

Annual Progress Report 2025:

UN Joint Programme: Green Finance Facility to Improve Air Quality and Combat Climate Change in North Macedonia

COVER PAGE

JOINT PROGRAMME (JP) PROFILE:	
Country	North Macedonia
JP title	Green Finance Facility to Improve Air Quality and Combat Climate Change in North Macedonia
Funding Round	Catalytic Investments (C2)
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Reporting Period: 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025

A. Results Narrative

Summary

In 2025, the Green Finance Facility UN Joint Programme (GFF) has delivered transformative results in strengthening the local ecosystem for renewable energy (RE) and energy efficiency (EE) finance and accelerating North Macedonia's green transition. The Programme has provided nearly USD 13 million (compared to USD 10.5 million in 2024) in financing investments by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) (43) and over USD 1.6 million (compared to USD 260,000 in 2024) for households (185 up from 30 in 2024) in RE and EE solutions. From the inception of the Programme to date, a total of 300 RE and/or EE projects have been financed (85 SMEs and 215 households) and more have been supported with technical assistance.

A recent review of results shows that the programme contributes to reduction of greenhouse gas (GhG)¹ emissions and air pollution and to addition of new renewable energy capacity across its SME and household portfolios, with performance aligned to objectives and supported by a robust methodology.

Uptake and results in households have significantly increased with targeted outreach, visibility and marketing efforts and thanks to an enlarged scope of the target groups of underserved households (by adding youth 18 to 35 years of age, single income households, households with 3 or more children, in addition to women, female-headed households, single parents, persons with a disability, remittance recipients and returning migrants initially), following JP's Mid-Term Review and Programme Revision with extension to April 2027 to support results promotion, scalability and replicability potentials.

Through joint engagement, the Programme operationalized human mobility considerations by tailoring outreach to remittance-receiving households and returning migrants, leveraging migration and diaspora resources for climate-positive household investments and strengthening links between green finance, reintegration and resilience.

A notable trend is a strong uptake of electrification technologies, particularly high-efficiency heat pumps in household investments coupled with photovoltaic systems in SMEs. This shift signals a clear market transformation toward cleaner, more sustainable solutions. These technologies have emerged as the primary drivers of energy savings and emissions reductions, while also contributing to improved local air quality by estimated reductions of over 6,500 kg/year in particulate matter pollution (PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ combined). These improvements reinforce the programme's contribution to public health and environmental objectives, adding further value beyond its core energy and climate goals.

The achievements in the programme contribute directly to SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), SDG 13 (Climate Action), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) - reinforcing GFF's role as a catalyst for North Macedonia's green transition.

¹ Current calculations on nearly 90% of beneficiaries in 2025 indicate GHG emissions reductions or avoidance at 41,715 t/yr. Specific values achieved and targets by Outcome are included in the Results Reporting Framework.

In 2025, the Programme achieved significant visibility through extensive media coverage and participation in high-level events and conferences, most prominently at the 14th International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development held in Skopje, as well as at the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development in Sevilla, positioning the Programme within global discussions on blended finance, and green sustainable investment.

Performance Rating: Satisfactory, Solid Achievement

1. Systems-Level Transformation

The Green Finance Facility (GFF) JP has catalyzed systemic change by embedding green finance into market and policy systems. This transformation spans behaviors, relationships, power dynamics, and mindsets—creating an enabling environment for sustainable development.

Behavioral Shifts

Partner financial institutions have integrated green lending practices, prioritizing renewable energy (RE) and energy efficiency (EE) investments. SMEs invested in diverse solutions: 64% RE-focused, 23% EE, and 13% combined EE and RE. Households increasingly adopt bundled measures—combining building envelope improvements with RE systems and achieving higher energy savings and emission reductions. These shifts normalize green finance as mainstream, unlocking financing for 107 female-headed and 30 youth households and reinforcing market confidence. Through joint engagement, household investments were framed as part of sustainable reintegration and resilience pathways for returning migrants and remittance-receiving families.

Strengthened Relationships

The GFF fostered multi-stakeholder partnerships among seven local financial institutions (five banks, one leasing company, and one microfinance organization/savings house), civil society organizations, relevant line ministries and public institutions, development partners, and private sector actors involved in green and sustainable investments. These partnerships align policy and finance frameworks with financial products and community needs, while business and civil society organizations amplify awareness and demand. Their specificity, linking global expertise with local implementation ensures program stability, resilience and scalability, making systemic change real and sustainable. This included strengthening linkages between financial institutions and migration-affected communities, helping reduce informational and access barriers.

Power Dynamics

Green finance and green transformation support are now embedded in national strategies (National Development Strategy 2024-2044), energy policies (Law on Energy 2025), and government's budget (Official Gazette 253/2025), financial regulations (National Bank of the Republic of North Macedonia 2023, 2025). While not directly attributable to the JP's mandate, these are positive developments that contribute to a supportive eco-system in which the JP operates and facilitate decision-making

of financing institutions to partner and invest in RE and EE. Gender-responsive finance further shifts dynamics by recognizing women as investors and decision-makers in the green transition.

Mindset Transformation

Stakeholders increasingly embrace blended finance models, combining public and private resources to de-risk investments, add behavior incentives and accelerate green transitions. Acceptance of gender-responsive approaches underscores women's role in driving sustainable solutions and ensures inclusivity. The model has successfully supported other underserved, socially vulnerable but marketable groups of households in need of affordable finance for investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy in their homes and businesses. They have responded well to outreach efforts and the financial incentives (performance-based payments) imbedded in the financial products of the PFIs with support by JP's team. While the scope of eligible target groups of households was expanded in 2025 to accelerate uptake, additional recommendations have been noted to consider further expansion and inclusion of other target groups such as retirees, agricultural households in rural areas, craftsmen/women and owners of private accommodations for tourism and hospitality services.

These mindset shifts and initiatives foster innovation, promote assistance targeting and promote green finance as a tool for both environmental and social progress.

Conclusion

The GFF demonstrates that embedding green finance is not a single intervention but a structural shift that reshapes behaviors, strengthens partnerships, unlocks private finance, and reconfigures power dynamics. By institutionalizing green finance and promoting collaborative governance, the GFF lays the foundation for long-term sustainability and resilience.

Max words 600 (count 450)

2. Policy, Regulatory, and Capacity Shifts

Integration into National Financing and Strategies

Climate finance is now embedded in North Macedonia's fiscal planning and investment frameworks, aligning economic development with sustainability goals. This systemic commitment mobilizes public and private resources for renewable energy (RE), energy efficiency (EE), and other green initiatives. The Joint Programme (JP) attracted additional resources and/or interest from international financial institutions (IFIs), UNDP and UNECE, to support and learn from the JP and explore sustainability and replicability. Importantly, the Government has allocated resources through a national environment program, signaling strong ownership and commitment to climate priorities. This includes additional financing to the JP, reinforcing its role as a catalyst for systemic change. In parallel, the JP supported policy coherence by integrating inclusion and human mobility considerations into the enabling environment for green finance, strengthening links between climate investment frameworks and household-level resilience.

Adoption of Green Lending Guidelines

A milestone was the National Bank of the Republic of North Macedonia (NBRNM)'s adoption and implementation of green lending guidelines and assessment of climate risks, providing financial institutions (PFIs) with standards for assessing and monitoring green loans². This approach enhances transparency, incentivizes PFIs to expand green portfolios, increases share of 'green loans' in lending portfolios of FIs³ and accelerates uptake of RE and EE solutions. By institutionalizing these practices, the financial sector is moving beyond ad hoc green products toward a structured, sustainable approach aligned with good international practices.

Capacity-Building for PFIs and SMEs

Recognizing that policy alone is insufficient, the JP invested in capacity-building for PFIs and SMEs. Three PFIs strengthened by over 100 branch managers and loan officers combined with knowledge through targeted training, improving their ability to design and market green products, and complying with the JP and regulations. Similarly, over 80 SMEs received technical and investment support to develop bankable projects and access financing. These efforts bridge knowledge gaps, reduce perceived risks, and empower market actors to actively participate in the green transition.

Gender-Responsive Data in Loan Procedures

Gender-responsive practices advanced women's economic empowerment, with 34 per cent of SME loans extended to women-led enterprises and 107 loans supporting women and female-headed households. The use of disaggregated data and tailored outreach helped address structural barriers such as limited collateral and credit history, enabling more equitable access to finance and participation in the green economy. This approach reinforces gender equality as a key driver of sustainable development and ensures that climate finance delivers both environmental and social benefits.

Conclusion

Through strategic integration, capacity building, gender-responsive practices, government commitment and support, North Macedonia is laying the foundation for a robust and inclusive climate finance ecosystem. These systemic shifts demonstrate that sustainable green finance is not a technical, marketing or reporting exercise, it is rather a transformative approach in support of economic growth, environmental stewardship, and social equity.

Max 500 words (count: 495)

3. Financing Solutions and Resource Flows

² NBRNM 2023-2025: <https://www.nbrm.mk/ns-newsarticle-srednorocen-plan-na-aktivnostite-na-narodnata-banka-vo-domenot-na--upravuvane-so-rizicite-povrzani-so-klimatskite-promeni-za-periodot--2023---2025-godina.nspix>

³ NBRNM 2025: <https://www.nbrm.mk/ns-newsarticle-soopstenie-04042025.nspix>

The JP has established a financing ecosystem to accelerate investments in EE and RE with a “deal room” concept, convening public and private actors in blended finance solutions. These include concessional loans, technical assistance, targeted RE and EE consumer loans with flexible terms, joint promotion and marketing, and tailored performance-based payments.

Source of Financing	Type of Source (e.g. PUNO, PPP, DFI, donors, private sector, etc.)	Planned amount in the ProDoc	Actual amount mobilized as of reporting date
UN Joint SDG Fund	MPTF	\$ 8,224,431	\$ 8,474,431
EBRD	IFI	\$ 31.4 million	\$ 43.42 million ⁴
Government	Government	\$ 0.8 million	\$ 0.8m. mobilized (plus .25m. committed in 2026)
Local banks	Private sector	\$ 6.5 million	\$3.45 m. mobilized contributions from 3 PFIs in Outcome 2. (plus, additional 2 new FIs have committed \$3m. total in expressions of interest to join GFF Outcome 2.)
TOTAL		\$ 46,924,431	\$ 59,394,431

Influence on Broader Financing Flows and Government Budgets

Through sustained policy dialogue, the JP influenced national budget allocations of USD 1.05 million (of which USD 250,000 in 2025 for 2026) and integrated green finance priorities into government strategies, such as the National Development Strategy 2024-2044 and the new Law on Energy. Advocacy for financial incentives and streamlined permitting processes strengthened the enabling environment, fostering private sector engagement and long-term sustainability.

Financial Instruments and Solutions Developed

The JP introduced innovative financial products tailored to SMEs and underserved households, including loans, leasing options, and microfinance solutions for vulnerable groups (neither is the case with the similar GEFF programme operating in the country and region for several years). These (GFF's) products include performance-based incentives and are complemented by technical assistance for financial institutions and SMEs.

Pipeline of Investment-Ready Projects

JP's project and energy consultants, municipalities, SMEs, business and civic organizations, technology providers (vendors) and media outreach have contributed to a steady pipeline of bankable projects, on energy efficiency and RE installations in both households and SMEs.

⁴ EUR 37m as per Letter signed between EBRD and UNDP of 10.11.2025. Equivalent USD 43.42 per UN exchange rate of 1.1.2026.

Moreover, JP's partnerships with PFIs and their credit lines have reached a maturity phase of implementation, delivering both climate and socio-economic benefits.

Recent Milestone: Expanding Outcome 2 Financing and Reach

The JP launched a call for one bank to join Outcome 2, which resulted in two applications - from a commercial bank and a microfinance organization. Each committed USD 1.5 million for green household loans, creating a dedicated financing stream for residential EE and RE. This milestone demonstrates the JP's capacity to mobilize private capital and expand affordable finance for households.

Financial Leverage and Alignment with Priorities

The JP achieved significant financial leverage by mobilizing private capital alongside programme resources. Partnerships with local banks, leasing company, and microfinance organization multiplied the impact of JP funds, creating a sustainable financing model aligned with national energy and climate strategies. This approach accelerates market transformation while embedding resilience and inclusivity into the financial system.

Conclusion

The JP has positioned itself as a catalyst for systemic change, bridging finance and implementation to deliver transformative impact at scale. Direct government contributions underscore strong national ownership and complement international support.

Max 500 words (count: 499)

4. Strategic Partnerships

The JP has built a comprehensive network of partnerships across national institutions, international organizations, financial actors, private sector entities, and civil society. These collaborations have been pivotal in scaling the programme's reach, mobilizing resources, and embedding systemic changes in policy and financing frameworks.

National Institutions

Engagement with the Office of the Prime Minister and key ministries – the Ministry of Energy, Mining and Mineral Resources, the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, and Ministry of Finance has ensured alignment of JP objectives with national strategies and priorities. The National Bank of North Macedonia has strengthened this enabling environment by enforcing green lending guidelines, integrating climate risks and incentivizing financial institutions to expand their green portfolios. Municipalities have played a critical role in local outreach and implementation, facilitating community engagement and accelerating the adoption of energy efficiency and clean energy technologies. The success of these partnerships lies in their specificity: each partner contributes unique mandates and resources, from policy-setting and regulatory reforms to

financing and practical implementation. This multi-tiered collaboration guarantees strategic coherence and operational effectiveness, making it a model for impactful climate action.

International Organizations

The JP is implemented through a strong partnership among UNDP, UNECE, EBRD, IOM, and the Government, each contributing complementary expertise and value. EBRD has supported four participating financial institutions through green credit lines for SMEs and provided targeted technical assistance to strengthen SME investment readiness. IOM has partnered with the financial institutions to enhance the programme's social dimension, supporting vulnerable groups such as returning migrants and remittance recipients. UNECE and UNDP jointly facilitated the JP's representation at the 14th International Conference on Energy for Sustainable Development, increasing its visibility and credibility within international policy and finance forums. Together, these partnerships have anchored the JP within broader regional and global sustainability and green finance agendas.

Financial Institutions

Formal agreements with five local banks, one leasing company, and one microfinance institution have unlocked new financing channels for households and SMEs. These arrangements enabled blended finance models, reduced barriers to credit, and introduced innovative products such as energy-efficiency loans and leasing options for renewable technologies. By mobilizing private capital, these partnerships have significantly scaled investment volumes beyond the programme's initial resources, reinforcing market confidence and accelerating the green transition.

Private Sector Engagement

The Banking Association and Chamber of Commerce have served as platforms for dialogue and advocacy, fostering market confidence and accelerating uptake of clean technologies. Partnerships with SMEs and technology providers ensured timely delivery of high-efficiency equipment and services, while promoting local value chains and competitive, sustainable business models.

Civil Society

The partnership with Romalitico Institute strengthened outreach to Roma communities, resulting in Roma household beneficiaries. Through research and stakeholder engagement, Romalitico enhanced transparency, accountability, and inclusive governance, ensuring that programme benefits extend to marginalized groups.

Impact at Scale

Collectively, these partnerships have embedded JP objectives into national frameworks, mobilized private and public investment, and fostered inclusive participation. They have leveraged resources, introduced technical expertise, facilitated systemic and firm- and household-level behavioral improvements that enable long-term sustainability.

Max 500 words (count 490)

Engagement with the European Union (EU)

The JP has engaged with the EU primarily through dialogue and alignment with North Macedonia's Reform Agenda, which prioritizes sustainable energy and digital transition.

In addition, the JP cooperated with the EU-funded project EU4Prespa implemented by UNDP and the Municipality of Resen to reach target groups of households including small accommodation owners in the Prespa region.

Planned Actions for 2026

In 2026, the JP will strengthen EU involvement by exploring co-financing opportunities with the EU under EU Green Deal and Just Transition frameworks. Actions considered include:

- Promoting blended finance opportunities for residential and SME-level renewable energy and energy efficiency investments.
- Joint advocacy and technical support for regulatory reforms aligned with EU energy directives.
- Exploring integration of EU-funded technical assistance into capacity-building for financial institutions and municipalities.

Opportunities for Diversification

Concrete opportunities exist to broaden EU partnerships through:

- Continued cooperation with EU4Prespa project and scaled to other EU-funded projects implemented by UN agencies in the country.
- Social inclusion initiatives, leveraging EU expertise to scale gender-responsive and vulnerable-group-focused financing models.
- Evaluation of public sector support programs focused on energy poverty, including promotion of clean cooking.

By aligning with EU priorities and leveraging UNDP's role as a key implementing partner and partnerships anchor, the JP can accelerate North Macedonia's energy transition, embed sustainability into financial systems, and deliver transformative impact at scale.

Max 300 words (count: 292)

5. Constraints, Adjustments and Lessons Learned

During the reporting period, the JP faced contextual and operational challenges that required adaptive management to maintain relevance and effectiveness. These challenges were linked to verification processes, gender equity gaps, and outreach to vulnerable communities.

Key Constraints and Risks

Longer than expected time for verification emerged as a operational constraint under Outcome 1, driven by long and complex permitting procedures and cumbersome documentation for large-scale photovoltaic investments. These delays have affected disbursement timelines of performance-based payments to SMEs. Under Outcome 2, engaging Roma communities, returning migrants, and other vulnerable households proved challenging, constraining inclusivity and limiting uptake of energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions. Migrant participants, particularly returnees and remittance-dependent households, faced additional risks related to documentation gaps, irregular income streams, and limited financial literacy, which affected their ability to participate fully in programme-supported financing schemes.

Adjustments and Mitigation Actions

To address verification delays, the JP enhanced monitoring protocols, and improved coordination and responsiveness in the partnerships and with consultants to accelerate the verification process. Enhanced outreach campaigns targeted women entrepreneurs and female-headed households, supported by gender-responsive measures embedded in financial products. Challenges with credit product promotion and uptake were mitigated through training to the PFIs and marketing including sponsored posts as well as through joint outreach via media, municipalities, chambers of commerce, businesswomen's association and organizations of persons with a disability. Further, the JP engaged a civil society organization active in the Roma community to promote the program which has resulted in a number of project applications from Roma households. Efficiency measures include a harmonized monitoring and reporting templates across implementing partners.

Lessons Learned

1. Outreach and Engagement Improves Uptake

Proactive communication, visibility, and targeted technical assistance were critical in improving participation by SMEs and households. Clear, accessible information and hands-on guidance helped beneficiaries navigate financing requirements and build confidence in green credit products. Early outreach and engagement supported timely renewable energy and energy efficiency project preparation, facilitated loan approval processes, and improved implementation quality, underscoring the importance of sustained visibility and advisory support throughout the programme cycle.

2. Diversification of Investment Types (Mix) Delivers Greater Impact

Combining RE and EE solutions enhances energy savings and climate benefits but demands tailored technical support and flexible timelines. Bundled interventions of EE and RE such as combined investments in insulation, heat pumps, solar panels and e-mobility should be prioritized in future outreach and promotion.

3. Continuous Stakeholder Coordination is Critical

Close coordination among JP partners, participating financial institutions, national and local authorities, and regulators was essential to mitigate risks and ensure responsiveness to target groups. Coordination tools included a shared monitoring database, regular coordination meetings,

and joint field and online promotional activities. Coherent communication and visibility efforts, including participation in International Conferences like the Sevilla's SDG Financing for Development and the Energy Forum further strengthened stakeholder ownership, programme credibility, and alignment with national and global sustainable development agendas.

4. Gender Mainstreaming Requires Dedicated Action

Achieving gender equality in access to finance cannot rely on generic, one-size-fits-all measures. Structural barriers continue to limit women's participation in financial markets, requiring deliberate and targeted action to ensure equal opportunities and outcomes. The JP undertook focused outreach through media channels and women's business organizations and supported PFI in the marketing and promotion of green credit products designed to reach women more effectively. By applying gender-responsive approaches that address the specific constraints faced by women-owned and women-led businesses, households, and single mothers, JP worked to level the playing field in access to green finance.

Max words 500 (count 496)

6. 2026 Plans and Exit Strategy

The Joint Programme (JP) will focus on consolidating gains and scaling impact through three core priorities: financing and financial leverage, strategic partnerships, and transformative impact.

Key Priorities for 2026

First, the JP will deploy additional finance (EUR 8 million) from EBRD in Outcome 1 (signed in December 2025⁵) and by adding a financial institution with 1.5 mil. in Outcome 2 with additional channels for household-level green finance, with focus on youth. Each case requires close consideration of the timeframe for implementation as the partner EBRD and respective IFIs are seeking a **cost-extension of the programme until 2028** for implementation of the new credit lines. This will be complemented by accelerated verification processes and strengthening technical assistance supporting financial institutions to design innovative green products and SMEs to develop bankable projects.

Gender-responsive outreach, communication and marketing tools and strategies will be deepened to address equity gaps, ensuring women entrepreneurs and female-headed households have equal access to financing.

⁵ EBRD 2025 available at <https://www.ebrd.com/home/work-with-us/projects/psd/57060.html#>

Exit Strategy and Sustainability

The JP's exit strategy is embedded throughout implementation to ensure continuity and scalability. It builds on UNDP's Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) to mainstream climate finance into national systems. Capacity strengthening for financial institutions, municipalities, and SMEs ensures that local actors can manage and scale activities independently. Technical tools, including the joint technology catalogue and harmonized reporting templates, will be transferred to national and local institutions to support continuity.

Sustainability of social inclusion is ensured by integrating outreach and eligibility approaches for Roma communities, returning migrants, and remittance-dependent households into standard financial products and delivery channels. Through JP model, energy efficiency and renewable energy investments remain accessible to vulnerable households by reducing upfront costs, improving affordability, and offering technical guidance, thereby directly addressing energy poverty in a sustainable manner.

Phase-over of activities will prioritize government-led scaling, with ministries and municipalities assuming responsibility for outreach and implementation. Partnerships with international organizations, notably EBRD, will be leveraged to replicate successful models regionally, aligning with EU Green Deal and Just Transition frameworks.

Pathways for Scaling and Transformative Impact

By embedding programme methodologies into national frameworks and fostering regional replication, the JP creates conditions for long-term sustainability. Strategic partnerships will remain central—mobilizing additional donors, expanding co-financing opportunities, and promoting inclusive approaches that address gender equity and energy poverty.

The JP's vision for 2026 and beyond is clear: a resilient, inclusive financial ecosystem that accelerates North Macedonia's energy transition, strengthens governance, and delivers transformative climate and development impacts across the Western Balkans. This vision goes beyond short-term interventions—it seeks to institutionalize green finance as a core pillar of national development strategies and regional cooperation. To that end, UNDP's INFF project is contributing resources to assess and advance the sustainability and scalability of the JP and to promote a dialogue on regional replicability in the Western Balkans.

The JP is contributing to a market of financial products and RE and EE technology solutions that are accessible, affordable, and promoted across sectors. By embedding gender-responsive approaches and social inclusion, the JP ensures that vulnerable groups, including women entrepreneurs and female-led households, benefit from the green transition.

Through strategic partnerships with government, financial institutions, and international actors such as EBRD, the EU, and other IFIs, the JP will foster innovation, mobilize capital, and scale

successful models regionally. This integrated approach positions North Macedonia as a leader in sustainable energy transformation in the Western Balkans.

Max words: 500 (count: 500)

B. Indicator-based Performance Assessment

B.1. The JP results framework and workplan (Excel)

Please assess the JP performance against the indicators identified in you JP's Prodoc annex: Integrated results framework and workplan, including 1) JP outcomes and outputs, and 2) JP workplan.

Please upload the completed excel file via the Microsoft online form (question 8).

- JP Integrated Results Framework and Work Plan are appended for upload
- Study from Review of GFF Results appended for upload

B.2. Leaving No One Behind

Please indicate the number of direct beneficiaries from your JP to date. Direct beneficiaries are individuals, groups or organizations who actively participate in JP activities and directly benefit from its interventions, such as civil servants attending workshops, small business owners receiving training, or households accessing services provided by the JP.

Type of engagement	Total Number of People	Number of Women and Girls*	Number of Children (0-14)*	Number of youth (ages 15-24) *
Training/workshops for targeted groups	796	505	0	20
Awareness raising campaign for broad audience	428,060	300,742	0	20,000
Dialogues/consultations with relevant stakeholders	119	64	0	2 youth organizations
Coordination meetings with key partners	150 (attendees at monthly partner coordination meetings and mid-term review interviews.	90	0	unknown
Access to expanded services	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Others (Please specify):	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

** Note that it is allowed to have overlaps in the reporting of women/girls and children/youth columns.*

B.2.a. Has the JP demonstrated positive results and influence for youth (age 15-24 years) in accordance with the principles in Youth2030 Strategy. If yes, please describe your contributions to the Youth2030 Strategy.

The Joint Programme (JP) aligns strongly with the **UN Youth2030 Strategy**, advancing youth engagement, economic empowerment, and inclusion. Following recommendations from the Mid-Term Review of the Green Finance Facility, the JP expanded its target groups in mid-2025 to include youth aged **18–35**. This addition had a strong traction with significant interest and uptake by young couples and innovators to invest in RE and EE solutions in their homes.

This strategic adjustment significantly increased youth participation and relevance. Since the expansion, interest from young applicants has surged, reflecting the programme’s responsiveness to youth-led green entrepreneurship and sustainable finance needs. Currently, **over 30 loans applications** from the 18–35 age group are in progress, signaling improved accessibility to green finance opportunities.

Key contributions include:

- **Economic empowerment and climate action:** Youth feedback informed programme design, leading to targeted financing for RE and EE investments in homes.
- **Inclusion and equity:** Expanded eligibility criteria to reach young innovators and entrepreneurs.
- **Sustainability and resilience:** Supporting youth participation in climate-smart investments aligned with national and global goals.

By adapting to evidence-based recommendations and creating tangible pathways for youth economic participation, the JP strengthens its role as a catalyst for an inclusive green transition in North Macedonia.

Max words 200 (count: 200)

B.2.b. In bullet points, please provide a summary of how the JP is benefiting the marginalized and vulnerable groups identified in the ProDoc. Include results to which you have contributed at both institutional/policy and local/human levels. Please find the 20 standard LNOB groups in footnote 28 on page 17 of the UNSDG Output Indicator Framework’s [Implementation Guide](#). You can also consult the human rights checklists on [digital transformation](#), [food systems transformation](#), and [social protection and jobs](#) to inform your responses. (NB: PUNOs may need to request access first).

In 2025, the Joint Programme (JP) engaged **2,989 individuals**, bringing cumulative outreach to **25,000+ beneficiaries**.

Benefits for Marginalized Groups

The JP advocated for inclusive financing in line with the leave-no-one-behind principle. The JP has supported underserved but marketable groups such as women, female-headed households, women-led businesses, single parents, Roma, single parents, households with persons with disabilities, youth (aged 18-35 years), single income households, with three or more children, remittance recipients and returning migrants for green investments.

Gender

Gender equality remains central: **34% of SME loans** were secured by women-led enterprises, and **107 household loans** supported female-headed households. Tailored training strengthened women’s role in the green economy and promoted access to finance for individual women and women-led firms. Over 50% of trainees and attendees at public events were women.

Youth

Aligned with **Youth2030 Strategy**, the JP enabled access to RE/EE finance through **30 household loans** for youth aged 18–35 to adopt clean energy and reduce emissions. Moreover, all households that accessed and benefited from RE and EE finance include 197 children aged 0-18 years.

Intersectional Approach

Applying a “**Leave No One Behind**” principle, the JP addressed overlapping vulnerabilities—such as women from Roma communities through outreach and community partnerships.

Max words: 200 (count 199)

B.3. Reporting against JSDGF global indicators

Kindly provide progress made against the following Fund-level indicators.

Enabling Action areas:

Indicators	Progress in 2025
Number of integrated policies/regulatory frameworks that have been both adopted and show early evidence of systems change (e.g., increased cross-sector coordination, enhanced resource allocation, improved service delivery integration) with Joint SDG Fund support	Two frameworks: Green Financing regulatory incentives integrated into banking sector; gender-responsive loan procedures and

	data collection implemented.
Number of policy innovations or regulatory reforms that have been replicated or scaled beyond initial target areas/sectors with Joint SDG Fund support	/
Number of new or strengthened institutional mechanisms (e.g., coordination bodies, implementation units, multi-stakeholder platforms) that demonstrate improved cross-sector integration in SDG implementation	Multi-stakeholder GFF Steering Committee operational; new PFIs onboarded.
Number of government entities, both at the central and sub-national levels, that have restructured their planning, budgeting or implementation processes to enable integrated SDG acceleration, with evidence of sustained organizational change	4 national institutions: 1. Government (with its. National Development Strategy and 2026 Program and budget for Environment Promotion), 2. Ministry of Energy, Mining and Mineral Resources (with a new Law on Energy enacted in 2025). 3. Ministry of Finance – approved additional finance for the JP in 2026, 4. the National Bank of North Macedonia with a methodology and data on green finance, integrating climate risks into financial

	analysis, and new methodology for gender-informed finance.
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Key Transition and Thematic Indicators (respond to all relevant indicators, especially those in the JP's primary and secondary transition areas)

Transition area	Indicators	Progress in 2025
Digital	Number of individuals, including those who are marginalised, vulnerable and left behind, benefiting from enhanced digital public services and solutions, including sex-disaggregation	/
	Number of digital applications and engagement platforms, created with UN support, linked to SDGs	/
	Number of institutions and private sector partners with enhanced skills and capacities based on support provided	10 (3 ministries and 7 private sector partners)
Food systems	Number of new and improved evidence-based food systems policies/strategies developed and implemented, in line with international human rights and other relevant standards	/
	Number of small-holder farmers and producers adopting innovative and sustainable food production practices, including sex-disaggregation	/
	Number of targeted populations, including those who are marginalised, vulnerable and left behind, with improved food security and nutrition outcomes, including sex-disaggregation	/
Social Protection & Jobs	Number of reforms, policies and programmes that have been adopted (Decree, Law, governmental policy) and/or implemented, by a national authority (such as the parliament or national assembly, government institution or body relating to decent jobs or social protection and originating in the GA Roadmap)	/
	Number of people, including those who are marginalised, vulnerable and left behind, benefiting from the introduction, extension and strengthening of social protection and decent work policies, including sex-disaggregation	/
Energy transition	Number of new or enhanced integrated policy and regulatory frameworks developed and/or adopted to accelerate energy transition, in line with international human rights and other relevant standards	/
	Number of people/households, including those who are marginalised, vulnerable and left behind, benefiting from improved access to clean and affordable energy, including sex-disaggregation	639 (555 from households, 84 from SMEs),

		over 50% women
Climate, biodiversity, pollution	Number of NDC 3.0 components strengthened with integrated just transition and inclusivity considerations	0 (NDC 3.0 is in development)
	Reduction of CO ₂ eq emissions, through JSDGF support	41,715 t/yr
	Area of terrestrial and marine protected areas created or under improved management practices (hectares), supported by the JSDGF	/
Education	Number of children, youth, and adults, including those who are marginalised, vulnerable and left behind, benefiting from improved access to inclusive, quality education, including sex-disaggregation	/
	Number of teachers and school staff trained demonstrating gender-sensitive and inclusive teaching practices aligned with national education, including sex-disaggregation	/
	Number of education sector policies/regulatory frameworks adopted or strengthened, in line with international human rights and other relevant standards	/

B.3. Reporting against JSDGF global indicators

Kindly provide progress made against the following Fund-level indicators.

Enabling Action Areas

Indicators	Progress in 2025
Integrated policies/regulatory frameworks adopted with systems change	Two frameworks: Green Financing regulatory incentives integrated into banking sector; gender-responsive loan procedures and data collection implemented.
New or strengthened institutional mechanisms for SDG integration	Multi-stakeholder GFF Steering Committee operational; new PFIs onboarded.

Key Transition and Thematic Indicators

Energy Transition

Indicator	Progress in 2025
Households benefiting from clean energy access	185 (up from 30 in 2024)

Climate, Biodiversity, Pollution

Indicator	Progress in 2025
Reduction of CO ₂ eq emissions	41,715 (cumulative: 86,912)
Protected areas improved	N/A (not applicable to GFF scope)

Social Protection & Jobs

Indicator	Progress in 2025
People benefiting from decent work policies	N/A

C. Strategic Communications and Partnership Update

Please provide the links to written communications products published by the JP team PUNOs, RCOs or implementing partners, or the draft outline of a written article to be finalized in the coming weeks. Examples of human-interest stories, practical guidance on storytelling, other useful tools to produce impactful written articles can be found on [UNSDG Knowledge Portal](#) (NB: PUNOs may need to request access first).

List of links to written articles, case studies, factsheets, videos (do not include social media posts): • UNDP Resident Representative Armen Grigoryan - Video • UN Deputy Secretary-General - Article • North Macedonia's Path to Cleaner Energy and Air Quality - Article • Green Financing: Women as Key Agents of Change Joint SDG Fund • A mosaic of womanhood – Capturing diverse realities of women's experiences United Nations Development Programme • Economy and Business - Partnerships for Clean Air and Sustainable Development • Interview in Morning Show at Macedonian National TV • Interview in Morning Show at ALFA TV GFF Articles and Features in Media (prominent magazines, TV and business web portals): • https://bankarstvo.mk/GFF • https://www.bankometar.mk/GFF • https://pari.com.mk/ifesd-14-bozinovska/ GFF at the 14th International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development: • https://opserver.mk - IFESD and energy • https://mia.mk - IFESD and energy GFF • https://makfax.com.mk- IFESD and energy GFF • https://nezavisen.mk - IFESD and energy • https://www.vecer.press - IFESD and financial instruments GFF • https://mk.tv21.tv IFESD and financial instruments GFF
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- https://www.linkedin.com/posts/unece-sustainable-energy_energyefficiency-renewableenergy-sustainablefinance-activity-7389688795694120960-pOc1

- **GFF SME Success Stories:** [LINK](#)

Video Animation 1. [Link](#) 2. [Link](#)

Household Stories / Testimonials:

- Markov Manastir (Skopje surroundings) [Link](#)
- Makedonski Brod: [Link](#)
- Prilep: [Link](#)
- Skopje (2) [Link](#) | [Link](#)
- Shtip: [Link](#)
- Tetovo: [Link](#)

Partner financial institutions:

Outcome 1 (SMEs)

- Komercijalna Bank A.D. Skopje: <https://www.kb.mk/gff-makedonija-na-ebor.nspk>
- ProCredit Bank A.D. Skopje: [Link](#)
- Sparkasse Leasing:

Outcome 2 (Households):

- Silk Road Bank: [Link](#) [Link](#)
- TTK Bank: [Link](#) [Link](#)
- Savings House Mozhnosti: [Link](#) [Link](#)

Draft outline of a written article of a human-interest story (500 words / 1 page max)

The Taste of a Sun-Powered Home: Sinisha's Green Homecoming

For many, the "Macedonian dream" involves seeking a life across the ocean. For Sinisha Baeder, the dream was exactly the opposite. After years of living in Canada—a country of immense opportunity and stability—Sinisha found himself pulled by a persistent, quiet urge: the desire to come home. It wasn't that Canada had failed him; he had a good job and a secure life. But as any returnee will tell you, there are things geography cannot replace. "I just wanted to be where family and friends are," Sinisha explains. "Where the air feels familiar and where everything, from the food to the conversations, simply tastes different."

Returning to his hometown of Štip with his wife and two small children was an act of faith. He didn't have a job lined up, but he had a conviction that if he followed his heart, the pieces would fall into place. However, living abroad had changed his perspective on what a "home" should be. He didn't just want four walls; he wanted a modern, energy-efficient sanctuary that would provide a healthy environment for his children and a sustainable future for his family.

A Vision Above the Valley

Sinisha chose a unique location on the outskirts of Štip. The site offers a breathtaking view of the valley—a landscape where traditional scenery is increasingly dotted with shimmering photovoltaics. While some might see solar panels as purely industrial, for Sinisha, they were a sign of progress and added value. He saw a harmony between the land he loved and the renewable energy technology he respected.

But building a "perfect" energy-efficient house is a significant financial undertaking. Sinisha knew that to truly realize his vision, his home needed to be part of the solution, not the problem. He needed his own photovoltaic system to power his family's new life.

Bridging the Gap with Green Finance

The turning point came through the **Green Finance Facility (GFF)** project. Designed to accelerate the transition to renewable energy, the GFF specifically recognizes the unique role of returnees—people like Sinisha who bring global perspectives back to their local communities but often face the high costs of modernizing infrastructure.

Through the project, Sinisha was able to access a **30% grant** for the installation of his solar system. "The grant made the decision easy," he says. "It bridged the gap between wanting an eco-friendly home and actually being able to afford the technology to make it happen."

Roots and Renewables

Today, Sinisha's home stands as a bridge between two worlds. It possesses the modern efficiency he grew accustomed to in Canada, powered by the Mediterranean sun that defines the Štip region.

His story is more than a tale of construction; it is a story of "brain gain." By returning home and investing in green technology, Sinisha is helping to reshape the local economy and environment. As his two children play in the shadow of their sun-powered home, they aren't just growing up near their grandparents—they are growing up in a future where stability, dignity, and sustainability are built into the very foundation of their everyday lives.

For Sinisha, the taste of home is finally what he imagined: clean, bright, and powered by the sun.