Global Europe Results Framework Indicator Methodology Note

1. Indicator name
GERF 2.31: Number of countries which have benefitted from EU support to strengthen their social protection systems
2. Technical details
Please use the information provided in OPSYS or the SWD. Results Dashboard code(s): *65247.* Unit of measure: *Number of (#).* Type of indicator: *Quantitative (not qualitative) – Numeric (not percentage); Actual ex-post (not estimated or ex-ante); Cumulative (not annual); Direct (not indirect); Stock (not flow).* Level of measurement: *Specific Objective – Outcome; Direct Output; Output.* Disaggregations: *None.* DAC sector codes: *16010 – Social protection.* Main associated SDG: *1.3 Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.* Other associated SDGs: *1.1 extreme poverty; 1.2 multidimensional poverty; 1.5 resilience to shocks and disasters; 3.4 communicable diseases; 2.1 hunger and access to food; 2.2 malnutrition; 3.3 communicable diseases; 3.8 universal health coverage; 8.5 employment and decent work; 10.1 income growth of the bottom 40 percent; 10.2 inclusion without discrimination; 10.3 reduce inequalities of outcome; 17.9 capacity building.* Associated GERF Level 1 indicator: *1.23 Proportion of population below the international poverty line (SDG 1.1.1).* Associated GERF Level 3 indicators: *3.3 Amount and share of EU-funded external assistance contributing to strengthening investment climate* *3.10 Amount and share of EU-funded external assistance directed towards supporting social inclusion and human development* *3.13 Number and share of EU- external interventions promoting gender equality and women's empowerment* *3.14 Number and share of EU-funded external interventions promoting disability inclusion* *3.16 Amount and share of EU-funded external assistance qualifying as ODA*
3. Policy context and Rationale
Social protection is a critical pillar of the EU's external action and development cooperation

policies, firmly rooted in the European Consensus on Development and the broader international framework, including the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Social protection systems play an essential role in reducing poverty and inequality, ensuring that no one is left behind, and promoting social inclusion. They provide vital support to vulnerable groups, including women, children, the elderly, and people with disabilities, helping to mitigate the impacts of economic and social shocks, such as unemployment, health crises, or natural disasters.

The EU's commitment to social protection is also tied to its overarching goals of fostering inclusive and sustainable development. Strong social protection systems contribute to economic stability by maintaining consumption during downturns and promoting long-term investment in human capital through improved access to healthcare, education, and social services. Moreover, they play a key role in reducing inequality and supporting the transition towards more equitable and resilient societies.

By supporting partner countries in building and enhancing their social protection systems, the EU contributes to a more inclusive, stable and prosperous global environment. This approach aligns with global efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), reinforcing the EU's role as a key actor in global development and international partnerships.

4. Logframe inclusion

If an intervention generates the result measured by this indicator, then it must be reported in OPSYS. Corporate targets have been set for the indicators used to monitor the Strategic Plan and the Multiannual Financial Framework (see Section 9). Progress towards these targets is reported annually in the Annual Activity Plan (for the Strategic Plan) and the Programme Performance Statements (for the Multiannual Financial Framework). These values are calculated by aggregating the results reported in OPSYS. These reports ultimately contribute to the Annual Management Performance Report submitted by the European Commission to the Council and Parliament during the annual budgetary discharge procedure. If targets are not met, explanations must be provided. Therefore, it is crucial that all results are recorded in OPSYS.

There are two ways of doing this:

1. Include the indicator directly in the logframe (recommended approach);
2. Match the indicator to the closest logframe indicator (only if the indicator was not originally included in the logframe and modification is not possible).

Why? The matching functionality in OPSYS only accommodates reporting current values and does not yet support encoding baselines and targets. This is a significant drawback because targets are a valuable piece of information, especially at the beginning of a Multiannual Financial Framework. Indeed, results take time to materialise as they are the last step in the chain, appearing only after programming, commitments, contracting, and spending have occurred. Targets allow to see what results are expected long before they materialise, which is reassuring to the different stakeholders concerned with accountability. **Therefore, include all corporate indicators directly in the logframe whenever possible, and reserve the matching**

functionality only for cases when this is not feasible.

5. Values to report

The following values must be determined in line with the definitions provided in Section 6.

Baseline value: the value measured for the indicator in the baseline year. The baseline value is the value against which progress will be assessed. For GERF indicators, this value is usually zero**.** This is because the results being measured must be directly attributable to EU support; prior to the start of implementation, the specific intervention has not yet occurred and therefore cannot have generated a result. A non-zero baseline may only occur if the intervention is following up on work achieved by another intervention financed by the same instrument.

Current value:

- **For logframe indicators**: the most recent value for the indicator at the time of reporting. The current value includes the baseline value which is reported separately for logframe indicators in OPSYS.
- **For matched indicators**: the most recent value for the results achieved at the time of reporting since the start of implementation of the intervention. This value is obtained by taking the most recent value for the indicator at the time of reporting and subtracting off the baseline value which is not reported separately for matched indicators in OPSYS.

Current values will be collected at least once a year and reported cumulatively throughout the implementation period.

Final target value: the expected value for the indicator in the target year.

Intermediate target values (milestones). A tool has been developed in OPSYS to generate intermediate targets automatically[1].

- **For outputs**: the intermediate targets are generated using a linear interpolation between the baseline and target values because it is assumed that outputs materialise sooner and more progressively over implementation (than outcomes).
- **For outcomes**: the expected progression over the course of implementation will vary

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[1] This has been done in the context of the Primary Intervention Questionnaire (PIQ) for the EAMR. Three new KPIs provide an overall assessment of ongoing interventions (current performance and future performance) and completed interventions (final performance). Scores will be calculated for all INTPA and NEAR interventions participating in the annual results data collection exercise.
- *KPI 10* reflects the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of ongoing interventions. The information on relevance is provided by the Operational Manager's response to a question in a survey. The information on efficiency and effectiveness is provided either by the logframe data, if sufficient data is available, or the response to a question in a survey, if not.
- *KPI 11* reflects expectations regarding the most probable levels of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability that can be achieved by ongoing interventions in the future. In this case, all the information is provided by the Operational Manager's responses to questions in a survey.
- *KPI 12* reflects the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of completed interventions. The information on relevance is provided by the Operational Manager's response to a question in a survey. The information on efficiency and effectiveness is provided by the logframe data if sufficient data is available, or the response to a question in a survey, if not.

across interventions. During the creation of a logframe, the expected outcome profile must be selected (OPSYS offers four options[2]) and this selection triggers the generation of intermediate targets for all 30 June and 31 December dates between the baseline and target dates for all output and outcome quantitative indicators. All automatically generated intermediate targets values and dates can be subsequently modified by the Operational Manager or the Implementing Partner with the approval of the Operational Manager.

6. Calculation of values

Specify all assumptions made, list definitions for all technical terms, provide any relevant guidance on (double) counting, and include checklist for quality control.

The value for this indicator is calculated by counting the number of countries which have benefitted from EU support to strengthen their social protection systems, using the technical definitions and counting guidance provided below. Please double check your calculations using the quality control checklist below.

Technical definitions

Social protection systems refer to a set of policies and programs designed to reduce poverty and vulnerability by promoting efficient labor markets, diminishing people's exposure to risks, and enhancing their capacity to manage economic and social risks. These systems typically encompass various components, including social insurance (e.g., pensions, health insurance, unemployment benefits), social assistance (e.g., cash transfers, food assistance), and labor market interventions (e.g., job training programs, wage subsidies). A well-functioning social protection system aims to ensure that all individuals, particularly the most vulnerable, have access to a minimum standard of living, protection against life-cycle risks, and opportunities for social and economic inclusion.

Support to social protection systems involves a comprehensive range of interventions aimed at enhancing the capacity, coverage, and sustainability of social protection mechanisms in partner countries. This support can take various forms, including:

Policy Development and Reform:

- Assisting in the design and reform of social protection policies, including the development of legal frameworks, national strategies, and regulatory guidelines.
- Ensuring that policies are inclusive, equitable, and sustainable, addressing the needs of vulnerable and marginalized groups.

Capacity Building:

- Strengthening the capabilities of institutions responsible for administering social protection programs through training and capacity-building initiatives.
- Enhancing the ability of national and local authorities to manage and coordinate social

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[2] a. *steady progress*: The outcomes are achieved continuously throughout implementation; b. *accelerating progress*: The outcomes are achieved towards the end of implementation; c. *no progress until end*: The outcomes are mostly achieved at the end of implementation; d. *none of the above*.

protection interventions effectively.

Financial Support:

- Providing financial contributions to national social protection schemes or direct budgetary support to help governments sustain or scale up their programs.

Improving Data Systems:

- Supporting the development of data collection, monitoring, and evaluation systems to track the performance and impact of social protection programs.
- Facilitating evidence-based policy-making by identifying coverage gaps and assessing program effectiveness through robust data systems.

Governance and Accountability:

- Strengthening governance structures to ensure efficient allocation of resources and transparency in the management of social protection systems.
- Promoting accountability mechanisms to ensure that programs reach those most in need and that resources are used effectively.

Coordination and Collaboration:

- Fostering partnerships with international organizations, civil society, and the private sector to create comprehensive and integrated social protection systems.
- Encouraging dialogue and coordination between different actors to ensure that social protection systems are adaptable and capable of responding to evolving social and economic challenges.

This holistic and multi-faceted support contributes to the broader goals of poverty reduction, inequality mitigation, and the promotion of social inclusion, while enhancing the resilience and sustainability of social protection systems in partner countries.

Counting guidance

1. If the intervention supports social protection systems, then it is mandatory to include this indicator in the logframe, even if the intervention is implemented in one single city or country and the value to be reported is one. Indeed, this indicator might not be useful for monitoring purposes, but it is necessary to ensure accurate corporate reporting.
2. Overseas countries and territories (OCTs) should be counted as countries.
3. Double counting is not allowed: a country can be counted only once in the same period of EU support. The EU can support a country to address several aspects of their social protection systems. In addition, the EU can support a country to address any of these issues at the national and sub-national levels. However, a single country can be counted only once in these instances, even if the support is provided to different state institutions or by different interventions or in different years of the same period of EU support. Report the name of the country supported in the comment field to facilitate quality control of double counting.

Quality control checklist

1. Has the indicator been included directly in the logframe? Reserve the OPSYS matching

functionality only for cases when this is not feasible.

2. If the indicator has been included directly in the logframe, does the current value *include* the baseline value? If the indicator has been matched to a logframe indicator, does the current value *exclude* the baseline value?

3. Have OCTs been included? OCTs are counted as countries.

4. Is the GERF value a whole number? The number of countries cannot be a decimal number.

5. Has double counting been avoided? Countries can only be counted once per period of EU support.

6. Has the name of the country been reported in the comment field?

7. Examples of calculations

Example 1

The EU is financing an intervention in Country A with the following components:

- Technical Assistance: expert consultancy to help redesign and implement a new cash transfer program targeting low-income families;
- Capacity-Building: workshops and training sessions for local officials on effective program management and monitoring;
- Impact Assessment: the development of monitoring and evaluation tools to assess the effectiveness of the new cash transfer program.

As soon as implementation starts, this country may be included in the count for this indicator.

8. Data sources and issues

Please use the data source categories specified in OPSYS.

EU intervention monitoring and reporting systems: *Progress and final reports for the EU-funded intervention; ROM reviews; Baseline and endline surveys conducted and budgeted by the EU-funded intervention.*

Include any issues relating to the availability and quality of the data.

9. Reporting process & Corporate reporting

The data collected on this indicator will be reported in OPSYS by the Implementing Partner. The values encoded in OPSYS will be verified, possibly modified and ultimately validated by the Operational Manager. Once a year the results reported will be frozen for corporate reporting. The methodological services in HQ that are responsible for GERF corporate reporting will perform quality control on the frozen data and aggregate as needed to meet the different corporate reporting requirements.

Please replace ○ with ● for the relevant items below.

This indicator is used for corporate reporting in the following contexts:

   ○ *NDICI via the Annual Report*
   ○ *NDICI via the 2021-27 Programme Performance Statements*

● *INTPA Strategic Plan 2020-24 via the Annual Activity Report*
● *INTPA Strategic Plan 2025-29 via the Annual Activity Report*
○ *NEAR Strategic Plan 2020-24 via the Annual Activity Report*
○ *ENEST Strategic Plan 2025-29 via the Annual Activity Report*
○ *MENA Strategic Plan 2025-29 via the Annual Activity Report*
○ *FPI Strategic Plan 2020-24 via the Annual Activity Report*
○ *FPI Strategic Plan 2025-29 via the Annual Activity Report*

This indicator has been included in the following other Results Measurement Frameworks:

● *EFSD+*
○ *GAP III*
○ *IPA III*
○ *TEI-MORE*

10. Baseline alignment & Annualisation

Corporate reports most often cover different timeframes. Only rarely does the 7-year Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) start in the same year as the 5-year Strategic Plans. Because the MFF drives the funding for these interventions, it serves as the primary baseline for data collection. To report against other cycles with different start dates, results must first be annualised and then re-cumulated starting from the required baseline year.

The annualisation method depends on the type of indicator, which can be found in Section 2:

- **Flow Indicators** (discrete achievements): These measure "one-off" events or new beneficiaries reached within a specific timeframe (e.g., Number of people trained). To find the annual result, we calculate the variation (the difference between the cumulative total at the end of the year and the beginning of the year).

    Example: If a project reached 500 total people by 2024 and 800 by 2025, the 2025 annual result is 300 (the new results generated that year).

- **Stock Indicators** (continuous support): These measure an ongoing state or sustained support (e.g., Number of countries supported). To find the annual result, we take the total cumulative value at the end of the year, as this represents the full extent of the EU's active footprint.

    Example: If the EU supports 10 countries in 2024 and continues supporting those same 10 in 2025, the 2025 annual result remains 10 (the total "stock" of support active that year).

    In this case, the result is often achieved at the onset of the intervention and remains ongoing throughout implementation. When re-baselining for a new corporate cycle, these results are maintained rather than recalculated as variations. The annual value is the total number of entities under active support at the end of the reporting year, regardless of whether that support commenced before or after the new baseline year.

11. Other uses

GERF 2.31 can be found in the following thematic results chains:

- [Human Rights](#)
- [Resilience, Conflict sensitivity and Peace](#)

GERF 2.31 can be found in the following groups of EU predefined indicators available in OPSYS, along with other related indicators:

- Employment and VET
- Human Rights
- Nutrition
- Resilience, Conflict sensitivity and Peace

For more information, see: [Core indicators for design and monitoring of EU-funded interventions | Capacity4dev (europa.eu)](#)

12. Other issues