

**Global Gateway Civil Society and
Local Authorities Advisory Platform:
Terms of Reference**

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1. Introduction

On 1 December 2021, the European Commission and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Vice President of the Commission (HRVP) presented the Joint Communication on Global Gateway¹. It is the EU's contribution to narrowing the global investment gap, supporting global economic recovery and accompanying the twin green and digital transitions beyond European borders, and promoting the resilience of value chains globally. It intends to boost smart, clean and secure links in the digital, climate, energy, and transport sectors, and to strengthen education, research and health systems across the world. Global Gateway (GG) is Europe's positive and **values-based offer** to channel investments in global infrastructure development in accordance with **six key principles**: democratic values and high standards, good governance and transparency, equal partnerships, green and clean, security-focused and catalysing private sector investment. In terms of investments, GG aims to mobilise up to €300 billion through a Team Europe approach, bringing together the EU, its Member States and their financial and development institutions.

Civil Society and Local Authorities have a vital role to play when it comes to the **implementation** of Global Gateway in line with **the values-based approach** in order to shape projects in full respect of fundamental values and to the benefit of local communities.

The role of the civil society is **formally recognized** in the Joint Communication, which foresees two levels of civil society's involvement in GG: one at local level, through the public consultations held on the design and implementation of concrete GG projects, and one at HQ level, being part of the governance and communication structure of GG. This Terms of Reference covers only the latter.

2. Overarching objective

The **Global Gateway Civil Society and Local Authorities Advisory² Platform (the Platform)**, established at HQ level on 24th October 2023 at a launch event held back-to-back with the first Global Gateway Forum, has the following objectives: (1) to contribute to the implementation of the Global Gateway strategy, enhancing its overall effectiveness and ensuring alignment with its key principles, the Sustainable Development Goals, and the 2030 Agenda; (2) to ensure the transparency and accountability of the implementation of the GG Strategy at all stages and GG financing, as well as (3) to hold the EU to account for respecting and fulfilling EU values as stated in the Treaties.

The European Commission will take into account the perspectives, recommendations and knowledge provided by civil society and local authorities via the Platform in the implementation of GG strategy, with a view to ensuring that a fully inclusive approach is

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EsN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52021JC0030>

² This group is not set up as a formal advisory body to the European Commission (not a COM expert group) but as a special informal group for dialogue on GG.

taken. This means adhering to the rule of law, upholding high standards of human, social, and workers' rights and respecting norms from international rules and standards, ensuring that investments are sustainable – for local people, local environment and local economies. The two principles of “do no harm”, “leave-no-one-behind” and a rights-based approach will underpin the work of the Platform. With that aim, the Platform will look at the GG Strategy, including from a sectoral perspective, and may explore case studies from which to draw lessons and recommendations for other future projects.

3. Purpose

More specifically, the platform would:

- 1) **Provide recommendations** on the implementation of the Global Gateway strategy, ensuring a person-centred and whole-of-government approach and ensuring the engagement of and value added for local communities, reducing inequalities, respect for labour rights, promoting an enabling environment and space for local authorities and civil society, respect for the environment and planetary boundaries and policy coherence for sustainable development. It includes recommendations on financing modalities as well as pointing to common features and trends in the design and implementation of GG projects and identifying best practices on the ground.
- 2) **Ensure a diversity of views**, representing the breadth of civil society and local and regional authorities and paying particular attention to marginalised and excluded groups.
- 3) **Enhance knowledge**, understanding and capacities on the objectives and implementation of the Global Gateway Strategy.
- 4) **Ensure transparency** and contribute to a smooth communication flow between the EU, civil society and local authorities by providing a space for regular updates, exchange of good practice and the sharing of information concerning key GG projects, with regard to relevant cross-cutting issues such as inequality, climate, environment and gender and, when published, reports on results achieved measured by EU corporate indicators³.

4. Structure

The Platform is set up as a working group of **the Policy Forum for Development**. It is self-organised and consists of:

- a) **Overarching Platform/Plenary**: with up to 60 members and broad representation of CSOs and LAs, plus up to 10 observers;
- b) **Steering Group**: a smaller group of no more than 15 members, representing a diversity of CSO/LAs, appointed to guide and lead the work for a mandated period. It will act as a liaison between the Platform and the European Commission.
- c) **Potential thematic sessions/ working groups** (ad hoc or regular) focused on specific areas of partnership of the Global Gateway strategy and/or cross-cutting issues, may

³ Corporate Indicators are those in the GERF (Global Europe Result Framework). Staff working document Global Europe Results Framework ((2022) 22 final)

be developed by the platform at any time. This may include exchanges with members of the Global Gateway Business Advisory Group on specific topics or sectors (e.g. on ESG, business and human rights).

5. Composition

Platform members shall be global CSO and LA associations or networks from Europe and INTPA/NEAR regions. The representatives in the Platform will have the requisite knowledge to inform the discussions, being actively engaged in the GG Strategy implementation, and to promote the recommendations of the Platform in all other GG fora.

The CSO/LA members will be active in Global Gateway's key areas of partnership (digital sector, climate and energy, transport, health, education and research) or in cross-cutting areas related to Global Gateway's "key principles" (democratic values and high standards, good governance and transparency, equal partnerships, clean and green, security-focused). Participation of representatives from member organisations should be flexible and not limited to one contact person per organisation, especially if specific expertise is needed in a given meeting. However, members will ensure continuity and consistency between their representatives.

Members will include actor-based organisations (women and youth, associations representing the informal sector, indigenous people, LGBTQI+ groups, diaspora organisations etc.) sector-specific expert organisations, as well as social partners, experts in responsible investing and development finance, philanthropy support organisations/networks and local authorities' regional and global associations. Representativeness will be important. Diversity and inclusion should be ensured across the structure of the platform.

Platform members may be drawn from Policy Forum on Development (PFD) members or from outside the PFD membership as required to ensure a balanced representation along Europe and the INTPA/NEAR regions⁴, thematic criteria and specific expertise. Criteria for selection shall be those applied for the selection of PFD members, namely organisations shall:

- Represent a network in the region or at global level that works in and has a history of working in the area of international cooperation and development for at least 5 years.
- Have adequate regional contacts to reach a wide membership; presence via members in the majority of the countries of a given region.
- Have proven capacity to communicate/disseminate information via an existing database or dissemination tool and feedback mechanisms already in place.
- Have proven and relevant competence and experience, including at European and/or international level, in relevant areas; specifically, have knowledge and experience working with current EU policy implementation.
- Ensure adequate competence and experience of the proposed representatives.

⁴ Sub-Saharan Africa; Latin America and Caribbean; Asia, Middle East and Pacific; Eastern Neighbourhood; Southern Neighbourhood.

Platform members shall commit to participate in the Platform's activities for a period of two years. They shall remain members until replaced. Their stint as members may be renewed. Registration in the EU Transparency Register is required for organisations to become Platform members. Platform members will inform the steering group of any potential conflicts of interest that may arise during the mandated period as soon as they arise.

The Committee of the Regions (CoR), European Economic and Social Council (EESC) and other EU institutions and services may be granted an observer status by direct invitation in the plenary. Observers shall be represented by 1 person per institutions/service. Observers' representatives may be permitted to take part in the discussions of the platform plenary and provide input. However, they shall not participate in the formulation of recommendations or any decision of the Platform.

6. Organisation and Ways of Working

The plenary would convene for up to two times per year, including one meeting in the run up to the GG Forum or Board Meeting. This meeting shall, in principle, be held in-person, in Brussels and the Commissioner for International Partnerships would participate in one plenary meeting per year.

In between plenary meetings, the steering group will meet on a quarterly basis online and report and exchange with the platform members through a digital space, and ad hoc exchanges will be convened as needed.

The agenda for the plenary meetings will be jointly agreed by the steering group, in consultation with the Commission and based on a transparent exchange of information about the current state of play of GG priorities and progress. As far as possible, the steering group shall adopt its opinions, recommendations or reports by consensus.

The Platform, under the guidance of the steering group, may produce short papers to be transmitted to the EU Commissioner for International Partnerships and representatives of the EEAS and DG NEAR, as well as the Business Advisory Group, for dialogue and exchange.

The Platform may, out of its own initiative, engage with different actors and mechanisms which are part of the Global Gateway, as well as the global PFD. The aim of this exchange is cross-fertilisation between the groups and mechanisms.

The creation of sub-group/thematic groups (permanent or ad-hoc), as appropriate, may allow for the participation of additional organisations, including national organisations at the initiative of Platform members and as required to facilitate discussion of individual topics.

Being a working group under the Policy Forum for Development (PFD), there will be no specific allocation of financial resources for the Platform, but principles and rules of the PFD apply, including allocation of financial resources for studies or reports as well as travel cost for Platform members to the in-person meeting of the plenary once a year.

Platform members commit to:

- Undertake outreach and gather feedback around relevant issues before and after Platform events to maintain a continual flow of information;
- Share information with constituents regularly to feed into Platform discussions and decisions;
- Represent the views of their constituencies to the best of their capacity in Platform meetings and events;
- Act in a transparent and accountable manner, avoiding any conflict of interest;
- Participate in the Platform activities and communication during and in between main meetings.

For CSO and LA members of the Platform to be able to implement their role, the European Commission and any other associated institutional actors will:

- Share relevant information in a timely manner;
- Use appropriate methodologies to allow for meaningful and constructive engagement;
- Agree meeting dates and deadlines together with steering group members;
- Provide regular feedback on how outputs and recommendations from the Platform were included in decision-making and on the decisions taken.

Annex

Platform internal management guidelines:

1. Possible Outputs/Deliverables

The Platform could produce the following elements to enhance understanding of objectives and value added of GG:

Policy

- Formulate recommendations to EU institutions and relevant stakeholders
- Develop and publish policy briefs

Knowledge

- Produce knowledge products, and organise joint events
- Sharing of best practices
- Added value of partnering with CSO & LA in implementation
- Organise thematic webinars and events to stimulate debate and knowledge exchange

Follow-up

- draft studies and reports: to highlight achievements, key outcomes, challenges, and recommendations for improvement

2. Values

The following principles will guide the Platform's work and positioning:

- Inclusion, intersectionality, gender equality
- Representativity, diversity
- Transparency, accountability, and anti-corruption
- Respect for human rights, labour rights and environmental sustainability
- Do no harm principle
- Constructive candour
- Innovation
- Intergenerational collaboration
- Sharing of best practices and collaboration
- Solidarity and equal partnership

3. Guidelines for engagement

Individuals representing CSOs and LA in the platform are expected to have significant experience and track record in the area of activity of their organisations. They will also have:

- ✓ proven capacity to represent and express the views of their constituencies, including past representational experience and specific experience in gathering and synthesizing multiple inputs;

- ✓ demonstrated capacity to provide their constituencies with regular feed-back on the discussions and conclusions reached within the GG CSO-LA platform;

The following guidelines would underpin the operations of the Platform to complement the ways of working :

- Safe space
- Intersectional, feminist and decolonial approach
- Multi-lingual approach (as needed English, Spanish, French, and Portuguese) with simultaneous translation for plenary and Steering Group meetings to allow diversity and inclusion as needed
- Provide timely feedback and actionable recommendations on processes, procedures, policies, and supporting tools that ensure the values and principles espoused by the European Union and Global Gateway are reflected in the roll-out of the Global Gateway Strategy

4. Evaluation framework

The following metrics can serve to self-monitor and self-assess the Platform's work and impact:

- Perception of accessibility to the Platform and the meaningfulness of conversations;
- Perception of Platform member's inclusive collaboration and the degree of co-creation and co-decision-making
- Perception of the ability to influence GG strategy development, implementation, monitoring and learning and degree to which recommendations have been adopted and feedback provided on Platform recommendations and decisions taken;
- Frequency and quality of reports on the implementation of GG by the EU
- Composition of the Platform (broken down by gender, region, etc).