

Call for proposals

Technical assistance for the GO4SDGs “SME Assessment” work stream in Latin America and the Caribbean

1. Introduction

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the voice of the environment within the United Nations system. UNEP acts as a catalyst, advocate, educator and facilitator to promote the rational utilization and sustainable development of the global environment.

UNEP's work includes assessing global, regional and national environmental conditions and trends; developing international and national environmental instruments; and strengthening institutions for the sensible management of the environment. UNEP has a long history of contributing to the development and facilitation of intergovernmental platforms for the development of environmental agreements, principles, multilateral guidelines and studies aimed at addressing global environmental challenges.

Thus, the Global Opportunities for Sustainable Development Goals (GO4SDGs) was launched by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the German Ministry for the Environment in 2019 with the goal to support policy champions, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and youth in integrating sustainable consumption and production, and inclusive green economy approaches in their policies and decisions to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals as well as the Paris Climate Change Agreement.

The GO4SDGs “SMEs Assessment” work stream is led by the UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Green Growth Knowledge Partnership (GGKP). This work stream focuses on rapidly deploying an SME self-assessment solution on a region-by-region basis; the output of which will support the uptake of resource efficiency practices by providing SMEs with simplified and tailored access to existing support services such as capacity building, financing solutions and SME networks. The objective of this workstream is three-fold:

1. Deploy a system through which the needs of individual SMEs can be easily ascertained and that takes into account their sector of activity and location.
2. Develop a dynamic database of resource efficiency support services existing in the target region and which can be easily upscaled and replicated.
3. Match the existing resource efficiency support services with the identified SMEs based on their specific needs, and work with the organisations providing the support services to upscale and replicate them as required to meet the increased demand from SMEs.

This workstream will thereby ultimately support SMEs implement resource efficiency actions that will help them manage the impacts of the current COVID crisis and build resilience for both future crises and growing market competition.

The “Integrated Greening Operations” (I-GO) solution for SMEs is being developed as part of the GGKP Green Industry Platform (GIP) work programme in collaboration with the Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE) initiative. The I-GO solution has been designed to build on the vast amount of support services (guidance, tools, SME networks, financial solutions, training programmes and technical assistance) that GIP has collected from leading organisations and experts from around the world and tailor it to the specific needs of individual SMEs.

The core of the I-GO solution consists of an easy to use SME self-assessment tool that produces a customized list of recommendations on how best to approach improving the resource efficiency of the particular SME's operations. Each recommendation comes with links to the relevant support services that can directly enable the SME to implement the necessary resource efficiency actions, taking into account their location and sector of activity. By matching SMEs to the existing resource efficiency support services most suited to their individual needs, the I-GO solution is also actively able to identify where specific support services can be upscaled and/or replicated to meet the demand of identified SME needs.

I-GO Solution – The steps to transform knowledge into action:



The development of strategic I-GO partnerships with international, regional and national organisations engaged with SMEs in Latin America and the Caribbean is key to the successful deployment of the I-GO solution in this region. These I-GO partnerships are necessary to ensure the effective compilation of the wide range of existing resource efficiency information and support services (e.g. through NGOs, business associations and governmental organisations) and to enable access to the numerous different location and activity specific SME networks (e.g. through large companies with supply chains and business associations).

Through their multiplier effect, these strategic I-GO partnerships will play a leading role in building awareness of the I-GO solution and its benefits amongst SME networks. The established I-GO partnerships will also help I-GO partner organisations provide critical support to their SME networks during the COVID crisis.

2. Objective of the call of proposals

UNEP invites universities, research centres, think-tanks, business associations, National Cleaner Production Centers, NGOs and other civil society organizations to submit their proposals to provide technical assistance for the GO4SDGs "SME Assessment" work stream in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The applicant entity must demonstrate, based on the information requested below, that it is duly qualified and has the necessary experience to carry out the service described in the scope, duties and responsibilities of the technical assistance.

Only non-profit organizations will be eligible.

3. Scope, duties, and responsibilities

The project covers the Latin America and Caribbean region as well as a more in-depth focus on Mexico, Costa Rica, Colombia and Brazil. The work will involve supporting the development of key partnerships with international, regional and national organisations and companies engaged with SMEs in the Latin America and Caribbean region and the four focus countries, researching and compiling existing SME resource efficiency materials and supporting communication and workshop activities. The contracted party will deliver on this by carrying out the following duties:

3.1. Compilation of potential I-GO partners

The first stage of the project will require extensive research to build a compilation of potential I-GO partners with SME networks in the Latin America and Caribbean region, as well as separate potential I-GO partner compilations for each of the four focus countries. This stage is considered a desk-based review process and it is therefore not necessary to have direct interaction with the identified potential I-GO partners.

I-GO partners can be considered to be of two types:

- Organisations that provide publicly accessible resource efficiency information (guidance, tools and case studies) and/or support services (financial incentives, training and technical assistance) services relevant to SMEs. These organisations, as an I-GO partner, would have the opportunity for their information/services to be promoted through the I-GO solution as well as the green industry platform. In addition, such organisations would benefit from feedback received from I-GO users to help improve/update their information/services. The key benefits for this type of I-GO partner are the increased uptake of their information/services and comprehensive user feedback to support improvements/updates.

And/or

- Organisations that engage directly with SME networks, typically in a leadership or supporting role. Such organisations can range from, for example, large companies with SME supply chains to business associations to development organisations. To be a potential I-GO partner, such an organisation would be deemed willing to actively promote the benefits of the I-GO tool amongst their SME network and support the gathering of feedback from SMEs through surveys, etc. The key benefit for this type of I-GO partner is the ability to provide active support to their network in dealing with the impacts of COVID-19, improving their sustainability and strengthening their market competitiveness.

Typical examples of potential I-GO partners include for Latin America and Caribbean region:

- International development organisations active in the region
- Regional government organisations and SME initiatives
- International and regional business associations and industry led initiatives
- International and regional service providers for SMEs
- Multinational companies with supply chain interests in the region

For the individual focus countries:

- International development organisations active in each country
- Government ministries, agencies and initiatives supporting SMEs
- National business associations and industry led initiatives
- National service providers
- Large companies with supply chain interests in the individual countries
- National Cleaner Production Centers

The potential I-GO partner compilations must include details of a relevant key contact person for each organisation, a detailed description of the organisation and its SME network, an evaluation as to how relevant the organisation would be as a potential I-GO partner and recommendations on how to best engage with the organisation.

A presentation of the potential I-GO partner compilations must be given to the project team at the conclusion of the task and include an overview of a proposed outreach campaign to engage directly with the potential I-GO partners.

The potential I-GO partner compilations, presentation and proposed outreach campaign overview should be prepared in English.

3.2. Partnership development

The second stage of the project will be to actively engage with the potential I-GO partners identified in Stage 1 and support the development of formal I-GO partnerships with interested organisations. As part of the outreach activity it will be required to also gather additional information on the general needs of both potential partner organisations and their SME networks regarding productivity improvements, COVID crisis impacts and barriers to resource efficiency uptake. The specific activities of this project stage include:

- i. Conducting – in close cooperation with UNEP- an active outreach campaign to develop concrete relationships with potential I-GO partners identified in the pipeline. This outreach campaign will require direct engagement with the potential I-GO partners in order to present the I-GO solution, confirm their provisional interest and agree a senior representative to be the main point of contact. This step will include one regional outreach campaign and four national outreach campaigns for the focus countries
- ii. Supporting the dissemination of one regional and four national surveys (these will be developed by the project team) amongst the potential I-GO partners, and where possible their SME networks, to understand the current key SME needs and barriers to resource efficiency uptake. The survey should be prepared in the three languages (English, Spanish and Portuguese).
- iii. Supporting the development and operation of one regional and four national virtual I-GO training workshops for the potential I-GO partners. These workshops will be organised together with UNEP. The workshops will focus on:
 - Supporting I-GO partners identify the opportunities for upscaling and replicating existing resource efficiency support services such as capacity building and financial solutions

- Learn about the I-GO tool, its application by SMEs and its planned deployment process
- Engage with the other potential I-GO partners to share experiences and lessons learned
- Provide feedback on the overall I-GO project to ensure its ability to be adapted to the local context

The workshop agenda and methodology will be developed in collaboration with UNEP and the main level of support will be required to manage the invitees, provide insights during the workshop and summarise the proceedings.

- iv. Support the administration of putting in place formal I-GO partnerships with interested organisations and companies.

3.3. Compilation of resource efficiency knowledge

The third stage of the project will involve the compilation of existing best practices available in any of the three languages (English, Spanish and/or Portuguese) and resource efficiency information (case studies, technical guidance and toolkits) and support services (training, financial incentives and technical assistance) relevant to the region and the individual focus countries. This project stage will require both independent research and well as engagement with potential I-GO partners to build up a comprehensive regional database and four national databases of the existing resource efficiency information and support services that can be integrated into the I-GO solution.

As many of potential I-GO partners will be important sources for this this resource efficiency knowledge compilation, it would be expected that this project stage will also be carried out in parallel to stage two.

The overview should be prepared in English, but the best practice material referenced in the overview does not need translation.

3.4. I-GO Promotional Campaign

Once the I-GO partnerships have been put in place and the resource efficiency knowledge compilation integrated into the I-GO solution, **a comprehensive promotional campaign will be undertaken by UNEP to support the official roll-out of the I-GO solution in the region and four focus countries.** The fourth stage of this project will involve the active support of the promotional campaign and will include the following key activities:

- i. Supporting UNEP with the design and development of an I-GO promotional campaign for the region and the four focus countries, in particular taking into consideration how it can be deployed through the various I-GO partners
- ii. Managing the engagement with I-GO partners during the promotional campaign
- iii. Providing a technical help desk function for SMEs and SME service providers using the I-GO self-assessment tool during the I-GO promotion period

Ultimate results of service

The contracted organisation delivering these activities will be working under the Resource Efficiency and Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) sub-programme in the UNEP

Latin America and the Caribbean office. Working under the supervision of the Regional Coordinator, the contract organisation will contribute to improving the uptake of resource efficiency measures amongst SMEs in Latin America and the Caribbean.

4. Expected duration and deliverables/products

The expected start date of the contract is 30.11.2020. The duration of the services is 10 months.

Date	Product/deliverable
18.12.2020	One regional and four national potential I-GO partner compilations in excel format and conclusion of a presentation of the compilations with recommendation on how best to engage with the potential partners.
29.01. 2021	Report detailing confirmed potential International, regional and national (four focus countries) I-GO partners, as a result of an active outreach campaign targeting initiatives and organisations identified in the partner compilation documents.
26.02. 2021	Excel document outlining best practice SME resource efficiency information materials (case studies, technical guides and tools) and support services (Technical assistance, financing solutions and training) relevant to the region (minimum 60 resources) and four focus countries (Minimum 20 resources per country).
19.03. 2021	Report outlining the results of one regional survey and four national surveys on SME resource efficiency needs and barriers carried out amongst the potential I-GO partners and their SME networks.
28.05.2021	Regional and four national I-GO introduction virtual workshops for potential I-GO partners and submission of a summary of feedback received during the workshops.
26.06.2021	Development of priority I-GO promotional campaign deployment options through I-GO partners
21.08.2021	Report summarizing the promotional activity with each engaged I-GO partner.
30.09.2021	Summary report of support provided to I-GO users through the technical help desk function.

All summary reports detailed above should be prepared in English.

5. Obligations

The selected entity shall:

- Have the necessary equipment and personnel for the development of the technical assistance products.
- Allow UNEP to provide up to 3 rounds of comments to each product delivered, without implying any cost to the contracting entity.

6. Selection criteria

The contracted organisation will be expected to provide a team with the required qualifications and experience to successfully deliver the outline activities. It is expected that the core team members will have advanced degrees in environmental management, sustainable development and/or environmental studies, and/or social science; a first level degree with relevant experience can be considered in place of an advanced level degree.

The core team members of the contract organisations should be able to demonstrate the following experience:

- A minimum of 7 years accumulated work experience working in the field of environment and sustainable development related projects and that includes experience with an international development organization.
- A sound understanding of SME resource efficiency in the Latin America and Caribbean region, specific experience within one or more of the four focus countries is desirable.
- Relevant work experience in developing countries, as well as a deep understanding of context in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Strong project management experience and planning, liaison and organization skills; initiative to identify alternatives ahead of project challenges;
- Communications experience, particularly with outreach, presentation, and coordination at various stakeholder levels.
- Knowledge of the UN system is an advantage.
- Fluency in oral and written English and Spanish is required. Good knowledge of Portuguese is an advantage.

7. Information required

The proposing organization should provide UNEP with the information below in a PDF document.

A. General information

- a. Name of the proposing entity
- b. Country of origin and registration:
- c. Type of legal entity / organization:
- d. Date of formation:
- e. Address:
- f. Website:
- g. Name of the contact person:
- h. E-mail address:
- i. Phone number:

B. Technical proposal

- a. Organizational profile: present a brief description of the proposing entity, including size (number of workers), type of activities carried out and the geographical scope of its work (max 250 words).
- b. Describe the specialised knowledge and experience with similar initiatives that can be applied for the implementation of the proposed activities. This should include the organisation's experiences implementing similar, local and/or regional work. The organization should detail at least 4 experiences in a table like the one below.

Experience with other United Nations organizations and/or multilateral organizations is desirable.

Table 1. Background studies

Name of the study	Contractor	Year of execution	Duratuon	Vaule of contract	Relevance for this technical assistance

C. Work plan and approach

- Provide a general description of the methodology to be used for the development of the reports
- Identify the gaps and challenges in terms of existing information for the development of the reports and how it plans to address them.
- Develop a work plan, detailing the planned activities and the timeline for their implementation.

D. Work Team

- Describe the structure of the proposed team/staff, and the work tasks (including supervision) assigned to each.
- Present the curriculum vitae of the proposed staff who will be involved in the development of the report, highlighting academic qualifications, specialized courses and relevant work experience.

E. Financial Proposal

The applicant entity should estimate the cost of the technical assistance using the table below. Please note that the purchase of office equipment, rental of workspace and any other costs associated with the day-to-day operation of the entity are not eligible expenses. The estimated budget for this activity is 45,000 to 55,000 USD.

Type of Expense	Unit	Cost per Unit	Total Cost

7. Form of presentation and deadline

Proposals must be submitted in digital format (PDF) and sent to the following e-mail addresses: Adriana Zacarias Farah, Global Coordinator of Go4SDGs, (adriana.zacarias@un.org), and to Beatriz Carneiro, Programme Manager, Ecolabelling and Consumer Information (Beatriz.carneiro@un.org) no later than **Monday 16 November 2020, 18:00 (Panama time)**.

To facilitate communication, the subject line should be: "GO4SDGs "SME Assessment" work stream in Latin America and the Caribbean"

The proposal must be submitted in Spanish or English. However, the entity must demonstrate that the team assigned to the development of the report is proficient in English, taking into account that many of the consultations with the UNEP will be conducted in this language.

Interested partners could also send their questions no later than Friday 30 of October 2020. Responses will be delivered through a Frequently Asked Questions Document that will be shared with partners prior to the submission deadline.