

## Terms of Reference

### Evaluation Synthesis Study Consultant:

#### Synthesis Study of IEU and GCF Evaluative Evidence and Lessons

#### *Independent Evaluation Unit*

### I. Introduction to GCF and IEU

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) is a multilateral fund created to make significant, ambitious contributions to the global efforts to combat climate change. GCF contributes to achieving the objectives of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement. In the context of sustainable development, GCF aims to promote a paradigm shift towards low-emission and climate-resilient development pathways by providing support to developing countries to limit or reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to climate change, while accounting for their needs and supporting particularly those that are vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. The GCF is governed by a Board, composed of an equal number of members from developed and developing countries. It is operated by an independent Secretariat headed by an Executive Director.

The Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) of the GCF is mandated by the GCF Board under paragraph 60 of its Governing Instrument to inform its decision making. The IEU has a mandate for both an accountability function and for supporting learning.<sup>1</sup> These are central to the GCF as a learning organization as also laid out in its Governing Instrument as well as in its initial strategic plan.<sup>2</sup>

The IEU has several objectives:

- (a) Inform decision-making by the Board and identify, disseminate lessons learned; contributing to guiding the GCF and stakeholders as a learning institution, providing strategic guidance;
- (b) Conduct periodic independent evaluations of GCF performance to objectively assess the results of the GCF and the effectiveness and efficiency of its activities;
- (c) Provide evaluation reports to the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement for purposes of periodic reviews of the Financial Mechanism.<sup>3</sup>

The responsibilities of the IEU are as follows:

- (a) Evaluations: Undertake independent overall, portfolio, country, thematic and programme evaluations that inform GCF strategic result areas.<sup>4</sup> The IEU will use relevant and innovative methods and an independent peer-review mechanism to provide guidance on evaluations. The vision, criteria and guidelines will be laid out in the Independent

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<sup>1</sup> Board document B.16/18.

<sup>2</sup> Annex I to decision B.12/20.

<sup>3</sup> The Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC provides the following guidance on the function of the IEU: "The reports of the GCF should include any reports of the independent evaluation unit, including for the purposes of the periodic reviews of the financial mechanism of the Convention" (UNFCCC decision 5/CP.19, annex, paragraph 20).

<sup>4</sup> Annex I to decision GCF/B.05/03.

- evaluation policy. The IEU is also mandated to independently peer review and attest the quality of GCF self-evaluation;<sup>5</sup>
- (b) Advisory and capacity support: The IEU is required to advise the Board by synthesizing findings and lessons learned from its evaluations. Findings and lessons learned are expected to also inform the Executive Director and other GCF stakeholders.<sup>6</sup> The IEU will engage closely with independent evaluation units of intermediaries and implementing entities of the GCF, including national designated authorities (NDAs) and accredited entities (AEs). It will provide support to catalyse learning and build and strengthen their evaluation capacity. It will also provide guidelines and support evaluation-related research producing rigorous evidence;
  - (c) Learning: The IEU will support GCF in learning by ensuring that recommendations from independent evaluations are incorporated into GCF functioning and processes.<sup>7</sup> This includes recommending possible improvements to GCF performance indicators and its initial results framework, after accounting for international experience and the results of evaluation;<sup>8</sup>
  - (d) Engagement: The IEU will actively participate in relevant evaluation networks to ensure that it is at the frontier of evaluation practice. The IEU will involve its own staff and staff from NDAs and AEs in evaluations wherever feasible and appropriate.<sup>9</sup> In addition, the IEU will support knowledge hubs of low-emission and climate-resilient pathways.<sup>10</sup>

## II. Aim

The IEU seeks to commission a **Synthesis Study** of IEU and GCF Evaluative Evidence and Lessons from past and current evaluations, reviews, studies etc. conducted by the IEU and by the GCF, focusing on the findings, conclusions, recommendations and scenarios presented so to draw the overall lessons learnt and highlight key patterns emerging from the evaluative work by the IEU, Independent Units, GCF Secretariat and other units, and other organizations within the wider organizational landscape of climate finance.

The **synthesis study** will look at, but not be limited to, implementation of GCF themes of mitigation and adaptation; frameworks such as risk management, results management or compliance; lessons originating from programmes and projects such as the readiness and preparatory support or the learning oriented real time assessment, or the project preparation facility; policies such as simplified approval, enhanced direct access, country ownership, environmental and social safeguards or indigenous people; GCF criteria such as complementarity and coherence, gender equity, country ownership and others including the investment criteria of GCF; modalities such as public and private sector investment and direct and indirect access to climate change finance, and processes such as accreditation approval, proposal approval, and similar. The synthesis study may also use as required relevant materials from other independent units or audit reports.

The synthesis study will represent one of the first comprehensive inputs into a wider learning process on the GCF performance so far. It will carefully consider the specific contexts in which GCF operates and its current stage of evolution. It will also provide a set of initial overall conclusions and

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<sup>5</sup> Decisions B.12/12 and 20.

<sup>6</sup> Annex III to decision B.06/09

<sup>7</sup> Syntheses will include evidence from GCF funded programmes and policies, and from other agencies relevant to GCF's areas.

<sup>8</sup> Annex III to decision B.06/09.

<sup>9</sup> See note 7 above.

<sup>10</sup> Annex I to decision GCF/B.05/03.

identify some of the main and emerging areas of recommendations for the future of GCF as informed by the data, information, reviews, studies and evaluations that will have been conducted by the GCF and by the IEU up to present.

The **main purpose of the Synthesis Study** is to:

- (a) Critically appraise documents on GCF programmes/projects, frameworks, modalities, themes, processes and policies, and insights from IEU evidence reviews, to inform the synthesis study;
- (b) Provide a synthesis of the patterns related to the results of reviews and evaluations done both by the EU, the GCF Secretariat, independent units, audit, and other players in climate finance;
- (c) Draw lessons that can be useful at this junction of GCF evolution and to inform the improved preparation, consideration and implementation of GCF funding proposals in the future;
- (d) Indicate knowledge gaps regarding the effectiveness and efficiency, and further (evaluation) criteria defined by the TOR of the IEU, of processes, policies, frameworks and interventions;
- (e) Review factors that have been influencing the overall performance and impact of GCF so far.

### III. Scope and Methods

The consultant will be expected to conduct the activities outlined below and use appropriate methods:

- (a) Review and critically appraise existing documents and evidence gaps, bias, coverage, knowledge and lessons learned in sectors related to GCF result areas of mitigation and adaptation, to inform the scope and content of the synthesis study based on IEU and GCF reports, reviews, evaluations;
- (b) Design the framework to be used to extract the findings and lessons learned, from a wide range of GCF and other materials and develop an evidence matrix outlining the inputs (data, sources, reports<sup>11</sup>) needed to properly inform the study and accordingly agree on a final report outline;
- (c) Schedule and conduct on-/off-site interviews with relevant stakeholders both internal and external to the Fund; including very close consultation with the IEU team to inform the synthesis study;
- (d) Utilize Board and other GCF and IEU documents involving GCF processes, policies, frameworks and implementation windows, baseline reports and other reports within the climate finance area;
- (e) Draft a synthesis study of the main findings, to include lessons learnt with wider applicability.

The synthesis study should draw on findings, lessons and recommendations from reviewing the GCF, the IEU's evaluations, reviews and other studies available by then and the learning and knowledge products.

The study will be co-authored with the IEU task manager, who will provide direct conceptual guidance. An advisory committee will inform the process and substance of the synthesis study and be constituted by experts in the field of evaluation, evidence and environmental science, as well as a methodological expert.

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<sup>11</sup> After being identified, these will be provided to the consultant by the IEU, GCF, other Independent Units, and other partners.

The evaluation synthesis study should include:

- (a) Synthesis of findings from sub-groups determined in the approach paper and/or analysis of impacts on GCF's overall performance; this could require use of Board documentation, terms of reference, inception papers, final reports and management responses to evaluations;
- (b) Synthesis of the findings on the external factors that has influenced the performance of the GCF;
- (c) Discussions and summary of the key knowledge gaps that need to be addressed in the future;
- (d) Summary of lessons learnt from evaluations and reviews of GCF processes, policies, frameworks, modalities, themes etc. and the resulting emerging areas of recommendations for GCF future.

The report will broadly help informing GCF processes, policies and frameworks with lessons that can be used to support GCF projects/programmes and institutional environments that are flexible and responsive, both within and external to the Fund, to provide initial recommendations to design processes, policies and frameworks that are even more adequate to GCF, and to determine the scope of these to address key gaps.

#### **IV. Timeline**

The synthesis study will involve in part a desk study, but also need close engagement and communication between the IEU, GCF Secretariat and other organizations within climate finance. The estimated length of the work is spread over November 2018 to March 2019. The work needs to be completed latest by early February 2019, with follow up through March. The timeline for this study is as follows:

- November 1, 2018: Commencement of consultancy assignment and start of the review and synthesis work
  - Receive draft approach paper prepared by IEU, including draft scope, data, methods
- November 11, 2018: Finalize draft of approach paper, and propose plan for implementation
- December 10, 2018: Database and documentation search, consultation process completed.
  - Includes participation in a 1-week or 2-week meeting in Songdo to conduct the above
- December 17, 2018: Presentation of draft results to IEU/GCF and receiving IEU comments.
- December 25, 2018: Zero draft paper finalized, sent to IEU/GCF for review and comments.
- January 10, 2019: Comments on the zero-draft received from the IEU and incorporated.
- February 10, 2019: Synthesis study report finalized and submitted to the IEU for initial use.
  - Includes participation in a 1-week final meeting in Songdo to finalize the above.
- March 20, 2019: feedback and comments received, validated, and report further reviewed.

#### **V. Candidate Requirements and Qualifications**

- (a) Advanced degree in economics, public policy, international development, or related fields;
- (b) Strong experience with implementing, conducting and synthesising evaluations or reviews on programmes and projects, most desirably within the climate change and climate finance areas;
- (c) Outstanding writing skills including a strong track record of publications in areas relevant to GCF;
- (d) Direct expertise on multi-sector evidence and synthesis reviews, chiefly in the core GCF areas of adaptation, mitigation, energy, environment or climate finance, and very good knowledge of GCF;



- (e) Excellent ability to critically appraise different layers of evidence including programmes/projects, frameworks, modalities, themes, processes and policies, and information from evidence reviews to inform the synthesis, and to design a framework to extract the key findings and lessons learned;
- (f) Very familiar with synthesis studies, systematic reviews and meta-analyses approaches, including synthesis and meta-analyses, database searches mainly through use of qualitative review methods;
- (g) Proven knowledge of mainstream evaluations and monitoring and evaluation frameworks;
- (h) Able to commit to produce a highly credible, very well written synthesis report within the budget and period requested, and to take into consideration GCF feedback after its initial use by the GCF;
- (i) **Availability to travel to Songdo, Korea for up to 3 times (or another suitable location of mutual convenience) and at times of mutual convenience, but within the above timeline;**
- (j) Commitment to ensuring that weekly or fortnightly skype calls are undertaken to keep the IEU/GCF team up-to-date on progress and discuss advancement on the synthesis study;
- (k) Given the limited timeframe, willingness and availability to work with the IEU managers over holiday times (e.g. Christmas/end of year).

## VI. To Apply

Interested candidates are requested to submit the following items by **October 22, 2018, midday Korean Standard Time (KST)**:

- (a) A statement of interest that highlights how each of the eligibility criteria have been met.
- (b) Any documents that closely demonstrate the eligibility criteria, including but not restricted to:
  - i. CV highlighting experience with evidence reviews, synthesis studies and meta-analysis.
  - ii. Max 1-page brief note clearly stating the key elements and approaches needed to design this synthesis study, the key considerations to be made, and the information required.
  - iii. Three supporting publications, one of which should refer to a comparable synthesis study.
  - iv. A statement committing on the ability to undertake the review within the time stated, that includes the availability to remain engaged (at least in great part) during holiday periods.
  - v. Financial proposal and breakdown of costs.
- (c) Please send a single file named: “[last name] [first name]” (e.g. Johansson Anna)
- (d) Subject line: “IEU Evaluation Synthesis Study Consultant” compiled into a single file, to: [roster@gcfund.org](mailto:roster@gcfund.org) and [ieu@gcfund.org](mailto:ieu@gcfund.org).
- (e) Please submit your application by **October 22, 2018, midday KST**.