



CASE
(Civic Action for Security and Environment)
Small Grants Programme

CASE-TAJIKISTAN NATIONAL STRATEGY

April 2010

Table of Contents

1.	BACKGROUND INFORMATION	3
1.1.	Launching of the CASE Initiative by OSCE.....	3
1.2.	CASE Guidelines	4
1.3.	Purpose of CASE-Tajikistan National Strategy	5
2.	STRATEGIC BACKGROUND FOR CASE-Tajikistan	6
2.1.	Environmental Situation in Tajikistan	6
2.2.	Integration of UNECE Environmental Conventions.....	6
2.3.	Integration of OSCE-Supported Initiatives	7
2.2.1	ENVSEC Initiative	7
2.2.2	Aarhus Centres	7
3.	CASE-Tajikistan: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	8
3.1.	OCEEA	8
3.2.	OSCE Office in Tajikistan (OiT)	8
3.3.	OiT CASE Team	9
3.4.	CASE-Tajikistan National Screening Board	10
4.	FRAMEWORK FOR SMALL GRANTS.....	11
4.1.	Priority Themes for Small Grants.....	11
4.2.	Cross-cutting Themes.....	11
4.3.	Eligibility	12
4.3.1	CSOs Eligible for Application	12
4.3.2	Eligible Projects.....	12
4.3.3	Number of Projects to be Submitted by Eligible CSOs.....	13
5.	CASE-TAJIKISTAN PROJECT CYCLE.....	14
5.1.	CASE-Tajikistan Project Cycle: Summary of Basic Steps.....	14
5.2.	Preparation and Selection of Projects.....	14
5.2.1	Call for Project Proposals.....	14
5.2.2	Preparation of Project Proposals.....	15
5.2.3	Selection of Projects	16
5.3.	Implementation of Projects	17
5.3.1	Signature of the Implementing Partnership Agreement (IPA)	17
5.3.2	Disbursement of Grants	17
5.3.3	Project Execution	18
5.4.	Project Reporting	18
5.4.1	Narrative Reports	18
5.4.2	Financial Reports	19
5.5.	Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.....	19
5.5.1	Project-Level M&E	19
5.5.2	Country-Level M&E	20
6.	CASE-TAJIKISTAN COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY.....	22
6.1.	Background to CASE Communications Strategy	22
6.2.	Content of CASE Communications Strategy.....	23
6.3.	Development & Implementation of the Communications Strategy	23

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1. Launching of the CASE Initiative by OSCE

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is the world's largest security organization with 56 participating states from Europe, Central Asia and North America. Cooperation and security is at the centre of OSCE mandate. Its 19 field missions in South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia act as pre-eminent instruments for early warning, conflict prevention, conflict management and post conflict rehabilitation. OSCE deals with three dimensions of security, namely the politico-military, the economic and environmental, and the human dimension. Through these dimensions, it addresses a wide range of security-related concerns, including arms control, confidence and security-building measures, human rights, national minorities, democratization, policing strategies, counter-terrorism and economic and environmental activities.

Through its involvement in the Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative covering the Central Asia, South Eastern Europe, the Southern Caucasus and Eastern Europe regions, the OSCE has been addressing a variety of environmental problems which pose security risks to communities within and across national borders. OSCE has also taken various initiatives in the areas of hazardous waste management, management of transboundary waters, environmental governance and environmental public awareness.

The OSCE, within the framework of its mandate, has a growing engagement with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in both operational and policy work that cuts across the three dimensions of security, namely the politico-military, the economic-environmental and the human. Issues related to "environment and security" offers a distinctive entry point for the OSCE to establish a strategic, mainstreamed partnership with CSOs as well as to facilitate partnerships of CSOs with Governments, academia, business community and donors.

In this respect, the OSCE has developed and launched **CASE – Civic Action for Security and Environment**, which has been designed as a small grants programme.

The overall objective of CASE is to create an enabling environment for CSOs to be a strong partner primarily to the government as well as to other stakeholders in collaboratively addressing environment and security challenges. This objective is intended to be achieved primarily through awareness programmes on the linkages between environment and security, capacity building of CSOs and providing grants for their projects that demonstrate such linkages.

In line with these basic means of attaining its overall objective, the target outputs of CASE are identified as follows:

- Output 1:** Increased public and political awareness on the linkages between environment and security;
- Output 2:** Strengthened capacity of CSOs in the field of environment and security;
- Output 3:** Rendering financial and technical assistance to CSOs on projects demonstrating Co-operation in the field of environment with government organizations, NGOs, private sector and international financial organizations.

Primary target beneficiaries of CASE are the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), which are defined as non-state actors whose aims are neither to generate profits nor to seek governing power. They comprise the full range of formal and informal organizations within civil society, including but not limited to Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), Community-based Organizations (CBOs), academia, journalist associations, trade unions, and trade associations.

Tajikistan is one of the pilot countries selected for the initial implementation of the CASE Initiative.

1.2. CASE Guidelines

CASE Guidelines that provide a framework for the implementation of CASE, comprising technical and administrative aspects, as well as operational procedures to facilitate their practical application at regional and national levels were prepared by Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OSCE/OCEEA).

The content of the CASE Guidelines encompass, *inter alia*, the following:

- **Background information** on CASE, including the launching of CASE, objectives and target outputs, target beneficiaries, and implementation modality.
- **Strategic background** for CASE, including the strategic outputs of OSCE, UNECE Environmental Conventions, and OSCE-supported initiatives.
- **Roles and responsibilities**, including OSCE/OCEEA, OSCE Field Operations, CASE Country Officers, and National Screening Boards.
- **CASE Country Strategy**, including the formulation and content of the CASE Country Strategy.
- **Framework for small grants**, including the general thematic priorities and cross-cutting themes.
- **Eligibility**, including the CSOs eligible for application to the small grants, and eligible projects.
- **Provision of small grants** to projects, including the guiding principles in the provision of grants, and amount of small grants.
- **CASE project cycle**, including the application for small grants, preparation and selection of projects, and implementation of projects.
- **Project reporting**, including the function and importance of project reporting, and Technical and Financial Reports.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation framework**, including the project-level, country-level and corporate-level M&E.

The CASE Guidelines have the following complementary Attachments:

- **CASE Communications Strategy** is intended to establish and maintain clear and regular channels of communication with the broad spectrum of OSCE partners at all levels, including CSOs in pilot countries as well as other stakeholders towards attaining the goals and target outputs of the CASE Initiative.
- **Capacity Building Framework** is intended to provide a basis for consideration by OSCE/OCEEA (and its country networks), with a view towards improving the operational aspects and contributing to the successful conduct of the capacity building activities planned under the CASE Initiative.
- **Sustainability Framework** is intended to provide a basis for consideration and discussion by OSCE/OCEEA (and its country networks) for ensuring the sustainability of the CASE Initiative and its successful conduct in the subsequent phases.

1.3. Purpose of CASE-Tajikistan National Strategy

It is stipulated in the CASE Guidelines that a CASE Country Strategy shall be formulated for each pilot country based on the national policies, strategies and priorities in the area of environment, sustainable development and security, taking into consideration regional and global commitments of the country.

In this context, the **CASE-Tajikistan National Strategy** has been prepared through a consultative process, and finalized by the CASE-Tajikistan National Screening Board.

The CASE-Tajikistan National Strategy identifies the technical and operational issues related to the implementation of CASE in Tajikistan. The CASE-Tajikistan National Strategy gives special consideration to the following:

- Ensuring the congruence of operational modalities and projects under CASE-Tajikistan with the overall objectives and implementation modalities of CASE.
- Giving due emphasis under CASE-Tajikistan to the implementation of relevant UNECE Environmental Conventions.
- Giving due emphasis under CASE-Tajikistan to the outcomes of the ENVSEC Initiative, and avoiding duplications and overlaps with this initiative.
- Giving due emphasis under CASE-Tajikistan to the role of Aarhus Centres in Tajikistan, and to the potential of CASE in serving as an effective operational tool for these Centres.
- Giving due emphasis under CASE-Tajikistan to the roles of different stakeholders in the country.
- Ensuring that the full range of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) participate in CASE-Tajikistan as the target beneficiaries.
- Identifying priority thematic areas for the small grants for CASE-Tajikistan in the light of the general themes identified for CASE.
- Focusing on cross-cutting themes for CASE-Tajikistan, in particular on the integration of youth and gender concerns and perspectives into environment and security initiatives.
- Specifying the eligibility criteria for projects to be supported under CASE-Tajikistan.
- Specifying the full project cycle for CASE-Tajikistan, including the application, selection and implementation stages, and grant-making procedures.
- Identifying the mechanisms for Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of CASE-Tajikistan implementations.
- Providing the general framework for the CASE-Tajikistan Communications Strategy, in line with the general CASE Communications Strategy to be subsequently developed.

2. STRATEGIC BACKGROUND FOR CASE-Tajikistan

2.1. Environmental Situation in Tajikistan

Severe environmental changes in Tajikistan have become increasingly evident during recent years. The country continues to face threats caused by radioactive waste and pesticide dump sites, land degradation and global warming. Tajikistan regularly suffers from landslides, mudflows and floods as well as periodic earthquakes. The country's glaciers have shrunk 35 percent in the past five decades; accelerated glacier melt represents another area of serious environmental concern and possible collateral damage to the country's sustainable development. While the melting glaciers could provide an abundance of water in the short run, eventually the glacier retreat would translate into a sharp decrease of water resources.

Environmental degradation has had a negative impact on poverty, food security, health conditions, and in some cases has spurred environmental migration. This has contributed to create tensions within Tajikistan, and at the regional level, calling for increasing actions from the International community including the OSCE Office in Tajikistan.

The 2008 official Environmental Concept (Concept) of Tajikistan prioritizes the integration of environmental policy with the state economic and social strategies. The Concept defines the implementation of environmental policy and management for Tajikistan. It aims to ensure favorable environment as necessary for improving living and health conditions of population, provide rational environmental management and facilitate the poverty reduction within the country.

In the Concept, the understanding of the CSOs is referred as tax payers, local communities, political parties and non-governmental organizations and it is seen in the role of beneficiary for development.

As for the situation with international agreements and treaties, although Tajikistan has ratified most international environmental conventions, the capacity of the country to address environmental challenges needs additional improvement.

2.2. Integration of UNECE Environmental Conventions

The Government of Tajikistan has ratified the **UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention)** in 2001.

Parallel to the CASE Initiative, CASE-Tajikistan aims at contributing to the implementation of the Aarhus Convention is one Tajikistan had ratified and to the promotion of the principles of other UNECE Environmental Conventions, as appropriate.

The **Aarhus Convention** was adopted on 25 June 1998 in the Danish city of Aarhus at the Fourth Ministerial Conference in the "Environment for Europe" process. By setting principles for "access to information", "public participation in decision-making" and "access to justice", the Aarhus Convention provides OSCE with a unique tool to support environmental governance processes at the national level which in turn contributes to the countries' efforts in addressing environment and security challenges. OSCE, as part of its support to the implementation of the Aarhus Convention, has been supporting the creation of Aarhus Centres in various countries, in close co-operation with the Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative

2.3. Integration of OSCE-Supported Initiatives

2.2.1 ENVSEC Initiative

The Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative is an inter-agency partnership which facilitates co-operation on critical environmental issues as a way to promote peace and security in four regions: Eastern Europe, the Southern Caucasus, Central Asia, and South Eastern Europe. Recognizing that environmental problems do not stop at national borders, ENVSEC partners (OSCE, UNDP, UNEP, REC, UNECE, and associate partner NATO) have developed a platform that turns the potential for conflict between states into opportunities for confidence-building and co-operation.

ENVSEC contributed to increasing public awareness and participation in environmental affairs, primarily through the establishment and operation of Aarhus Centres, which constitute one of the potential pillars of the CASE Initiative.

2.2.2 Aarhus Centres

OSCE, as part of its support to the implementation of the Aarhus Convention, has been supporting the creation and functioning of Aarhus Centres in Tajikistan, in close co-operation with the ENVSEC Initiative. These Centres provide a bridge between the Government and the civil society on the issues related to the three pillars of the Aarhus Convention, namely access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice.

In this context, Aarhus Centres that are currently functional in Tajikistan in Dushanbe (the capital), Khujand (the Sughd Region, the northern part of Tajikistan) and Kurgan Tube (the Khatlon Region, the southern part of Tajikistan) and their possible extension in Khorog (the Gorno Badkhash Region of Pamirs, the south-western part of Tajikistan) and Shartuz (the Khatlon Region, the southern part of Tajikistan) will play a facilitation role in the implementation of CASE-Tajikistan. In this context, the Aarhus Centres where existed will disseminate information on CASE, will facilitate the call for proposals, advise on proposal writing, implementation and reporting techniques, as well as deliver special consultations for local NGOs as needed.

3. CASE-Tajikistan: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Under the overall supervision of the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA), CASE-Tajikistan shall operate through the **CASE-OSCE Office in Tajikistan Team** hereafter (OiT CASE Team) led by the Environmental Officer of the OSCE OiT and **CASE-Tajikistan National Screening Board**, and with management and administrative support from the OSCE Office in Tajikistan.

In line with the management structure identified in the CASE Project Document, the different yet mutually-reinforcing roles and responsibilities expected to be assumed by OCEEA, OSCE Office in Tajikistan, OiT CASE Team and CASE-Tajikistan National Screening Board are provided hereunder.

3.1. OCEEA

The Office of the Coordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA) shall have the responsibility for overall supervision of CASE implementation and provision of political and technical support and guidance. With regard to CASE-Tajikistan, this responsibility shall include, *inter alia*, the following:

- Assisting in the formulation of CASE-Tajikistan National Strategy.
- Ensuring coherence among the CASE project portfolios of different countries.
- Guiding the establishment and functioning of CASE National Screening Boards in general, and the CASE-Tajikistan National Screening Board in particular.
- Preparing standard formats (fiches) separately for project concepts and project proposals, as well as for project reports.
- Preparing user-friendly formats for the evaluation of Project Proposals for facilitating, as well as ensuring the consistency of the process in different contexts.
- Participating in and providing guidance to the decision-making process to be conducted by the CASE-Tajikistan National Screening Board in relation to the review and selection of the project proposals submitted by CSOs.
- Reviewing the approved project proposals in Tajikistan.
- Providing guidance and assistance to the OiT CASE Team in disbursing grant instalments to grantee CSOs on the basis of performance reporting.
- Overseeing and coordinating the general implementation of CASE Communications Strategy. Communicating the strategy to the CASE-Tajikistan, OiT CASE Team and providing guidance in the appropriate incorporation of this Strategy within the CASE-Tajikistan National Strategy.

3.2. OSCE Office in Tajikistan (OiT)

OSCE Office in Tajikistan, within the context of its mission to promote the implementation of the OSCE principles and commitments in all OSCE dimensions, including the human, political, economic and environmental aspects of security and stability, shall provide administrative and programmatic support to CASE.

Such support shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Providing support in establishing and maintaining contacts with governmental agencies, local authorities and the CSOs in relation to CASE-Tajikistan implementations.
- Facilitating contacts and promoting information exchange and co-operation with international and national organizations and potential donors.
- Organizing capacity building programmes, regional events and site visits to support implementation of CASE-Tajikistan.
- Ensuring the linkages of CASE-Tajikistan with other OSCE-supported programmes and projects in the country.
- Ensuring project-level Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E).
- Disbursing grant instalments to grantee CSOs on the basis of performance reporting.

3.3. OiT CASE Team

OiT CASE Team shall be responsible for supporting the OSCE Office in Tajikistan in implementation of CASE in Tajikistan through ensuring the technical and substantive quality of CASE grants and projects. This responsibility shall include, *inter alia*, the following:

- Contributing to the drafting (and revision) of the CASE Country Strategy for Tajikistan (to be subsequently discussed and finalized by the CASE-Tajikistan National Screening Board).
- Contributing to the effective functioning of the CASE-Tajikistan National Screening Board.
- Announcing the CASE-Tajikistan “call for project proposals” through CSO networks, Aarhus Centres, media and other channels.
- Working in close partnership with CSOs to help them formulate their project proposals.
- Responding to requests for information and guidance from CSOs in relation to CASE-Tajikistan implementations.
- Reviewing/pre-screening the project proposals and informing the relevant CSOs (if needed) to revise and complete their project proposals before their evaluation by the CASE-Tajikistan National Screening Board.
- Subsequent to the selection of projects, notifying the grantee CSOs of this decision and providing guidance on the next steps of the CASE-Tajikistan project cycle.
- Preparing respective Implementing Partnership Agreements (IPA) with grantee CSOs for signature (duly signed copies to be forwarded to OCEEA).
- Supporting the approval and disbursement of grant instalments to grantee CSOs on the basis of performance reporting.
- Ensuring sound programme monitoring and evaluation, in particular on the basis of the criteria and indicators developed/refined in relation to CASE-Tajikistan.
- Contributing to the organization of capacity building programmes under CASE-Tajikistan.
- Overseeing the implementation of the CASE Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework in Tajikistan.
- Supporting the promotion of the goals and activities of CASE in general in Tajikistan.
- Supporting the establishment of partnerships and the mobilization of additional resources in relation to CASE-Tajikistan implementations.

- Conducting regular and occasional site visits (to be accompanied by relevant members of the CASE-Tajikistan National Screening Board) to overview and support the grantee projects.
- On the basis of the CASE Communications Strategy, coordinating the development and implementation of a Communications Strategy for CASE-Tajikistan.

3.4. CASE-Tajikistan National Screening Board

CASE-Tajikistan National Screening Board, serving on a voluntary basis, shall be responsible for policy guidance, project screening and programme promotion, and shall have, among others, the following roles and responsibilities in relation to CASE:

- Participating in and contributing to the development and revision of the CASE Country Strategy for Tajikistan.
- Establishing eligibility criteria for projects under CASE-Tajikistan on the basis of the general CASE Guidelines.
- Evaluating/selecting the project proposals on the basis of the selection criteria developed in the light of the general CASE Guidelines.
- Ensuring that the relevant Board members participate in and contribute to site visits to be conducted by the OiT CASE Team in relation to grantee projects.
- Contributing to and taking active part in the development and implementation of the Communications Strategy for CASE-Tajikistan.

4. FRAMEWORK FOR SMALL GRANTS

4.1. Priority Themes for Small Grants

In light of the CASE Guidelines, priority thematic areas of CASE-Tajikistan have been identified through participatory processes, and finalized by the CASE-Tajikistan National Screening Board.

In this framework, the following priority themes have been incorporated in the CASE-Tajikistan National Strategy to constitute the thematic priorities for small grants to be provided under CASE-Tajikistan:

- **Priority Theme 1: Environmental awareness-raising for local population and promoting community participation in environmental decision making processes;** (including different environmental campaigns and ways of problem solution on the local level, different public information meetings and activities connected to the environmental decision making, as well as workshops, trainings targeting to increase general environmental knowledge of local population and introducing them with their environmental rights.)
- **Priority Theme 2: Radioactive, hazardous wastes and chemicals;** (including the information on the level of risk from the radioactive waste tailings, informing on radioactive waste safety techniques, mitigation of risks from cross-border wastes, reducing pollution from heavy metals, recycling/disposal of hazardous wastes and chemicals, reducing the pollution of soils due to oil exploitation/spills and toxic waste, etc.)
- **Priority Theme 3: Climate change and environmental migration;** (including the strengthening of partnerships that foster exchanges of experience and expertise on climate change, public awareness-raising, promoting carbon offsetting programmes, local climate change activities that are linked to market mechanisms and policy interventions, etc.)
- **Priority Theme 4: Combating land degradation;** (including the improvement of soil management, preventing, controlling and reversing desertification/land degradation, combating soil contamination, combating salinization, promoting sustainable agricultural practices, improving soil fertility management, etc.)
- **Priority Theme 5: Natural and man-made disasters;** (including earthquake-based environmental risks, potential impacts of disasters on migratory pressures, reducing flood risks, strengthening community-level disaster preparedness, reducing disaster-prone health risks, etc.)
- **Priority Theme 6: Energy saving and efficiency.** (including the improvement of energy efficiency in order to meet sustainable energy objectives, integrating policies on energy, focusing on alternative renewable energy resources, demonstrations of energy efficient technologies and practices at the community level, etc.)

Each project to be submitted under CASE-Tajikistan should specifically target one of the priority themes delineated above, and display the explicit linkages of the targeted priority theme with the interface of environment and security issues.

4.2. Cross-cutting Themes

Coupled with the identified priority themes above, four cross-cutting themes have also been identified for CASE-Tajikistan, encompassing the following:

- **Cross-cutting Theme 1: Support to Environmental Governance** may be addressed by the proponent CSOs through, *inter alia*, seeking improved dialogue between different stakeholders on priority themes, targeting incremental improvements likely to pave the way for longer-term institutional and policy changes, streamlining with the activities of the

Aarhus Centres, stimulating the implementation of relevant UNECE Environmental Conventions, seeking tangible improvements in environmental governance, etc.

- **Cross-cutting Theme 2: Social Aspects of Environmental Security** may be addressed by the proponent CSOs through, *inter alia*, considering the potential impacts of environmental security on migration, seeking to contribute to the initiatives toward transforming environmental risks into co-operation in pertinent areas, introducing innovative tools and approaches to highlight social aspects of environmental security, etc.
- **Cross-cutting Theme 3: Role and Participation of Women** shall be considered not as an optional but as a pre-conditional cross-cutting theme in terms of the assessing the eligibility of projects. The proponent CSOs may address this cross-cutting theme through, *inter alia*, ensuring that women's organizations are consulted during the course of the project, ensuring that the project design provides opportunities for women to participate equally, highlighting the gender perspective in all events, incorporating gender perspectives/analysis in projects, obtaining women's opinions and perspectives on environment/security issues and concerns, etc.
- **Cross-cutting Theme 4: Role and Participation of the Youth** shall also be considered as a pre-condition for the eligibility of projects. The proponent CSOs may address this cross-cutting theme through, *inter alia*, ensuring that youth organizations are consulted/involved during the course of the project, targeting the youth as a major group amongst the beneficiaries of the project, obtaining the opinions and contributions of the youth on environment/security issues and concerns, involving special activities for awareness-raising and capacity building of the youth in pertinent priority themes, etc.

4.3. Eligibility

4.3.1 CSOs Eligible for Application

As the primary target beneficiaries of CASE-Tajikistan, the full range of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) operating in the country shall be eligible to apply to the CASE Small Grants Programme.

In line with the definition of CSOs provided in the CASE Project Document, the primary eligibility criterion for a CSO is to be a **non-state actor whose aim is neither to generate profits nor to seek governing power**.

In this context, CASE-Tajikistan shall be open to applications from CSOs comprising the full range of formal and informal (registered and non-registered) organizations within civil society, including but not limited to Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), academia, journalist associations, trade unions, and trade associations.

4.3.2 Eligible Projects

CASE-Tajikistan shall be open to project applications within the following context:

- The project is submitted by CSO(s) eligible for application, as identified above. (In case the project partners include institutions that do not have a CSO status, the lead/signatory institution should be an eligible CSO.)
- Problem to be addressed by the project is linked to **only one** of the priority themes identified above. (Projects should specifically focus on a **single priority topic**, and should not attempt to cover multiple topics at once.)
- The project adequately addresses cross-cutting themes, in particular the integration of youth and gender concerns under the targeted priority theme.

- The nature of the project is either one or a combination of the following types of projects: “demonstration project”, “capacity building and networking project”, “awareness-raising project”, “dissemination of lessons learned project” and “policy dialogue project”.
- The project is developed (and designed to be implemented and monitored) through a participatory process involving the partner CSOs, as well as (to the possible extent) the representatives of target groups and stakeholders.
- The project incorporates mechanisms for “partnership” with other CSOs, private sector, academia, etc. (Such mechanisms are expected to be based on written agreements or protocols describing the nature and sustainability of partnerships.)
- The project provides a practical opportunity to build and strengthen a network of CSOs (also other stakeholders, as appropriate) around the targeted priority theme.
- The project complies with, and/or compliments, the respective policies of the Tajikistan Government in the specific area of activity.
- The project aims at establishing direct linkages between CASE and ENVSEC Initiatives.
- The project aims at contributing to the activities of the Aarhus Centres in Tajikistan.
- The project does not duplicate other ongoing efforts. In particular, projects previously supported (or considered to be supported) by similar grant programmes shall not be deemed as eligible.
- The project introduces an innovative approach to the interface of environment and security issues, and has the potential of constituting a “best practice”.
- The project incorporates basic tools and mechanisms for ensuring the sustainability of its impacts.

4.3.3 Number of Projects to be Submitted by Eligible CSOs

In line with the principles endorsed by the CASE-Tajikistan National Screening Board, there will be no limitations with regard to the number of projects that any eligible CSO may submit under CASE-Tajikistan.

However, regardless of the number of projects submitted, each eligible CSO shall be entitled to receive grants (if selected) for only one specific project in each project selection cycle under CASE-Tajikistan.

5. CASE-TAJIKISTAN PROJECT CYCLE

5.1. CASE-Tajikistan Project Cycle: Summary of Basic Steps

CASE-Tajikistan Project Cycle shall consist of the following basic steps:

- Preparing the ground for CASE announcement (in this context, the OiT CASE Team has been appointed, the CASE-Tajikistan National Screening Board has been established, and the CASE - Country Strategy has been formulated).
- Announcement of the “Call for Project Proposals”.
- Submission of the Project Proposals by CSOs.
- Review of the Project Proposals by the CASE-Tajikistan National Screening Board (endorsement/elimination).
- Signing of the IPA with CSOs for approved projects.
- Release of the first grant instalment.
- Commencement of project implementation.
- Interim project reporting and subsequent grant disbursements.
- Site visits by the OiT CASE Team /or members of the CASE-Tajikistan National Screening Board.
- Final project report, followed by the final grant disbursement.

5.2. Preparation and Selection of Projects

5.2.1 Call for Project Proposals

The announcement of the call for Project Proposals shall be made by the OiT CASE Team through CSO networks, Aarhus Centres, media and other channels. The announcement for the call for Project Proposals shall include, *inter alia*, the following:

- Background information on CASE-Tajikistan.
- Eligibility criteria for applications (eligible CSOs).
- Eligibility criteria for projects.
- Priority (and cross-cutting) themes.
- Deadline for applications.
- Ceiling of grants to be provided to projects under CASE-Tajikistan.
- Evaluation criteria in relation to Project Proposals.
- Information on the evaluation process and calendar in relation to the review/selection of Project Proposals.
- Standard fiche for Project Proposals (to be filled out by proponent CSOs).
- Guidance/complementary information on how to prepare and submit Project Proposals.

5.2.2 Preparation of Project Proposals

The OiT CASE Team along with the existed Aarhus Centres, where applicable, shall provide guidance and assistance to the proponent CSOs in the preparation of their Project Proposals, if required/requested. However, such guidance and assistance shall by no means be interpreted as an assurance for the selection of the respective Project Proposals.

The Project Proposals shall include the following:

- Basic information on the proponent CSOs (separately for the lead and partnering CSOs, including the allocation of responsibilities under such partnership).
- Signatures of consent of all the partners (non-signature parties shall not be deemed as “partners” of the proposed project).
- Name and communication details of the Project Manager.
- Priority theme targeted by the project.
- Description of how the project would contribute to the interface of environment and security issues under the targeted priority theme.
- Description of primary goals/objectives and targeted outputs of the project.
- Description of how the project would address cross-cutting themes, in particular the integration of youth and gender concerns under the targeted priority theme.
- Description of the linkages with OSCE-supported initiatives in Tajikistan, in particular with ENVSEC and Aarhus Centres.
- Description of the linkages of the project with the CASE-Tajikistan Country Strategy.
- Project implementation framework (Target outputs, indicative activities and inputs in relation to the project should be written in a complete, balanced and explicit manner.)
- Project calendar/workplan (timing should be provided on a monthly basis for each activity indicated in the project implementation framework).
- Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan, together with resources allocated for this purpose.
- Description of how communications and outreach activities have been incorporated in the project.
- Description of how the sustainability of project would be achieved subsequent to its completion.
- Summary project budget (distribution of the project budget in terms of main expenditure items should be indicated.)
- Project budget (distribution of the project budget in terms of different budget items should be indicated in a detailed and explicit manner.)

The Project Proposals to be prepared by CSOs shall be submitted before the indicated deadlines to the designated addresses of the OiT CASE Team. Project Proposals shall be reviewed by the OiT CASE Team to ensure their compliance with the required format and content prior to their evaluation by the CASE-Tajikistan National Screening Board. Proposals that are incomplete in certain aspects shall not be categorically rejected, but instead, the applicant CSOs shall be notified of the deficiencies and be requested to remedy them within a given deadline. Regardless of the extent to which the applicant fully addresses the deficiencies (or, if no revisions are made by the applicant in due time), the Project Proposals shall be submitted to the Board in their present state.

5.2.3 Selection of Projects

Project Proposals submitted by CSOs shall be subject to the review and selection by the CASE-Tajikistan National Screening Board. Based upon its review, the National Screening Board shall decide to eliminate or endorse, as appropriate, the Project Proposals.

In relation to the Project Proposals selected/endorsed by the Board, the following alternative paths shall be followed: (1) The Board shall finalize its decision to award a grant to the selected project; or (2) the Board shall only provisionally select the Proposal, subject to its reformulation for further improving its content and remedying the identified deficiencies. In the latter case, the OiT CASE Team shall notify the proponent CSOs of the Board's request and provide them with appropriate guidance and assistance for the reformulation of the Proposal within the specified deadline. Regardless of the extent to which the deficiencies are remedied, another request for reformulation shall not be asked, and the Board shall make its final decision on the basis of the reformulated Proposal as to select or eliminate the project, as appropriate.

Evaluation and selection of projects by the CASE-Tajikistan National Screening Board shall be done on the basis of the following criteria:

- Assessment of the eligibility of the proponent organizations.
- Assessment of the eligibility of the project.
- Assessment of the conformity of the project to the CASE-Tajikistan National Strategy.
- Assessment of whether the Project Proposal clearly articulates its potential contribution to the interface of environment and security issues under the targeted priority theme.
- Assessment of the proposed project activities as to whether they would be adequate to attain its objective(s) and target outputs.
- Assessment of the project calendar/workplan as to whether a realistic time frame and deadlines are provided to undertake the proposed activities.
- Assessment of the project budget as to whether it is adequate to attain its objective(s) and target outputs, whether the budget items and cost estimates are realistic vis-à-vis the activities, and whether the proposed expenditures primarily relate to the project content rather than reflecting institutional overheads of proponent CSOs.
- The overall evaluation of the Project Proposal (general quality of the Project Proposal, its comprehensiveness in addressing environment and security challenges, the coherence and integrity of its content, etc.)

In addition to the criteria delineated above, the following points shall be taken into consideration as an integral aspect of the evaluation and selection process, with a view toward providing extra or "bonus" points, and having a positive impact on the "score cards" to the extent of their realization:

- *Participation*: The extent to which the project has been developed (as well as designed to be implemented and monitored) through a participatory process involving the partner CSOs, constituents of relevant CSO networks, and the representatives of target groups and stakeholders.
- *Partnership*: The extent to which the project is based upon a "partnership" arrangement (i.e. the collective strength and potential synergy of the proposed partnership).
- *Networking*: The extent to which the project provides a practical opportunity to build and strengthen a network of CSOs (and other stakeholders, as appropriate) around the targeted priority theme.

- *Cross-cutting themes*: The extent to which the project adequately addresses one of the cross-cutting themes identified in the CASE-Tajikistan Country Strategy, and particularly the integration of youth and gender concerns under the targeted priority theme.
- *Innovative approach*: Whether and the extent to which the project introduces an innovative approach to the interface of environment and security issues.
- *Outstanding features*: Whether and the extent to which the outstanding features of the project display a potential for being a “best practice”, as well as a potential to augment the visibility and credibility of the CASE-Tajikistan.
- *Explicit/direct linkages with OSCE-supported initiatives*: The extent to which the project includes specific activities/component aimed at establishing direct linkages between CASE and ENVSEC Initiatives, as well as specific activities/components aimed at contributing to the activities of the Aarhus Centres in Tajikistan.
- *Sustainability*: The extent to which adequate means and mechanisms are introduced to ensure the sustainability of the project subsequent to the termination of the CASE grant.

5.3. Implementation of Projects

5.3.1 Signature of the Implementing Partnership Agreement (IPA)

Subsequent to the finalization of the selection process, the OiT CASE Team shall promptly notify in writing all proponent CSOs about the outcome.

Along with this notification, the CSOs whose projects have been selected shall be provided with the necessary information and guidance in relation to the next steps to be taken prior to actual implementation of their projects. The **IPA** to be signed between the grant recipient CSOs and the OSCE Office in Tajikistan shall also be forwarded.

The IPA shall be signed by the designated representative of the lead/grantee CSO(s) and returned (within a given deadline) to the OiT CASE Team for signature by the Head of Mission. A copy of the Agreement shall be forwarded to OCEEA by the OiT CASE Team subsequent to the completion of its signature by the parties.

5.3.2 Disbursement of Grants

The OiT CASE Team shall be responsible for supporting the disbursement of grants for selected projects. The schedule indicating the grant disbursements for each selected project shall be included in the respective IPA.

Prior to the release of the grant instalments, the OiT CASE Team shall prepare a table indicating the total grant disbursements, and forward it to OCEEA for consent. The grant disbursements table shall include, *inter alia*, project names, project identification numbers, grant recipients, total amount and the breakdown of grants, and copies of IPA encompassing the duration of projects/grants, disbursement schedules, etc.

On the basis of the endorsed grant disbursement tables, grants shall be disbursed in instalments based on performance reporting, as delineated in Section 5.4 below.

For practical reasons, alternative arrangements for grant disbursements shall be applied for longer/larger projects and shorter/smaller projects. In this context, projects encompassing 3-4 or more quarters of actual implementation (as well as having a budget near to the specified ceiling), the following disbursement schedule shall be applied:

- 40% upon signature of the IPA, as advance payment.

- 60% upon the review and acceptance of the interim narrative and financial report. as the final instalment under the project.

5.3.3 Project Execution

Projects supported under CASE-Tajikistan shall be executed by the Project Manager, whose name has been provided in the respective Project Proposal. The responsibilities of the Project Manager shall include the issuing of payment orders under the project. To this purpose, the IPA shall include provisions on the means of changing the Project Manager by the grantee CSOs, if deemed necessary.

The transfer of the grant instalments shall be made to the specific project account to be opened by the grantee CSO. (In case of partnerships or an unregistered CSO platform, the account shall be opened by a leading partner or a CSO designated to act on behalf of the whole platform.) All payments under the project shall be made exclusively from this account. The Project Manager shall be the only person authorized to issue payments from this account. The project account shall not be used for purposes other than the project.

All expenditures to be made from the project account shall be based upon the payment order to be signed by the Project Manager. The payment order is expected to include the date of issue, accountancy number, budget item, description of expenditure and other relevant information, as well as the amount of payment in local currency and its equivalent in EUR, calculated on the basis of the exchange rate to be specified by OSCE. Each payment order is expected in turn to be supported by attachments, including the bank receipt, the invoice, bids received, tickets, contracts with experts and other supporting documents, as appropriate.

The implementation of the project shall commence upon the release of the first grant instalment, and the confirmation by the Project Manager that the pertinent advance has been received and recorded in the project account.

Interim project reporting shall constitute the basis for evaluating project progress, and releasing the next grant instalment. Pertinent evaluation to be made by the OiT CASE Team shall be based on the required content of the reports (as delineated in Section 5.4 below), as well as on the M&E Framework (as delineated in Section 5.5 below), including the site visits.

Upon the completion of project activities, the final technical and financial reports shall be prepared and submitted by the Project Manager. (In case the full amount of the grant that has not been utilized for any reason during the approved implementation period of a project, the balance shall be returned to the main account from which the grant instalments have been forwarded by the OSCE Office in Tajikistan.)

The project(s) shall be deemed to be completed subsequent to the review and acceptance of the final technical and financial reports by the OSCE Office in Tajikistan, and the disbursement of the final grant instalment.

5.4. Project Reporting

Grantee CSOs shall submit interim and final narrative and financial reporting and subsequent grant disbursements.

5.4.1 Narrative Reports

The narrative reports shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- A brief statement on whether the project is progressing as initially planned.

- Description of activities conducted during the reporting period, including an account of the differences between planned and realized activities (on the basis of the project implementation framework delineated in the project proposal).
- Description of project outputs achieved during the respective period (on the basis of the project implementation framework delineated in the project proposal).
- An account of major problems encountered during project implementation, and what has been done to overcome them.
- Description of activities planned to be conducted during the next quarter (in the format of a Work Plan).
- Any request for a revision/change in the duration and/or activities of the project, and their justification.
- Supportive material at attachments to the report (as appropriate, copies of the publications, brochures, visual material, newspaper articles, etc.)
- Suggestions of the grantee CSOs in relation to further developing and refining CASE Implementations (if any).

5.4.2 Financial Reports

The financial reports shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- A brief statement on whether the level of project expenditures conform to the project budget provided in the project proposal.
- Description/statement of expenditures made during the reporting period (in spreadsheet format), including an account/display of the differences between planned and realized expenditures.
- Project expenditures summary (in a cumulative format, including the amount indicated in the approved project budget, expenditures in previous quarters of implementation, expenditures in the current quarter, total expenditures made to date, and the remaining balance in the budget.)
- Supporting documentation including original invoices, bills and receipts pertinent to the transaction.
- Any request for a revision/change in the budget items (provided that a request for increasing the total amount of grant is not made).

5.5. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

In order to establish a comprehensive basis for assessment of CASE-Tajikistan achievements and impacts, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) shall be conducted both at the project level, and country level, as delineated below.

5.5.1 Project-Level M&E

The quarterly technical and financial reports to be submitted by grantee CSOs shall serve as the primary tool for project-level M&E, reinforced by other M&E activities to be conducted mainly by the OiT CASE Team.

The following points shall be taken into consideration with regard to M&E of the grantee CSO's reporting and presentation of financial statements in connection with the project:

- Compliance of the project with CASE-Tajikistan National Strategy.
- Overall quality of the report, including adequate description and documentation of project activities.
- Level of performance and timeliness of project activities, as well as the achievement of target outputs, on the basis of the project implementation framework and workplan.
- Level of expenditures and their consistency with the project budget and workplan.
- Reasons for diverging from the planned activities and budget, if any.
- Consistency of the activities planned to be conducted in the subsequent quarter (next steps) with the project implementation framework and workplan.
- Assessment of major problems encountered during project implementation, and what has been done by the grantee CSOs to overcome them.
- Assessment of any request of the grantee CSOs for a revision/change in the project.
- In relation to the Final Project Report in particular, assessment of the overall success of the project, and identification of best practices and lessons learned.

Project-level M&E shall also include the following:

- Site visits to the projects at least once in the project life-time and report on their findings, to be conducted by the OiT CASE Team and/or members of the CASE-Tajikistan National Screening Board.
- Assessment of the extent to which women and youth (and their organizations) are consulted for their opinions and perspectives during the course of each project.
- Identification of innovative approaches introduced in the interface of environment and security issues in connection with the projects supported under CASE-Tajikistan.
- Assessment of the extent to which the projects supported under CASE-Tajikistan display notable differences from projects supported under other similar initiatives.
- Press/media coverage and visibility of the projects supported under CASE-Tajikistan.

5.5.2 Country-Level M&E

The technical and financial reports to be prepared by the OiT CASE Team on a 6-monthly basis in relation to the implementation of CASE-Tajikistan shall serve as the primary tool for country-level M&E. These reports shall include, *inter alia*, information on the following:

- Information on country-level activities conducted within the framework of CASE-Tajikistan.
- Information on the CASE-Tajikistan projects under implementation (including the level of progress, achievements, problems and bottlenecks and solutions to overcome the problems).
- Assessment of the overall technical content and quality of the CASE-Tajikistan projects portfolio and the identification of significant lessons learned, in the light of periodic project reporting as well as pertinent site visits.
- An overview of the general interest of target CSOs in the CASE-Tajikistan Initiative.

- Progress on the involvement of women and youth and gender mainstreaming in CASE-Tajikistan activities.
- The extent to which CASE-Tajikistan has responded to the specific needs of CSOs in the country.
- The quantifiable impact of CASE-Tajikistan on the establishment of CSO networks in the country.
- Number of stakeholders and the quality of their involvement in national-level capacity building activities in Tajikistan.
- The extent to which capacity building programmes have contributed to the improvement in the development and management of projects on priority areas.
- Direct linkages of CASE with the ENVSEC Initiative in Tajikistan.
- Direct linkages of CASE with the Aarhus Centres in Tajikistan.
- The status of implementation of the CASE Communications Strategy adopted for Tajikistan.
- Addressing of relevant UNECE Environmental Conventions under CASE-Tajikistan.
- Progress achieved in resource mobilization in relation to CASE-Tajikistan.
- A breakdown of country level expenditures (including grant disbursements) during the reporting period and commitments for the next reporting period (financial report).

6. CASE-TAJIKISTAN COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

6.1. Background to CASE Communications Strategy

The CASE Guidelines envisages the development of a specific Communications Strategy for the CASE Initiative, with a view towards establishing and maintaining clear and regular channels of communication with the broad spectrum of OSCE partners at all levels, including CSOs in pilot countries as well as other stakeholders, toward attaining the goals and target outputs of the CASE Initiative.

Pursuant to the draft framework provided in the CASE Guidelines, the CASE Communications Strategy should be developed in a manner to attain the following key objectives:

- Disseminating and sharing a common understanding of the goals of OSCE in general and the CASE Initiative in particular.
- Informing all target audiences, including the OSCE network and CSOs in pilot countries as well as external organizations, in relation to the goals and target outputs of CASE.
- Promoting collaboration with strategic partners, and developing and strengthening regional and country level networks.
- Augmenting the visibility and credibility of the CASE Initiative, particularly on the side of the broad spectrum of CSOs in pilot countries.
- Promoting the emphasis of CASE on the interface of environment and security issues, and enhancing community-level understanding of respective linkages.
- Promoting the special and exclusive importance given by the CASE Initiative on CSOs and their networks.
- Enhancing the sharing of experiences, learning from each other and networking among CSOs in pilot countries, particularly in relation to the interface of environment and security issues.
- Promoting the effective sharing of the lessons learned from the CASE Initiative, not only within each pilot country but also in other countries in the OSCE region.
- Sensitizing decision-makers to policy measures and legislative/operational improvements required for the integrated approach to environment and security issues.
- Raising the media's level of interest and responsiveness to the CASE Initiative in order to increase and sustain positive media coverage.
- Identifying the outstanding challenges and opportunities in relation to CASE.
- Meeting the time frame and deadlines identified to attain the target outputs of CASE.
- Meeting resource mobilization targets of CASE, both in the initial stage of implementation, as well as in subsequent phases.

6.2. Content of CASE Communications Strategy

Pursuant to the draft framework provided in the CASE Guidelines, the CASE Communications Strategy should have the following content:

- Purpose of the CASE Communications Strategy.
- Target Groups: For the purposes of CASE, the target groups (or “audiences”) of the Communications Strategy should encompass the full spectrum of institutions, networks and other stakeholders at the local, national, regional and international levels with whom the pertinent information is intended to be shared and a synergy is sought to be developed.
- Key communication principles underlying the CASE Communications Strategy.
- Challenges and bottlenecks in relation to the CASE Initiative that needs to be addressed.
- Opportunities and strengths upon which the CASE Initiative can confidently build its future communications activities.
- Identification of the specific means/tools of the CASE Communication Strategy that are appropriate for the target audience of the CASE Initiative.
- Messages: The CASE Communications Strategy should underline and amplify the main messages that are intended to be given by the CASE Initiative.
- Outreach and Visibility: CASE should expand its outreach and enhance its visibility by effectively utilizing specific communications tools and means in an intertwined manner.
- The implementation arrangements in relation to the CASE Communications Strategy.
- M&E of the Communications Strategy: As an integral aspect of the CASE Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) process, special emphasis should be placed on overseeing and M&E of the implementation of the CASE Communications Strategy.
- Funding of the Communications Strategy: An appropriate portion of the CASE budget should be allocated to support the realization of the Communications Strategy.
- Preparation of CASE Communications Strategy Action Plan for the implementation of the CASE Communications Strategy.

6.3. Development & Implementation of the Communications Strategy

The arrangements in relation to the development and implementation of CASE Communications Strategy, and in this context, CASE-Tajikistan Communications Strategy, shall be as follows:

- OSCE/OCEEA, charged with the responsibility for the overall supervision of the CASE Initiative, shall be responsible for ensuring, coordinating and overseeing the development and subsequently the implementation of the CASE Communications Strategy.
- As part of this responsibility, OSCE/OCEEA shall be responsible for communicating the CASE Communications Strategy to OiT CASE Team, and shall provide guidance in the appropriate incorporation of this Strategy within the CASE-Tajikistan National Strategy.
- The OiT CASE Team shall ensure the appropriate incorporation of the CASE Communications Strategy within CASE-Tajikistan National Strategy. In this context, the OiT CASE Team shall coordinate the preparation of CASE-Tajikistan Communications Strategy to be subsequently incorporated into the CASE-Tajikistan National Strategy.
- Subsequent to the preparation and incorporation the CASE-Tajikistan Communications Strategy, the OiT CASE Team shall ensure the internalization of this Strategy in regular

reports on implementation and monitoring, and to effectively utilize it in building partnerships, mobilizing additional resources and promoting CASE activities in Tajikistan.

- The CASE-Tajikistan National Screening Board, established in Tajikistan for policy guidance, project screening and programme promotion, is expected to take the Communications Strategy into consideration in fulfilling its envisaged functions.
- OSCE Office in Tajikistan is also expected to take the Communications Strategy into consideration as an integral part of its significant role in providing administrative and programmatic support to CASE-Tajikistan.