financial and socio-economic drivers of SLM, ensuring that they are taken into account in relevant policy and planning processes at all levels as a foundation for increased financial flows and investments for SLM.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved policy frameworks that take into account financial and socio-economic drivers of desertification/land degradation and barriers to SLM at all levels. ▪ Development of IFSs and strategic NAP processes that are mutually reinforcing and provide the basis for investment frameworks. ▪ Increased mainstreaming of SLM into developed country Parties' development cooperation programming frameworks, leading to their support of affected developing country Parties' initiatives to reverse and prevent desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought. ▪ Increased use of opportunities to increase mobilization of financial resources through synergistic implementation.

2

OPERATIONAL
MODALITIES

THE MATRIX APPROACH

During COP.7 in 2005, the GM introduced a new organizational structure based on a matrix approach combining regional and strategic programmes, which together develop comprehensive country programmes. This structure was conceived to equip the GM to respond to the new international setting and to increase its impacts through improved working modalities. The GM's regional programmes are:

- the Asia and Pacific Programme;
- the East and Southern Africa Programme;
- the North Africa Programme;
- the Latin America and the Caribbean Programme; and
- the West and Central Africa Programme.

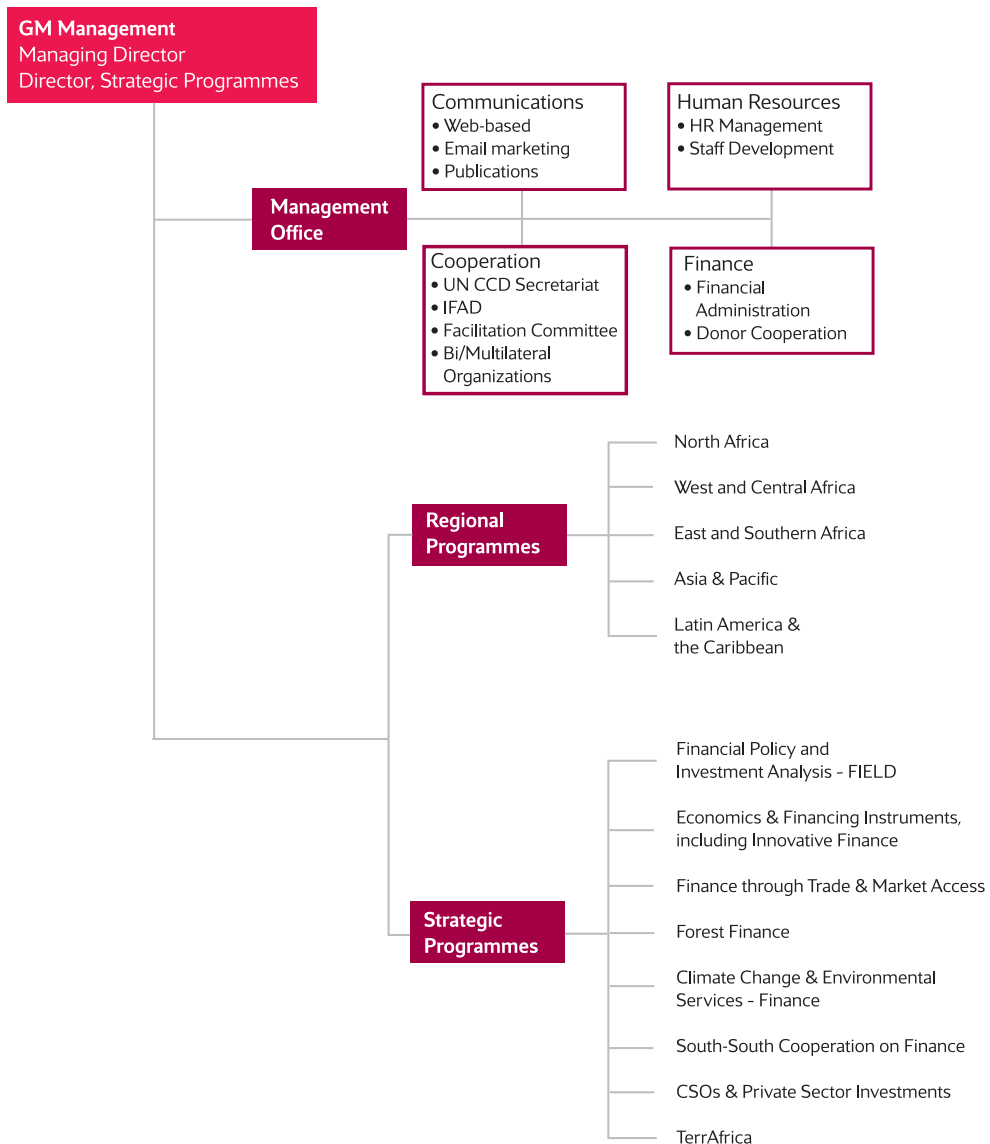
The regional programmes are responsible for developing the country programmes and for coordinating country, regional and sub-regional activities. The country programmes provide a coherent package of activities that aim to create an enabling environment for increased investments in SLM.

The strategic programmes were established to complement the GM's country engagement, thus increasing the impact of its operations at the country and sub-regional levels. These programmes have been selected on the basis of their potential to upscale finance for UNCCD implementation. Others may be added in the future to enhance the GM's comprehensive approach to UNCCD implementation. The programmes are:

- Climate Change and Ecosystems Environmental Services Finance;
- Economics and Financial Instruments, including Innovative Finance;
- Finance through Market Access and Trade;
- Financial Policy and Investment Analysis;
- Forest Finance;
- CSOs and Private Sector Investments;

- South-to-South Cooperation on Finance; and
- TerrAfrica.

THE GM'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE²



The contribution of the strategic programmes is to develop specialized knowledge of public finance and private investment applicable to these sectors. The programmes are designed to engage stakeholders and to link with sectors that have not traditionally been involved in UNCCD implementation but that have significant potential for increasing investment flows.

² As at 24 June 2008

THE PILLARS OF GM OPERATIONS

The GM's strategy is based on four equally-important pillars of engagement.

Pillar 1: Partnership building

The GM uses partnership building as a way to draw on the technical and strategic expertise of other organizations and processes that can be used to mobilize resources for UNCCD implementation. The GM has created or joined a variety of strategic partnerships at the international, regional and sub-regional levels. A range of operational partnerships are now in place to support actions at the country level.

All partnerships are based on the comparative advantages of the organizations concerned in their fields of expertise, and on the potential for synergies with the GM's work. GM partners include International Financial Institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank, the international development banks, GEF and IFAD - all of which are members of the GM's Facilitation Committee - bilateral donor agencies, technical organizations, the scientific community and individual experts.

At the national level, the GM fosters partnerships in line with international approaches to harmonization and alignment with national government institutions and CSOs. Coordinated support from the GM's FC members and increased cooperation with IFIs, GEF and bilateral organizations are prerequisites for GM engagement at all levels.

The GM also creates partnerships to help to fund its own operations: 80 percent of the GM's operational finance is currently received as voluntary contributions from IFIs - particularly IFAD and the World Bank Group - bilateral donor agencies, funds such as the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and foundations. The COP provides the remaining 20 percent.

Pillar 2: Mainstreaming

The COP has identified the mainstreaming approach - long advocated and practised by the GM - as an effective instrument for enhancing integration of the UNCCD into development agendas at the country level. For the GM, mainstreaming is a process of informed dialogue and national action focusing on poverty reduction and sound management of natural resources. The objective of mainstreaming is to engender political commitment that establishes issues of land degradation and desertification as a national priority, and to encourage actions to improve policy, legislative, institutional and planning frameworks. Government ownership of the process and support from partners in development cooperation are fundamental for success.

Pillar 3: Engaging in policy processes

The GM believes that for effective UNCCD implementation at the country level, more weight should be given to a supportive policy environment, legislative reform, governance

structures and institution building. To position the UNCCD more usefully in the domestic development context and to support country Parties in making the UNCCD a more effective tool, the GM contributes to policy processes directly linked to UNCCD implementation such as rural development, agriculture and forestry, trade and market access, and adaptation to climate change.

Pillar 4: Communications and outreach

To maximize the impact of its operations with limited resources, the GM places prime importance on communications and outreach. The Communications Group was established in early 2006 to utilize the most effective channels to raise awareness, share information, stimulate dialogue, generate knowledge and empower its constituencies by crafting its communications messages, products and services around the needs of its target audiences. The group complements all GM activities.

GM PRODUCTS, SERVICES AND PARTNERSHIPS

The GM's operations can be classified as products, services or partnerships.

The GM has designed and packaged a range of products to assist UNCCD country Parties and other stakeholders such as IFIs in implementing targeted activities promoting financial support for SLM and UNCCD implementation. Two such examples are the GM's training programme, Designing Integrated Financing Strategies (DIFS) and its South-to-South cooperation programme, SolArid (see Box 1).

The GM provides specialized advisory services on finance for countries and organizations interested in developing investment frameworks for SLM at the country level. These advisory services include policy analysis, identification of innovative financing mechanisms for SLM, opportunities for investing in SLM and economic assessments of the costs of inaction.

The GM provides services and applies its products in the context of national, regional and sub-regional partnerships that tie into its regional programmes and are supported by its strategic programmes. One example is the Central Asian Countries Initiative for Land Management (CACILM): this is a GEF ten-year, multi-country, multi-donor initiative led by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and developed with the GM's co-financing and technical support. It is designed to enhance collaboration between countries and external partners in pursuing a comprehensive approach to channelling substantial finances into SLM.

Box 1: Examples of GM Products

The **DIFS training programme** facilitates the engagement of senior decision makers in peer-to-peer exchanges of experiences in developing IFSs. The programme is intended to enhance teamwork among participants from the same country and between countries to enable them to develop IFSs jointly through a process of learning-by-doing. Country teams develop IFSs using the methods and skills acquired during this training process. The teams also function as trainers of trainers to develop a critical mass of individuals who can advance the resource mobilization process. Within the framework of the IFS process, the GM enables country Parties to access potential financial resources designated for SLM.

SolArid brings together the countries of the Sahel and the Sahara, highlighting characteristics of these countries that must be taken into account when developing strategies to combat desertification and poverty. It provides an opportunity to invest in new approaches to resource mobilization for SLM that respond to the needs of countries affected by desertification and drought, with the ultimate aim of improving peoples' livelihoods. SolArid also aims to establish a permanent network for exchanging experiences on resource mobilization strategies, developing financial partnering strategies and fostering partnerships.

THE INTEGRATED FINANCING STRATEGY

One GM product that deserves special mention for its breadth and depth is the IFS. The IFS is a comprehensive, coordinated strategy linked with the NAP and other national processes. It is anchored in the national institutional setting and brings into play a mix of financial sources, instruments and mechanisms through which sustainable, timely and predictable investments for UNCCD implementation can be identified and secured. The IFS enables government institutions, the private sector, CSOs and donor agencies to work together to create an investment framework for SLM by sharing knowledge of:

- the current financing situation and financial flows for SLM;
- public financial management and budget processes; and
- donor policies and modalities for obtaining bilateral and multilateral funds;

and by:

- forging partnerships on SLM; and
- identifying innovative financing sources, including climate change financing mechanisms, compensation for environmental services and trade and market access.

3

PRINCIPLES OF COUNTRY ENGAGEMENT

The current financing trends for SLM and other development initiatives respond to the emergence of new modalities for resource allocation premised on greater country leadership, country-driven identification of development priorities and improved donor coordination and harmonization. A systematic and harmonized approach to engaging at the country level is therefore needed to operationalize development initiatives.

LONG-TERM ENGAGEMENT COUNTRIES

In a limited number of interested countries, the GM is strengthening its longer-term commitment of three to five years duration by providing advisory services and capacity-building initiatives oriented towards facilitating national resource mobilization. Based on a country support programme agreed with the country concerned, the GM provides targeted technical advice and financial support to country Parties in identifying and mobilizing resources for SLM and UNCCD implementation.

Although all UNCCD country Parties qualify for GM support, the limited financial and human resources available to the GM force it to be selective. The GM takes the following factors into account when choosing countries for long-term engagement.

Country setting

- The country has ratified the UNCCD.
- The GM has received a formal request for technical assistance from the country Party.

Political commitment

- Political will to implement UNCCD is a priority of national development programming.
- The political and institutional context is conducive to the implementation of the GM's support programme.

Funds available

- There is clear bilateral or multilateral donor interest.
- Adequate resources are available at the GM to respond to the country's request.

Partnerships

- A partnership base exists to ensure effective implementation.

SMALL-SCALE TARGETED ACTIVITIES

The GM supports countries through a variety of small-scale, targeted activities that respond to country needs on the basis of demand. These activities also foster mainstreaming, partnership building and the creation of an enabling environment for resource mobilization. Such small-scale activities are time-bound, however, and normally last from one to two years.

COUNTRY OWNERSHIP

One of the principles governing current international development financing is the concept of "country ownership". In practice, however, this notion varies considerably. In engaging with countries, the GM interprets country ownership as 'sufficient political commitment to implement GM-supported initiatives under government leadership and with the participation of a broad range of stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector'. Country ownership requires:

- government leadership for coordination;
- appropriate institutional arrangements for stakeholder involvement; and
- GM services and strategies that are aligned with or support national development priorities.

The GM's traditional counterparts at the country level are ministries, for example the ministries of environment and agriculture, which are often also UNCCD focal point institutions. However, given the pivotal roles that the ministries of finance and economic planning play in resource allocation in national budgets, the GM has expanded its network of national counterparts to include ministries such as finance, agriculture or decentralization, whose core business is not SLM but whose work is relevant to UNCCD implementation.

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The GM must explain clearly from programme inception what its support entails and what is expected of government and other stakeholders. Effective country ownership of GM products and services can only be achieved if the engagement process is transparent. The programme document and cooperation agreement must therefore spell out the roles and

responsibilities of the government, other stakeholders and the GM. It must be clear that once the cooperation agreement is signed all stakeholders, including the GM, are accountable for their responsibilities.

SUBSIDIARITY AND COMPLEMENTARITY

The principles of subsidiarity and complementarity require GM-supported activities at the regional level to inform its country-level activities and vice versa. For instance, activities that by their nature and scope can be performed better at the national level or district level should be carried out at that level by the appropriate institutions or stakeholders. All actions taken, whatever the level, should support the learning process through knowledge management activities and tools.

VALUE ADDITION

GM services are designed to add value to national processes and to avoid duplication and overlap at the county level as far as possible. In terms of value-addition, it is therefore essential to know what already exists in the area of SLM in a given country, for example best practices, key stakeholders and lessons learned. After such analysis, the GM seeks to tap into ongoing national processes, partnerships and initiatives on which it builds: examples are the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) processes, the GEF and other country operations associated with the implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), including replication and upscaling.

4

ENGAGEMENT
PROCESS

PREPARATION OF THE COUNTRY PROGRAMME

Purpose of the country programme

The purpose of the country programme is essentially to provide a framework specifying the objective, expected results and main activities supported by the GM at the country level and agreed by the country and the GM. More specifically, the country programme:

- ensures that country situations and needs are recognized and taken into account in planning, implementation and evaluation;
- contains the framework and main strategic elements for the GM's basic approach, products and services adapted to the country situation;
- provides information on the scope, extent and time frame of the programme;
- outlines the principles and modalities for cooperation and partnership between the GM and the government, development partners such as bilateral and multilateral organizations, civil society and the private sector;
- defines the GM's comparative advantages, core competencies and complementarities in the country and the value addition the GM brings to country-level processes;
- is a means of promoting corporate learning by harnessing information and drawing lessons from programme implementation; and
- facilitates learning and knowledge transfer on resource mobilization through sharing the outcomes of the country programme (not only at the national level).

SUMMARY OF THE STEPS IN COUNTRY PROGRAMME PREPARATION

The country programme preparation process consists of seven steps that the GM takes to develop a support programme for LTECs.

Step 1: Country identification

The GM identifies and selects countries for long-term engagement based on the factors presented in Section 3 and on the formal request for technical assistance from a country Party.

Step 2: In-house consultation

Following initial discussions with the country Party on the potential focus of the support to be provided, the GM initiates an in-house consultation process involving regional and strategic programmes. This enables the GM to assess the potential scope and priorities of its support in a broad, inter-disciplinary manner and to identify which of the GM programmes will be involved.

As part of this process, the GM establishes a country team comprising the selected programmes and the Communications Group.

Step 3: Preparation of the country scoping note (CSN)

In consultation with the country Party, the country team develops a CSN³ that identifies the in-country issues and the options for programming. Because communications activities are part of the formulation and implementation of country programmes, explicit reference is made to them in the CSN.

Steps 4 and 5: Preparation and execution of the inception mission

The GM undertakes an in-country inception mission in collaboration with the government and in consultation with partners to assess the potential scope of the GM's country support, including objectives, expected results and main activities. The mission also takes stock of ongoing activities related to UNCCD/SLM implementation to identify options and entry points for resource mobilization, and identifies potential partners.

Steps 6 and 7: Programme development and validation

On the basis of the results of the inception mission, the GM country team develops the country programme in consultation with the government and development partners. The country programme as a whole is subsequently validated by the government and major stakeholders, for example through a national workshop.

The entire country programme development process should not exceed six months.

³ See Annex 1 for an annotated outline of the CSN.

COUNTRY PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

GM country programmes are an integral part of the GM's activities and contribute to the expected accomplishments defined by the GM in its *Four-Year Strategic Plan*. They aim to support national governments and their partners in their efforts to mobilize resources for implementation of the UNCCD and promotion of SLM.

Country programmes are implemented jointly by the GM and the counterpart institution, which is often the national UNCCD focal point institution, in partnership with other stakeholders such as ministries, multilateral and bilateral organizations, CSOs, research institutions and the private sector.

The GM mobilizes financial resources for the implementation of a country programme and is in charge of reporting to donor agencies. The GM is also responsible for overall supervision of the programme and provides technical backstopping through its regional and strategic programmes and its Communications Group. For each country, senior management designates one staff member to be responsible for coordination of the overall programme and the GM country team, and for communications with the counterpart institution.

The counterpart institution is responsible for direct supervision of the programme and its technical implementation at the national level. It designates a national coordinator, who is in charge of monitoring the programme and communicating with the GM. The national coordinator prepares six-month work plans and progress reports and liaises with other partners at the national level. At the end of the programme, the coordinator prepares a final report summarizing the main achievements for submission to the GM.

Programme implementation is supported by the GM's outreach activities led by the focal point for communications. In collaboration with the counterpart institution and the GM's country coordinator, the Communications Group develops and publishes regular updates on programme activities and major achievements on the GM's website and through such media as e-newsletters. In particular, the focal point for communications is instrumental in:

- developing communications initiatives and preparing targeted messages tailored to the country;
- establishing country communities of practice aimed at building local knowledge networks; and
- planning the operational support needed for all expected communications activities.

Quality assurance and results-based management (RBM)

The programme is implemented according to the programme document, which defines the objectives, expected results and activities of the GM following the principles of RBM.⁴ This means that all actual costs involved in carrying out the various activities and obtaining the expected results or outputs/outcomes are included in the budget. The GM has overall financial responsibility for the programme, and prepares contracts or institutional agreements

⁴ See Annex 2 for an annotated outline of the programme document.

according to the administrative rules and regulations of IFAD and the GM. If necessary and agreed by the GM and the counterpart institution, the country programme and the related budget can be revised according to the administrative procedures of IFAD and the GM.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

A steering committee consisting of representatives of government, the GM, partner institutions and other stakeholders involved in implementing the UNCCD are normally in charge of monitoring and evaluating the country programme.

A rigorous M&E system is established for every country programme. The M&E system includes:

- six-month work plans prepared at the beginning of each year indicating planned activities, expected results and the budget required for the six-month periods;
- annual progress reports compiled at the end of the year summarizing major accomplishments of the programme over the previous 12 months;
- final programme reports drafted three months before the termination of the programme summarizing the results and outlining follow-up activities envisaged by the national focal point institution; and
- minutes of steering committee meetings.

Reporting to donors is undertaken according to the rules and regulations of the donor agency or, if agreed with the donor, according to the rules and regulations of the GM's Multi-Donor Platform (MDP).

The MDP was established in January 2008 as a trust fund arrangement for GM operations and financed through voluntary contributions. It is based on:

- a pool of diversified voluntary contributions to co-finance activities;
- a cycle of replenishment throughout the biennium;
- a set of costed activities for the outcomes and outputs, in line with the GM's RBM system; and
- a standard reporting process.

The MDP offers enough flexibility to accommodate the needs of donor agencies and is designed to receive and hold contributions pledged at any point during the biennium and earmarked contributions.

Exit strategy

Country programmes have a maximum duration of four years. The GM's country support is therefore based on a well-defined exit strategy that outlines the follow-up activities to be undertaken under the leadership of the counterpart institution, after programme completion.

TABLE 2: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GM, NATIONAL COUNTERPART INSTITUTIONS AND DONORS

GM	National counterpart institution	Donor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mobilizes financial resources for implementation of the country programme. ▪ Provides overall financial management of the country programme. ▪ Provides overall supervision and coordination of the programme. ▪ Ensures communication and reporting to donors. ▪ Provides technical backstopping. ▪ Participates in the country programme steering committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implements direct supervision of the programme at the national level. ▪ Monitors the programme at the national level. ▪ Ensures communication with the GM and partners at the national level. ▪ Compiles draft annual work plans, progress reports and final reports for submission to the GM. ▪ Organizes meetings of the country programme steering committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provides financial resources for programme implementation. ▪ Reviews technical and financial reports provided by the GM. ▪ Carries out supervisory and/or evaluation missions as requested.

CONCLUSIONS

The CEM is a practical guide that supports the GM in reaching its corporate objectives. It is intended for long-term engagement at country level, yet the same methodology can be applied to its small-scale interventions.

The GM's approach, explained through the operational modalities and principles set out in the document, helps the organization to partner affected countries more efficiently and effectively. In line with the Ten-Year Strategy, whereby affected countries are called upon to realign their NAPs, the GM maintains that its approach can provide country Parties with the support, products and services they need to meet this challenge.

Having selected four pillars on which to base its approach - partnership building, mainstreaming, engagement in policy processes, and communications and outreach - the GM considers that its country engagement modalities will ensure long-term sustainable development results by securing predictable resources of financing for SLM.

ANNEX

1

ANNOTATED OUTLINE OF THE COUNTRY SCOPING NOTE (CSN)

INTRODUCTION

Provides the background, context, rationale and objectives for the CSN. It should include elements of the GM's CSEA and *Four-Year Strategic Plan*.

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Provides an overview of the country situation. It should include, but is not limited to:

- the political, economic, social and regional situation;
- positioning of the UNCCD in the country context;
- the threat of land degradation and how it is being addressed;
- the gaps or potential identified such as the policy, institutional and financing situations, and therefore the rationale for the GM's engagement; and
- United Nations issues such as: Is the country part of the "One UN" initiative? What is the status of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)?

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

Provides an overview of the national development goals and expected outcomes, and describes how the GM intends to focus and target its interventions in this context.

AID ARCHITECTURE

Provides details of:

- major donors in the country;
- aid flows and patterns;
- aid delivery mechanisms;
- financing mechanisms; and
- implications for the GM's strategic focus and targeting.

STRATEGY AND APPROACH TO RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

Outlines options for GM programming, entry points and potential niche areas.

ANNEXES

All other relevant information is annexed to the CSN.

ANNEX

2

ANNOTATED
OUTLINE OF THE
PROGRAMME
DOCUMENT

INTRODUCTION

Provides an overview of the GM's mandate and Four-Year Strategic Plan; contains the same text for all programme documents.

1.1 Background

Provides background information on the mission and main areas of GM intervention.

1.2 Principles of engagement

Summarizes the principles outlined in the CEM.

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Draws on the CSN to provide the rationale for the GM's engagement in the country and the status of UNCCD implementation.

2.1 Economic situation

2.2 Political and institutional situation

2.3 Environmental situation

2.4 Positioning of the UNCCD in the country context

2.5 Threat of land degradation and opportunities/constraints to combating land degradation

COUNTRY PROGRAMME

Focuses on the framework/entry points for resource mobilization in the country and on the GM's comparative and strategic roles.

3.1 Objectives

Defines the programme's objectives.

3.2 Expected results and activities

Describes in detail the planned activities and expected results for each objective.

TABLE 1. OVERVIEW OF OBJECTIVES, ACTIVITIES AND EXPECTED RESULTS

Objective	Expected results	Activities
Objective 1	Result 1.1	Activity 1.1.1
		Activity 1.1.2
	Result 1.2	Activity 1.2.1
		Activity 1.2.2
Objective 2	Result 2.1	Activity 2.1.1

3.3 Linkages with the Ten-Year Strategy for Enhancing the Implementation of the UNCCD (2008-2018)

Provides clear linkages between the country programme and the Ten-Year Strategy.

3.4 Risk assessment

Briefly describes potential risks that may hinder programme implementation and the achievement of expected results.

3.5 Information, communications and knowledge management

Outlines the communications strategy for the programme to ensure adequate information sharing at the national level and knowledge management at the institutional level.

3.6 Exit strategy

Describes measures foreseen to secure appropriate follow-up by the national counterpart institution on programme completion.

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING AND EVALUATION

4.1 Implementation arrangements

Defines the roles and responsibilities of the GM, the national counterpart institution, partner institutions (if applicable) and the donor. Describes administrative procedures for the management of financial resources, reporting and the functioning of a steering committee.

4.2 Resource allocation

Provides an overview of the budget earmarked for programme implementation, including GM staff time for backstopping. Indicates donors providing financial resources for implementation of the programme and potential financial or in-kind contributions provided by the host government.

TABLE 2: OVERVIEW OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES BY ACTIVITY

Activity	Input required	Budget (USD)			TOTAL
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	
1.1.1	▪ National expert	4 000	3 000	20 000	7 000
	▪ Organization of workshop	10 000			30 000

4.3 Monitoring and evaluation

Describes the monitoring and evaluation system established by the programme. Based on a well-defined programme log frame (see Table 3, below), it includes main tools such as the annual work plan, annual progress report, final report and minutes of steering committee meetings, and outlines the roles and responsibilities of the GM and the national counterpart institution.

TABLE 3. PROGRAMME LOG FRAME

Project component	Indicators of success (objectively verifiable indicators)	Methods of verification (means of verification)	Risks and assumptions
Development objective Immediate objective 1 Expected result 1.1 Expected result 1.2 Immediate objective 2	Provides verifiable indicators to show whether the defined objectives and results have been achieved.	Outlines the methods and sources used to obtain indicators of success.	Describes potential risks that may hinder objectives/ results, and assumptions indicating the potential for reaching the anticipated objectives and results.

5.1 Budget

Description	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Total	
	Person months	USD	Person months	USD	Person months	USD	Person months	USD
Professionals								
Professional 1								
Professional 2								
<i>Sub-total professionals</i>								
General service								
General Service 1								
General Service 2								
<i>Sub-total general service</i>								
International experts								
Expert 1								
Expert 2								
<i>Sub-total international experts</i>								
National experts								
Expert 1								
Expert 2								
<i>Sub-total national experts</i>								
Institutional agreement								
Agreement 1								
Agreement 2								
<i>Sub-total institutional agreement</i>								
Local contracts								
Contract 1								
Contract 2								
<i>Sub-total local contracts</i>								
Missions								
Mission 1								
Mission 2								
<i>Sub-total missions</i>								
Training (workshops and meetings)•								
Training 1								
Training 2								
<i>Sub-total training (workshops and meetings)•</i>								
Expendable equipment								
# 1								
# 2								
<i>Sub-total expendable equipment</i>								
Non-expendable equipment								
# 1								
# 2								
<i>Sub-total non-expendable equipment</i>								
Coordination costs								
# 1								
# 2								
<i>Sub-total coordination costs</i>								
TOTAL								

• Including travel and DSA for participants

5.2 Work plan

Work plan for 200X and 200X								
Activity	Year 1				Year 2			
	1st quarter	2nd quarter	3rd quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter	2nd quarter	3rd quarter	4th quarter
1.1.1								
1.1.2								
1.2.1								



UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION
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