



**OBSERVATOIRE DU SAHARA ET DU SAHEL**  
**SAHARA AND SAHEL OBSERVATORY**

# Counselling and advice practices

*July 2017*



## **Counselling and advice Practices**

### **1. SUBJECT**

This document describes the current practices used by OSS to assess the need of projects and programs beneficiaries for counselling and advice in order to implement the required support activities. It has been developed by the Executive Secretariat of the OSS as part of strengthening its capabilities in the management of funds available across different climate financing mechanisms and other donors.

The practices shall be regularly updated according to progress made in activities and challenges related to management of projects and programs in OSS intervention area.

### **2. SCOPE OF APPLICATION**

These practices was developed in the framework of setting up a counselling and advice mechanism for OSS. This document will be used as the main reference in the review of the projects and programs implemented or executed by OSS and the identification of support, counselling and advice needs of its beneficiaries and partners.

OSS shall use these practices in the execution of its duties as a regional implementing entity of Climate Funds (Adaptation Fund and Green Climate Fund) as well as in the management of funds received from other Funding institutions and financial partners.

### **3. DOCUMENTS OF REFERENCE**

This practices is fully compatible with OSS strategic orientations and operational guidelines for projects/programs management and implementation in its zone of action. These documents include mainly:

- 1) OSS Financial Regulation (December 2010).
- 2) OSS Strategy 2020 (December 2010),
- 3) OSS Manual of Procedures (April 2012),
- 4) OSS Arbitration procedure (October 2016),
- 5) OSS Environmental and social policy (April 2016).
- 6) OSS Gender policy (April 2016)



## 4. CONTENT

### 4.1. Roles and responsibilities (Who)

Each project manager shall be in charge of coordinating the counselling and advice activities needed to ensure the achievement of the project' objectives and results. This includes the mobilisation of the expertise required to conduct the assessment, identification and implementation of support activities. Expertise to be mobilised may include:

- The project implementation unit and technical experts
- The head of Environmental and Water programs at OSS
- The OSS financial unit and more specifically the internal controller
- External consultants recruited to conduct specific tasks/themes.

### 4.2. Intervention timeline (When & How)

Counselling and advice activities shall be conducted in parallel with the project interventions and constitute an integral part of the project implementation/execution cycle.

Identification and implementation of advice and support activities will be triggered either (i) during project preparation phase, (ii) during project supervisions missions or (iii) when receiving a specific request from the project beneficiaries or executing entities.

- **Project preparation phase**

The OSS advice and support activities addressed to the execution entities (EE) shall be initiated at the project preparation phase. The OSS project implementation unit (PIU) shall be responsible to provide the needed support and advice in order to EE related to the understating of the grant agreement sections and other preparation activities such as the Environmental and Social Impact Assessments. Support activities may take place during the preparatory mission and concertation workshop to be organised.

- **Project supervisions missions**

- 1- Launching meeting/workshop

During the launching meeting/workshop, OSS shall asses the needs of the executing entity (EE) related to the elaboration and validation of a project implementation manual and other relevant documents (work plan, procurement plan, audit procedure, steering committee composition and mandate) as well as the definition of the project management team composition and related tasks.

The OSS project implementation unit (PIU) shall provide the appropriate clarifications and advice required for the achievement of the launching workshop objectives. The PIU shall also plan capacity building missions or training to address specific needs of the EE.

The launching workshop report shall clearly indicate the support activities provided during the meeting and the planning for the specific advice missions or training to be conducted.

- 2- Regular supervision missions and activities reporting



Depending on the project specificities and scope, the PIU shall plan, in advance, the frequency and scope of its in-site supervision missions and activities reporting. Specifically, technical as well as financial and administrative aspects are covered by those missions and/or progress reports.

Supervision missions and activities reporting allow the PIU to track the progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and to assist the EE in improving project implementation. During these missions, the PIU shall identify the weaknesses related to project management and collect the needs of the EE for support and training. The PIU shall then propose a plan to conduct support activities.

### 3- Mid-term review

The PIU shall contract an external evaluator or evaluation team to review both the technical and financial and administrative aspects of the project. The Mid-Term Review shall provide the PIU of the project with sufficient information to make an informed judgement about the performance of the project (its efficiency and effectiveness).

After receiving the mid-term evaluation report, the project manager in collaboration with the PIU and the financial unit PIU shall review the report in order to make subsequent decisions about any required changes to the project scope such as the objectives, duration, indicators targets, budget and management arrangements. The EE shall be informed of the mid-term review outcomes and supported and guided by the PIU in order to apply and implement the mid-review decisions.

### 4- Terminal review

After the execution of the project activities, the PIU shall contract an external evaluator or evaluation team to conduct the terminal/final evaluation of the project. The evaluation shall cover the technical and financial and administrative aspects of the project. The terminal evaluation must provide a comprehensive and systematic account of the performance of the completed project by assessing its design phase, process of implementation, achievements vis-à-vis predefined objectives and expected result including any agreed changes in the objectives during project implementation.

The PIU shall review the outcomes of the terminal evaluation report to document both the best practices, lesson learned and weaknesses related to project management and implementation that will be used to enhance the counselling and advice practices of OSS.

By the end of the project, the PIU shall also evaluate the performance of the counselling and advice activities conducted and its impact on the implementation of the project.

- **Reponses to specific request from the executing entities**

In addition to the implementation of support activities identified during the various supervision missions of the project, the PIU shall also process the specific request for support submitted by the project beneficiaries or executing entities during the project implementation.



To this end, the PIU shall make all the necessary arrangements to ensure that executing entities have continuous access to support and advice resources and are able to submit requests at any time the need arises. This includes the development and maintain of the following tools (non-exhaustive list):

- E-mail address used by EE to send requests ([enquiries.requests@oss.org.tn](mailto:enquiries.requests@oss.org.tn)).
- A Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) section published on OSS website or the project website.
- An information request form published on OSS website or the project website.
- An exchange forum and/or a webinar series on best practices of project management.
- Ready-to-use training materials and/or useful resources on the different aspects of project management.