



**GREEN
CLIMATE
FUND**

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GCF/B.11/15

19 October 2015

Communications Strategy of the Green Climate Fund

Summary

The presentation of this communications strategy comes at a critical time, as the Green Climate Fund (GCF) prepares to start taking decisions on the approval of projects and programmes. Communications is a core function that cuts across all operational activities of the Fund. It helps attract high-quality funding proposals, as much as it supports country-ownership (through country outreach), policy areas (including gender), private sector engagement, and continued resource mobilization. The proposed priority areas presented in this strategy should, therefore, be implemented into all substantive areas of the Fund in an integrated and coordinated manner.

This communications strategy is submitted to the Board for its consideration and approval.

In addition, the Secretariat seeks Board approval for the development of crisis communication guidelines specific to the Fund.

* The agenda item number will be determined when the final sequence of items in the provisional agenda is confirmed by the Co-Chairs.

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I. Background

1. At its June 2013 meeting, the Board of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) requested the Secretariat, under the guidance of the Co-Chairs, to develop a communications strategy with the assistance of a consultant or consultants, on the basis of the terms of reference previously approved by the Board.
2. With the support of two competitively recruited external consultants, the Secretariat developed an initial draft communications strategy in autumn 2013. To coordinate the planning of the strategy the Secretariat and consultants conducted on-site meetings and workshops, as well as informal outreach and consultations with key internal and external stakeholders, to determine the approach. To inform the strategy, primary and secondary research was conducted, including a communications review, analysis of the Fund's existing communications, perception audit of external stakeholders, and mapping of the communications strategies of other comparable international institutions. (The full scope of work is listed in Annex II.) This research and the Fund's ongoing communications activities have informed the draft strategy.
3. The draft strategy was revised in the summer of 2014 to take into account new developments of the Fund as well as the launch of its initial resource mobilization (IRM) process. At that time a draft Action Plan for priority communication activities was also developed, to guide communication activities through 2015.
4. The draft strategy was further revised for the 11th meeting of the Board to align with all Fund policies and strategies and refers to elements that are included in the document titled "Strategic plan for the Fund (Progress report)" (GCF/B.11/Inf. 07) which is to be approved by the Board. As the communications strategy will evolve further with the development of the Fund, it will focus on short-term actions in support of the Fund's vision. This period covers the IRM period ending in 2018.
5. The executive summary below presents a synopsis of the GCF Communications Strategy. The full document is included in Annex IV.

II. Recommended action by the Board

6. It is recommended that the Board:
 - (a) Takes note of the information presented in the Communications Strategy of the Green Climate Fund, as contained in Annex IV/as contained in document GCF/B.11/15; and
 - (b) Adopts the draft decision presented in Annex I of this document.

III. Executive Summary

7. The "Communications Strategy of the Green Climate Fund" sets out two overarching goals:
 - (a) **Raise awareness, encourage support, and promote collaboration** among governments and key stakeholders of the Green Climate Fund, to support the continuous resource mobilization and the timely disbursement of funds; and
 - (b) **Integrate communications into the Fund's business operations** by using communications as a proactive tool to support the Fund's objectives.
8. The strategy takes into account the two distinct progression stages with the short-term development of the Fund – i.e. a first progression leading up to the end of 2016 and the roll-out

of the Fund's first projects and programmes, and a second progression (to the end of 2018) that communicates issues around the Fund's operations, engaging audiences and showcasing outcomes and results in support of GCF's replenishment.

9. The short-term priority areas, which pair communication tools and specific deliverables with high-profile international events and Fund milestones, focuses on the period to the end of 2016.

10. The Fund's communications strategy will be directed at several external audiences, including:

- (a) Governments (beneficiary and contributing countries);
- (b) Development partners;
- (c) Private sector;
- (d) Civil society;
- (e) Opinion leaders, including those outside the climate change process; and
- (f) General public.

11. The Fund's internal and external objectives have **three pillars**. Within these pillars, two strategic objectives are defined:

- (a) **Communicate the Fund as a key actor in climate finance** to make a significant and ambitious contribution towards achieving the '2 degree objective';
- (b) Achieve support for the Fund's objectives, mission, and vision.

12. The first pillar focuses on key issues relating to a **common vision and mandate** for the Fund, aligning key components required for strategic communications, defining the image of the Fund, establishing the Fund's identity, and communicating "reasons to believe" in the Fund. These constitute the first building blocks for the Fund's communications.

13. Within the first objective, two actions should be simultaneously undertaken:

- (a) **Profiling the Fund**, so that the institution speaks with a single vision and unifying voice to all audiences ("one Fund, one vision, one voice");
- (b) **Positioning the Fund** within the climate finance landscape, multilateral institutional sector, and global public mind.

14. Profiling will include defining the Fund's vision, establishing the Fund's institutional identity, and building trust in the Fund by communicating "reasons to believe" to stakeholders and target audiences. The Fund's core values, capabilities, and institutional culture, as perceived by internal and external stakeholders and audiences, will form the foundation of its profile (Action Pillar 1).

15. Positioning will involve **differentiating the Fund in scale and scope from other funds** and organizations engaging and collaborating in the same space; shaping the debate on climate finance; communicating key opportunities to target audiences; and establishing crisis communication guidelines. Through differentiation, the Fund's core competencies, benefits, strengths, and competitive advantages will become part of its unique profile – a skill set that can be leveraged to attract new contributors, public and private investors, beneficiary countries and implementers, and qualified staff to its headquarters in Songdo, Incheon, Republic of Korea (Action Pillar 2).

16. When communicating opportunities to target audiences, the Fund should both highlight its potential to create innovative win-win low emission and climate resilient development

pathways and showcase its impact and transformative results. This would include promoting a gender-sensitive perspective in Fund communications within the context of its objectives, and the associated development goals and aspirations.

17. Where appropriate, Fund **communications, messaging, and outreach should be linked to other development issues**, for instance to the sustainable development agenda. Communicating sustainability benefits and co-benefits that will derive from the Fund's operations is another way in which the Fund can communicate its mission.

18. The Fund will also need to establish **crisis communication guidelines**, to respond rapidly to potential crises and mitigate negative impact on the Fund's reputation. The third Action Pillar of the communications strategy is a **"call to action" – an appeal to stakeholders and target audiences to act and engage with the Fund**, its projects, programmes, and core activities. At this stage Fund communications should engage, enthuse, and mobilize target audiences and key stakeholders, to encourage specific actions, i.e. new public announcement of pledges and contributions by contributors, country ownership approach by beneficiary countries, and cooperation and collaboration among stakeholders.

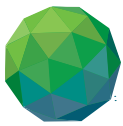
19. Through strategic media relations and outreach activities, the Fund can shape its image, influencing how stakeholders and the public perceive the institution. Telling the Green Climate Fund story in its own words can create a profile that resonates with target audiences. (Key elements of the 'GCF story' would include the universal support to establish the Fund, the notion to instil a paradigm shift in the global climate response, the Fund's equal approach to mitigation and adaptation, as well its balanced governance structure.) **Media relations and outreach can aid in countering misperceptions** that may arise about the Fund. Structured listening to stakeholders, through consultations and other forums, and amplifying key messages in partnership with like-minded organizations will help achieve buy-in for the Fund, its mission, and scope of activities.

20. In this context, continued resource mobilization and country readiness remain key messages within the Fund's communications during the forthcoming period leading up to full operation, when resources are disbursed.

21. Strategic enablers of Fund communications (that bring the strategy into existence) are outreach, resource mobilization public promotion, innovation, and cooperation.

22. The GCF Communications Strategy is ambitious and will require considerable resources, capacity, and time to implement in full. In the short term, implementation of the strategy will focus on **eight key priority areas** that will support the strategic actions proposed in the Strategic Plan, including:

- (a) Priority area 1:
 - (i) Develop the Fund's profile and visual identity; and
 - (ii) Re-launch the Fund's website;
- (b) Priority area 2: Intensify strategic outreach and engagement;
- (c) Priority area 3: Intensify media outreach;
- (d) Priority area 4: Develop publications;
- (e) Priority area 5: Publish e-newsletters;
- (f) Priority area 6: Develop select social media platforms;
- (g) Priority area 7: Develop public promotion materials; and
- (h) Priority area 8: Develop audio-visual content.



23. Because the Fund is a learning institution moving towards full operation, the communications strategy, by necessity, cover the start-up phase of the Fund. Once the Fund's business model is fully in place, financing has begun to flow regularly and projects get implemented, the Fund's communications needs will grow and its communications should change accordingly.

24. **The main premise of this strategy is that communications should closely follow the development of the Fund**, to support it in achieving its core objectives successfully.

Annex I: Draft Decision of the Board

The Board, having considered document GCF/B.11/15 titled “Communications Strategy of the Green Climate Fund”:

- (a) Affirms the role of communications in establishing the Fund as an effective, transparent, and collaborative body, and in supporting the achievement of the overall objectives of the Fund;
- (b) Approves the Communications Strategy of the Green Climate Fund, attached to this decision as Annex IV;
- (c) Requests the Secretariat to develop formal crisis communication guidelines.

Annex II: Scope of Work

The scope of work of the GCF Communications Strategy include:

- (a) Communications review, including an analysis of the initial perception of the Fund among key constituencies and stakeholders;
- (b) Mapping of the communications strategies, relationships, and output of other comparable international institutions;
- (c) Mapping of stakeholder and target audiences;
- (d) Establishing objectives and priorities for the Fund’s communications;
- (e) Key messages for the Fund’s external communications (including recommendations for preferred communication channels); and
- (f) Overview of proposed communications activities, including baseline components, with associated resource and capacity implications; and, additional “added value” components, also with resource and capacity implications.

Annex III: Strategy at a Glance

OVERALL GOALS

- Raise awareness, encourage support, and promote collaboration among participant countries and key stakeholders, to support a successful initial resource mobilization and disbursement of funds.
- Integrate communications into the Fund’s business operations by using it as a proactive tool to support the Fund’s objectives.

Strategic Objective 1 (SO1)

**COMMUNICATE THE FUND AS KEY ACTOR
IN CLIMATE FINANCE**

Strategic Objective 2 (SO2)

**ACHIEVE SUPPORT TO THE FUND’S
OBJECTIVES,
VISION and MISSION**

Action Pillar 1 (AP1)

Profile the Fund

Action Pillar 2 (AP2)

Position the Fund

Action Pillar 3 (AP3)

Call to Action

- 1.1 Define the vision of the Fund
- 1.2 Define and establish the Fund’s identity
- 1.3 Define the Fund’s profile
- 1.4 Communicate “reasons to believe” in the Fund

- 2.1 Differentiate the Fund
- 2.2 Shape the debate on climate finance
- 2.3 Communicate Fund opportunities to target audiences
- 2.4 Establish crisis communications guidelines

- 3.1 Engage, enthuse, and mobilize target audiences and key stakeholders of the Fund
- 3.2 Support resource mobilization
- 3.3 Build and shape the image of the Fund through outreach and media
- 3.4 Communicate the Fund’s support for country ownership
- 3.5 Amplify messages in partnership with like-minded organizations
- 3.6 Facilitate interactive cooperation and collaboration
- 3.7 Practise structure listening

Audiences and Stakeholders

Governments and Participant Countries | Development Partners | Private Sector | Civil Society | Opinion Leaders | The Public

Strategic Enablers

Outreach | Public Promotion | Resource Mobilization | Innovation | Cooperation

Annex IV: Communications Strategy of the Green Climate Fund

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I. Introduction and Context

1.1 Background

1. At its fourth meeting held from 26–28 June 2013 in Songdo, Incheon, Republic of Korea, the Board of the Green Climate Fund considered and adopted a **decision** on the development of a communications strategy for the Fund.¹
2. Following the adoption of the decision by the Board, the Secretariat issued a request for proposals and subsequently selected and contracted two communications experts to assist in the development of the strategy.
3. This document has been continuously amended to take into account the experiences the Secretariat has encountered with the current communications approach at the Fund. It aligns with all Fund policies and strategies and refers to elements included in the document titled “Strategic plan for the Fund (Progress report)” (GCF/B.11/Inf. 07) which is to be approved by the Board.

1.2 Operating Environment and Communications Context

4. The development of this communications strategy comes at a critical time, as the Fund prepares to start taking decisions on the approval of projects and programmes. Communications are a core tool that will support the attraction of not only high-quality funding proposals, but also other areas of special emphasis such as operations (including country-ownership), policy areas (including gender), private sector engagement, and continued resource mobilization. It should, therefore, **be implemented into all substantive areas of the Fund** in an integrated and coordinated manner.
5. It would be prudent not to underestimate the **importance of strategic communications** and the associated provision of adequate resources – in terms of both human and financial capital – for successful delivery of the Fund’s communications.

1.3 How this Strategy was Developed

6. In the development of the strategy, the Secretariat, pursuant to direction of the Board decision, conducted a **comprehensive communications review**. The review included an early analysis of perception of the Fund among key constituencies and stakeholders; mapping of the communications strategies of other comparable international institutions; mapping of stakeholder and target audiences; and other key elements that inform the strategy.
7. It is expected that, from this strategy, a targeted communications and outreach plan, media relations plan, and profiling plan will be developed for the tactical implementation and delivery of the action pillars contained in the strategy.
8. To this end, and in support of implementation in the near term, this document includes a set of priority areas that will guide Fund communications throughout 2016.
9. An informal perception audit of Fund stakeholders was conducted in early 2014 to substantiate the development of this strategy.² Additionally, respondents were canvassed to

¹ Green Climate Fund, 2013. *Decisions of the Board – Fourth Meeting of the Board, 26–28 June 2013*. IX, Agenda item 9: Communications strategy, Decision B.04/14, p. 10.

² The **perception audit** provided a baseline for the early perceptions of Fund communications. The findings served to contribute to the development of this strategy. It also served as a reference point against which perceptions in the future could be measured.

learn their expectations for Fund communications, as well as to seek input on priorities for the Fund's communications strategy.

1.4 Constraints

10. It is important to note that key elements usually associated with the development of a communications strategy are still outstanding, as the Fund is currently under development. Most notably, **the Strategic plan for the Green Climate Fund** to be considered by the Board at B.11 should serve as a major departure point for the development of a strategy of this nature.

11. **The GCF Communications Strategy is ambitious**, and implementing it in its entirety would not likely be possible unless key steps are taken: Adequate resources should be allocated to the Secretariat for communications, including a proper budget,³ and to capacity available for implementation, both within the Secretariat and from external experts if and when needed.

12. The Secretariat would need to prioritize, resource, programme funds, and implement according to what is both most important and achievable within its overall budget. The communications plan(s) to be developed from this strategy and its recommended action plan would need to take that into account.

II. Communications Strategy

13. The main premise of this strategy is that **communications should closely follow the development of the Fund**, to support in the successful achievement of its core objectives.

14. It sets out to do so through a simple and pragmatic approach for communications: first, taking stock of the current state of communications; second, identifying what the Fund wants to achieve and how communications can support this; and third, putting in place the most appropriate actions in an overarching strategy that would allow communications to move forward in a manner that is not resource-intensive but still effective and smart.

2.1 Two Progression Stages

15. The strategy takes into account the two distinct progression stages within the short-term development of the Fund: a first progression leading up to the end of 2016, in which GCF will need to promote communications about the need for high-quality funding proposals, and a second progression (to the end of 2018), that communicates issues around the Fund's operations, engaging audiences and showcasing outcomes and results in support of GCF's replenishment.

16. This communications strategy has **three action pillars that are not mutually exclusive**. In fact, many of the actions proposed in these pillars should be embarked upon

Methodology – The perception audit was conducted via semi-structured questionnaire, undertaken via telephone or face-to-face interviews. The identity of the interviewees remained confidential, although their sectoral background was identified.

In total, 15 interviews were conducted with a range of stakeholders from the following constituencies: National Ministries, PSOs, CSOs, International institutions, International media. Interviewees were selected to represent a variety of levels of knowledge of the Fund. Most of them been closely following the Fund's development and participated in GCF Board meetings.

³At the time of writing, one full time staff member (IS) is working on communications and outreach at GCF. Support is provided by three consultants: one offsite (writer) and two at HQ (outreach, graphic design). A budget proposal for communications and outreach efforts is included in the Secretariat's budget calculation for the period 2016-2018 (GCF/B.11/12).

simultaneously, to effectively support the ambitious plan of work for the Fund's deployment during the short-term timeframe of its business plan.

17. At the outset, communications should focus on clearly defining and articulating, both verbally and visually, the Fund, its opportunities, and added value for target audiences. Putting in place the basic communication requirements, including definition of institutional identity, is a crucial first step for successful external communications in any environment.

18. Communications should also focus on informing audiences of **why they should engage with the Fund**, listening to and engaging key stakeholders so that the Board can take informed decisions on the specific modalities of the Fund, and, importantly, also informing stakeholders and the public of the progress achieved.

19. The Fund will further benefit if communications would support outreach efforts by the Executive Director – in charge of the day-to-day operations – particularly to:

- (a) **Maximize immediate impact of the Fund's operations** (targeted at receiving high-quality funding proposals that will trigger clear transformational change towards low-emission and climate-resilient development);
- (b) **Ensure broad coverage of developing countries** (targeted towards recipient countries) to highlight how beneficiary countries will benefit from their relationship with the Fund and – during the mid-term period of 2019–2024 – to showcase results. This will involve communicating the processes and procedures that enable countries to draw down funds, initiate projects, and achieve results, and illustrating the business case and value-add of the Fund in a pragmatic, simple, and effective manner;
- (c) **Continue resource mobilization** (targeted towards new potential contributors) in line with agreed resource mobilization plans or campaigns;
- (d) **Engage outside stakeholders** that have an interest in the Fund's operations and success; and
- (e) **Market the Fund vis-à-vis the public**, to raise its interest in making potential contributions to the Fund.

20. Once the Fund moves into the roll-out of its projects and programmes, the next phase of communications should begin telling the story of the Fund during implementation, drawing on human-centered case studies and examples of how the Fund is achieving results and impacting communities. (Key elements of the 'GCF story' would include the universal government support to establish the Fund, the notion to instil a paradigm shift in the global climate response, the Fund's approach to mitigation and adaptation, as well its balanced governance structure.)

21. Communications should eventually support building a Fund-wide communications network at the national level that encourages country ownership. This could be achieved through the development and sharing of toolkits, manuals, and other knowledge products that would assist countries in engaging with the Fund in an optimal manner.

22. Finally, as the Fund is new and will be guided by a continuous learning curve, it will be important to stay in touch with how the Fund is being received on the ground. Opportunities for listening, learning, and changing direction, where necessary, should be built into the day-to-day operations of the Fund and its communications, and communicated to the Board for consideration on a regular basis.

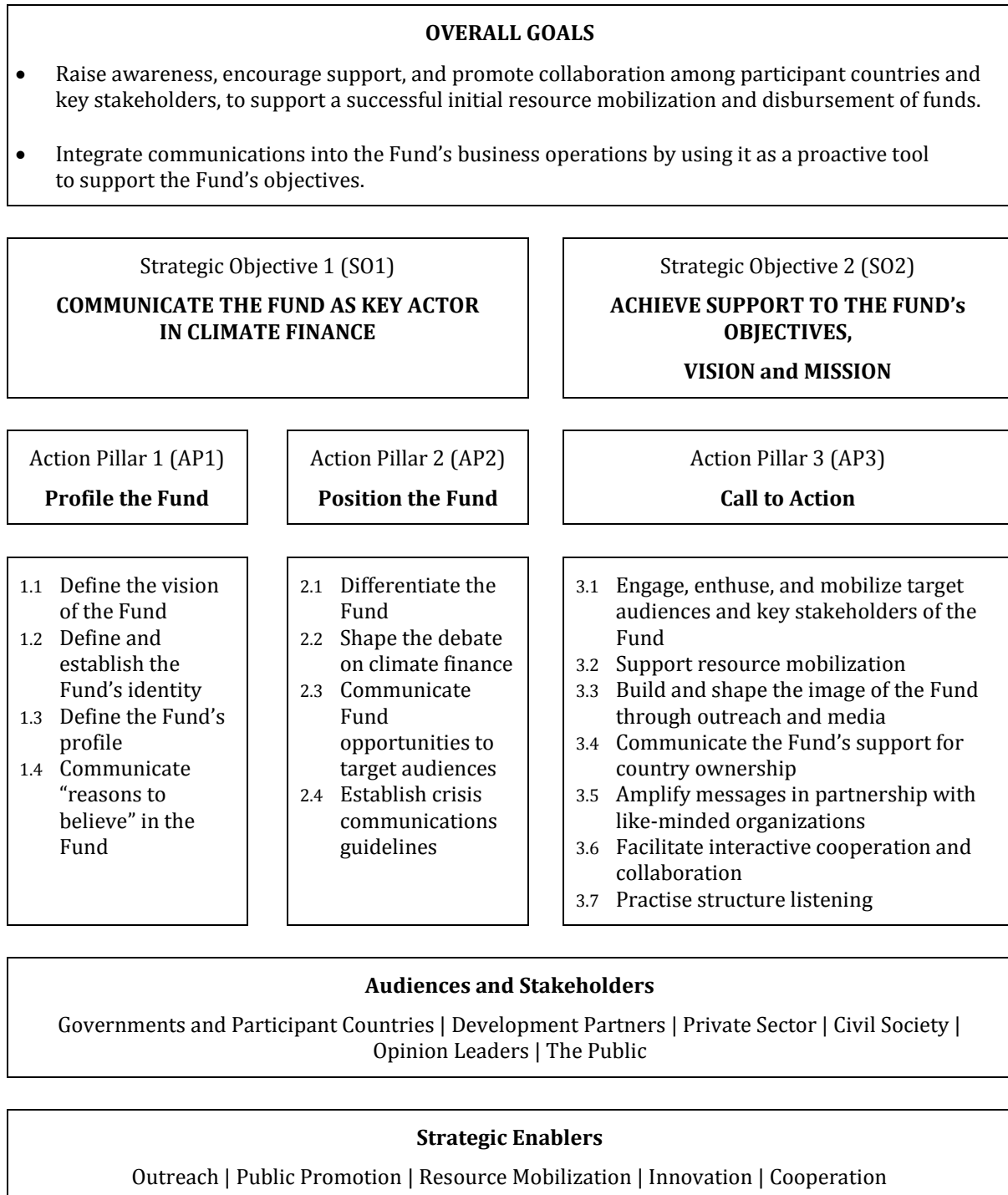
2.2 Objectives, Goals, Actions and Enablers

2.2.1 Overall Goals

23. This strategy has two **overarching goals**:

- (a) **To raise awareness**, encourage support, and promote collaboration among participant countries, key GCF stakeholders, and the public, to support a successful disbursement of funds and continued resource mobilization; and
- (b) **Integrate communications into the Fund’s business operations** by using it as a proactive tool to support the Fund’s objectives, as outlined in the Governing Instrument.
24. Supporting these, the strategy sets out two strategic objectives, with three pillars for phased action until 2018.

Diagram 1. Strategy at a Glance



2.2.2 Strategic Objective 1: Communicate the Fund as a key actor in climate finance

25. GCF is expected “to evolve over time and become the main global fund for climate change finance.”⁴ Governments reiterated this vision in the recent 2015 declaration of the United Nations sustainable development goals (SDGs), in which they seek to fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization.⁵

26. In light of the above, it is **important for the Fund to distinguish itself**, and to start communicating its potential to contribute to the global climate finance landscape.

27. Under the first strategic objective, communication efforts would focus on the first two action pillars with immediate effect, embarked upon simultaneously.

(a) Action Pillar 1: Profile the Fund – ‘One Fund, One Vision, One Voice’

- (i) The first pillar emphasizes fundamental issues relating to a common vision and mandate for the Fund, aligning key components required for strategic communications, defining the Fund’s institutional identity, and communicating reasons to believe in the Fund. These constitute the first building blocks for strategic communications.

1.1 Define the vision of the Fund in line with the Governing Instrument:

- 1.1.1 Articulate the Fund’s unique mandate.
- 1.1.2 Develop a compelling vision statement for the Fund.
- 1.1.3 Define the Fund’s core values.
- 1.1.4 Develop clear, consistent, and inspirational messages in line with the Fund’s mandate, mission, and vision that resonate across target audiences.

1.2 Define and establish the Fund’s institutional identity:

- 1.2.1 Develop a comprehensive visual identity for the Fund.
- 1.2.2 Develop visual identity guidelines that guide institutional communications of the Fund.

1.3 Define the Fund’s profile:

- 1.3.1 Assess the overall perception of the Fund.
- 1.3.3 Agree on how the Fund wants to be perceived externally and articulate reasons to believe in the Green Climate Fund profile that support this perception.

1.4 Communicate reasons to believe in the Fund:

- 1.4.1 Define the Fund’s main benefits to various audiences and key stakeholders.
- 1.4.2 Streamline communications through an integrated set of communications tools and toolkits developed for specific target audiences and stakeholders.
- 1.4.3 Bridge perception gaps through appropriate communications channels and tools.

⁴ Governing instrument for the Green Climate Fund, paragraph 32.

⁵ On 25 September 2015, the 193 countries of the UN General Assembly adopted the 2030 Development Agenda titled ‘Transforming our world’. The Green Climate Fund is explicitly referenced under SDG target 13.a.

(b) **Action Pillar 2: Position the Fund**

- (i) The second pillar focuses on positioning the Fund and differentiating it from other funds and organizations, communicating key opportunities to target audiences and managing perceptions, including those of risk.

2.1 Differentiate the Fund:

- 2.1.1 Differentiate the Fund within the global climate finance landscape (i.e. the climate finance architecture, scale and scope of the Fund, etc.).
- 2.1.2 Identify the Fund's core competencies, strengths, and competitive advantages, and promote these in communications campaigns and activities.
- 2.1.3 Reference key resolutions, decisions, and Board documents of the Fund in a visible, engaging, and comprehensible manner, to support the Fund's mission and work.

2.2 Contribute to the debate on global climate finance:

- 2.2.1 Position the Fund as a leading voice within the climate finance debate, offering innovative views on the future direction of global climate financing within the media and in public forums.
- 2.2.2 Establish a role for the Fund in facilitating discussion between stakeholders on climate finance.

2.3 Communicate opportunities to target audiences:

- 2.3.1 Highlight the Fund's potential: Highlight the potential of the Fund to catalyse the significant levels of climate financing needed to achieve the global climate goal; address developing countries' climate finance needs; and create innovative win-win low emission and climate resilient development pathways and solutions that are tailored to the unique circumstances of recipient countries.

- 2.3.2 Showcase impact, results, and transformation: Showcase the results-oriented, output-driven, and transformational nature of the Fund and associated sustainable development co-benefits, including the potential of the Fund to enhance the implementation prospects of national policy positively.

Promote a gender-sensitive perspective in Fund communications within the context of its objectives and the associated development goals and aspirations.

- 2.3.3 Link the Fund to the international development agenda: Where appropriate, link GCF communications, messages, and outreach to international processes on climate change (such as the UNFCCC's Conference of the Parties [COP]), to the Secretary-General's Climate Summit, as well as to the global sustainable development goals, among others.

Communicate the Fund's core vision by highlighting added sustainability benefits to be derived from the Fund's operations, such as socio-economic development, public health, food, energy and water, security, poverty reduction, and gender equity.

2.4 Establish crisis communication guidelines:

- 2.4.1 The Fund needs to be prepared to respond rapidly to potential crises. Appropriate, timely, and well-directed communication during a crisis can significantly lessen the negative impact of unfortunate events and mitigate the impact on the Fund's reputation.

2.2.3 Strategic Objective 2: Achieve Support to the Fund's Objectives, Vision, and Mission

28. The second strategic objective has a dual purpose. It focuses on launching a call to action that engages and mobilizes wider audiences to act, and it guides the Fund to stay in touch with its larger context and operating environment.

(a) Action Pillar 3: Call to Action

- (i) The third action pillar is strongly supported by outreach efforts at various levels. Outreach is an important responsibility of the Executive Director who, as the executive in charge of the day-to-day operations of the Fund, has to advocate for the Fund, and must act as the communications top official. The need for profiling an executive for any institution is widely considered to be best practice in order to advance the organization's profile.⁶ These efforts will be based on a well-informed outreach strategy that assesses agendas, audiences, and anticipated outcomes, and link these with well-crafted and motivational messages, for the Fund to engage, enthuse, and mobilize key target audiences and stakeholders towards action.
- (ii) Communications should support the development of strategic partnerships with the Fund, focusing on complementarity and progressively shaping the public image of the Fund through strong media outreach and management.

3.1 Engage, enthuse, and mobilize target audiences and key stakeholders of the Fund:

3.1.1 Governments and Participant Countries

- (a) Beneficiary Countries: Highlight the Fund's strategic opportunities to beneficiary countries (and NDAs) in line with their national priorities; and
- (b) Contributing Countries: Motivate for resource mobilization and other support by communicating the Fund's potential, and, once operational, outcomes and value-add.

3.1.2 Development

Partners: Engage multilateral and other development partners and funds in a collaborating manner by emphasizing synergy and supporting implementation.

3.1.3 Private Sector:

Communicate with the private sector in an engaging manner using business language and in the spirit of partnership, speaking with them rather than to them, to encourage climate finance

⁶ The Terms of Reference for the Fund's Executive Director position appropriately reflect this standard approach.

investments and gain insight, advice, and guidance where appropriate.

Showcase opportunities and rewards for the private sector in adaptation and mitigation, investment, and social responsibility.

3.1.4 Civil Society

Promote constructive dialogue for structured listening and strategic engagement with civil society representatives, wherever possible, at the international, regional, and national levels.

Create opportunities for meaningful dialogue with key civil society stakeholder groups such as the gender community, indigenous peoples, and youth through expert consultations, workshops, and other communications activities.

3.1.5 Key Decision Makers

Influence and win the support of key decision makers, opinion and thought leaders, particularly in government, private/public sectors, think tanks, and the media.

3.1.6 Public at Large

Profile the Fund to the public, showcasing it as a solution provider with which private individuals could get involved. Profile the Fund to prepare for private fundraising.

3.2 Support resource mobilization:

3.2.1 Develop strong, emotive materials and communications tools that support the Fund's business objectives and can help encourage additional public pledges and commitments, including from vibrant non-Annex I economies.

3.2.2 Support the Fund's resource mobilization efforts through development of fundraising campaigns and tailored presentations to new contributors.

3.2.3 Develop a targeted media strategy and case studies in support of resource mobilization that engage stakeholders in contributing countries in the benefits of supporting the Fund, and, in beneficiary countries, the benefits to be derived.

3.2.4 As the 2016 resource mobilization campaign unfolds, communications materials should be targeted to governments that are in a position to contribute to GCF but have not yet pledged, large cities, private sector corporations, philanthropists, and high net worth individuals.

3.3 Build and shape the Fund's image through outreach and media:

3.3.1 Continuously build and shape the image of the Fund through proactive outreach and media engagement at the global, regional, and local levels.

Make optimal use of "smart outreach" opportunities at all levels, focusing on high-profile or milestone events where a critical mass of decision-makers/target audiences are present. This will

facilitate outreach objectives in a manner that makes efficient use of time, resources, efforts, and political momentum.

Build on media support and understanding around the Fund's positioning as a significant and scaled-up player within the climate finance architecture.

Develop a core set of informed and supportive media contacts and journalists, initially and particularly in financial media that can understand and support this process on a continuous basis.

3.3.2 As the Fund starts its financing operations, the strategy should begin showcasing the institution's impact at the national level, as well as the associated sustainability co-benefits to be derived.

3.3.3 Communications should also develop human-centered storylines and emphasize the link between the Fund and other development processes.

3.4 Communicate the Fund's support for country ownership:

3.4.1 Communicate the Fund's support for country ownership.

Create awareness of the Fund's ability to enhance national capacity in countries as a result of implementation of Fund projects at the national level.

Develop communications tools and products that explain how GCF's funding mechanism will work in relation to mitigation, adaptation, and cross-sector projects, including application procedures, project selection criteria, decision-making and governance, envisaged transaction costs, reporting obligations, transparency, accountability, and capacity-building. An initial set of basic tools and products should be developed in the short term that can be elaborated over time as the Fund's scope of operations evolve.

3.4.2 Involve national and local communities.

Support beneficiary countries in communicating to national and local communities through outreach and capacity-building efforts at the national level. Communities are important allies for communications – not only as those most affected by climate change, but also as potentially the Fund's biggest advocates.

3.4.3 Develop strategic partnerships, to enhance and facilitate effective communications and outreach at the local level.

By putting in place strategic partnerships with key organizations such as the African Union in Africa and similar institutions in other regions, multilingual strategies and tools can eventually be developed and implemented, ensuring effective communication and outreach at the local level.

3.5 Amplify messages in partnership with like-minded organizations:

Coordinate communications and develop targeted messages with key partners on important topics and at prominent events, e.g. with the release of reports, joint side events, communiqués, and press conferences.

3.6 Facilitate interactive cooperation and collaboration:

- 3.6.1 Develop communication tools, IT platforms, tracking mechanisms and toolkits that support the Secretariat in its work plan, as well as supporting cooperation among developing countries and between developed and developing countries.
- 3.6.2 Enhance the Fund's digital experience by pro-actively engaging target audiences and key stakeholders: Use accessible language and the latest digital communication tools. This includes continually updating the Fund's website, promoting messages and interaction through social media channels and employing other IT platforms that enhance community networking.

3.7 Practice structured listening:

- 3.7.1 Create on-going and consistent feedback, monitoring and evaluation, and learning opportunities through tools and forums designed to obtain insight and advice (as required) from target audiences and key stakeholders. This will inform communications, including, but not limited to, workshops, events, and surveys.
- 3.7.2 Further enhance feedback loops through peer review (e.g. review of and learning from other major funds [The Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria; GAVI; UNICEF; etc.] and focus groups at UNFCCC COPs as a major reporting forum).

2.2.4 Strategic Enablers

29. Having a good strategy in place is not enough in itself to ensure successful implementation. Organizations that communicate effectively also focus on developing critical enablers that allow them to achieve their desired results.

30. In this strategy, four strategic enablers are identified that are considered vital if the implementation of the Fund's operations is to be successful, i.e. targeted outreach; public promotion, successful resource mobilization; and understanding, innovation, and cooperation. Their strategic value in delivering the Fund's goals is discussed throughout this document.

(a) Timeframes

Once approved by the Board, the strategy will commence implementation in 2016 and continue through 2018. This timeframe presents an opportunity for mid-point evaluation of the strategy at the end of 2017, at which time the Fund will have gained substantive experience in managing funding proposals so that communications can be fine-tuned.

(b) Internal Organization

Several respondents to the perception audit suggested to broaden GCF's communications approach. Nurturing the Fund's relationships with a wide range of audiences will help profile its public image, in particular with implementing entities, civil society stakeholders, the private sector, and the public at large.

Managing information flows between the Board and Secretariat can help ensure the timely delivery and implementation of effective messages and communication products. The constructive relationship that the Co-Chairs have developed with the Executive Director serves as an example for a successful cooperation among various bodies in the Fund governance. The balance has allowed the Board to exercise its oversight, and enabled the Secretariat to exercise its day-to-day responsibilities of Fund operations.

III. Messages

31. The Fund's messages through 2015 have been clearly focused and targeted⁷. As the Fund starts disbursing resources, messages will focus on communicating the Fund's activities and successes. In the period leading up to GCF's formal replenishment, messages should focus on generating confidence in the Fund's ability to successfully deliver on its mission.

32. In the period up until the end of 2016, messages should focus on high-quality funding requests, continued resource mobilization, readiness and preparatory support to developing countries, the Fund's operational readiness, and its distinctive characteristics.

3.1.2 **Message 1: Building Confidence in the Fund**

33. Messages should emphasize the Fund's progress towards the allocations of resources, building the case that it is a trustworthy institution for climate finance investors, be they public or private.

3.1.3 **Message 2: Continued Resource Mobilization**

34. Communications on resource mobilization should make a rational "business case" to target audiences; but it will also be important that the Fund connect emotionally with potential new contributors and build trust with all stakeholders. Messages should emphasize that the Fund is ready for contributors to take up their responsibilities.

3.1.4 **Message 3: A Distinctive Fund – Innovation at its Core**

35. To establish itself among the myriad of international bodies that are engaged in climate finance, the Green Climate Fund needs to stress its distinctive elements. These should be evidenced by the Fund's collaborative engagement with private and public sectors and its balanced focus on adaptation as well as mitigation.

36. The Fund's communications should stress its efforts to maximize engagement with the private sector, to catalyse, mobilize, and leverage flows of private climate finance into developing countries. Messages should emphasize PSF as a key element of this engagement.

37. Further evidence of innovation should be derived from the Fund's avowed commitment to aim for a 50:50 balance between mitigation and adaptation over time, and that at least 50% of adaptation allocation will go to particularly vulnerable countries, including LDCs, SIDS, and African states.

3.1.5 **Message Channels and Format**

38. Content creation and proactive communications messages should be prioritized, to communicate the Fund's messages successfully. This should include further use of social media as well as regular updates through blogs on the Fund's website⁸. Such online communications will allow a more responsive approach with less of an institutional style. This format uses a more informal tone and style and avoids bureaucratic language, and provides updated and inspiring content.

39. The Fund's messages should be developed alongside the roll-out of its visual identity. This should include the development of compelling themes, a revamped website, and the

⁷Cf. *GCF 3-Minute Brief*, published in June 2015.

⁸"GCF Dispatch" is the Fund's first newsletter, introduced after B.09.

promotion of a cohesive visual identity that communicates the Fund with “**one sight, one sound**” throughout its messages.

40. Amplification of the Fund's messages should also be encouraged through partners, stakeholders, and like-minded organizations, particularly through social media as well as their own on- and offline communications channels.

IV. Monitoring and Evaluation

41. To ensure maximum impact and outreach from Fund communications, it will be essential to track the progress, effectiveness, and results throughout implementation of the strategy. Key indicators should therefore be developed for all activities contained in the communications plan to be developed from this strategy.

42. Monitoring and evaluation should be conducted in a manner that is both quantitative and qualitative. This can include the use of online surveys, personal interviews, and focus groups of stakeholders or target audiences. The latest communications analytics tools should be used with the goal of establishing indicators to work towards, year-on-year reporting, and the highlighting of successes as well as areas where improvements could be made.

43. A more structured approach can seek to put in place robust monitoring and evaluation systems and tools that are shared (a) on a periodic basis with key stakeholders, to inform strategic decision-making and direction; and (b) a less formal “finger-in-the-air” approach that employs technology tools such as Google Analytics, social media monitoring, and in-person feedback.

V. Capacity Requirements

44. This communications strategy is ambitious and will require considerable resources, capacity, and time to implement in full. How much of this strategy will be executed during Strategy Phase I of the GCF Strategic Plan will depend on the ambition of the Fund.⁹

45. It is highly recommended that this strategy be supported by a permanent core team of competent communications specialists within the Secretariat who will roll out and institutionalize Fund communications. This will encourage consistency, efficiency, and continuity and, moreover, also allow communications to become a valuable and strategic institutional resource.

46. From time to time, the Secretariat may draw upon external consultants and companies to supplement the Fund’s communications capacity and provide specific advice and support to ensure that the Fund benefits from the latest developments and thinking in the market.

VI. Recommendations and Short-term Priority Areas (2016)

47. A communications strategy is a coherent narrative that provides a link between business objectives and communications delivery. Vision, context, top-line messaging and resources, among other elements, play a part in such strategy’s success.

48. Considering the GCF Strategic Plan and the Secretariat’s proposed work plan for 2016 - 2018, communications and outreach should implement key elements of the strategy’s three action pillars. In the short term, the implementation of the strategy should focus on supporting

⁹Comparable outfits to GCF allocate approx. 10% of its budget and staffing for external relations activities, including communications, outreach, and public promotion.

the Fund's strategic objectives, particularly on GCF's broad coverage of developing countries, its operations, and the engagement of the private sector.

49. Other focus areas include the attraction of high-quality and truly game-changing funding proposals and readiness activities, as well as the development of PSF.

50. Communication activities must be integrated so that there are consistent messages across all channels, as well as for public promotion, conferences, and high-level event participation.

51. The ultimate goal is to deliver **an engaging and service-oriented 'user experience' to all target audiences**, and to motivate key stakeholders to act.

52. Effective implementation is the most difficult part of any strategic planning process. It involves achieving the objectives set out in the GCF Strategic Plan, while remaining attentive and flexible as opportunities arise. Strategies often fail to deliver the intended results, not necessarily because the strategy itself is weak but rather due to how it is implemented. Attentive implementation of the communications strategy, backed by appropriate resources, will be key to its impact and success.

6.1.2 Specific Deliverables

53. This communications strategy includes a set of concrete priority areas that the Fund could undertake to profile and shape its image. Over the next 12 months (up until December 2016), Fund communications and outreach should focus on the following eight priority areas. Deliverables can be rolled out against an international events calendar.

54. The Secretariat seeks guidance from the Board on the approach and deliverables suggested, particularly on the following eight priority areas and milestones for the delivery of various communications- and outreach-related products and activities:

- (a) Priority area 1:
 - (i) Develop the Fund's profile and visual identity;
 - (ii) Re-launch the Fund's website;
 - (b) Priority area 2: Intensify strategic outreach and engagement;
 - (c) Priority area 3: Intensify media outreach;
 - (d) Priority area 4: Develop publications;
 - (e) Priority area 5: Publish e-newsletters;
 - (f) Priority area 6: Develop select social media platforms;
 - (g) Priority area 7: Develop public relations materials;
 - (h) Priority area 8: Develop audio-visual content.
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