



**GREEN  
CLIMATE  
FUND**

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**GCF/B.18/Inf.06**

**22 September 2017**

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# Report on the activities of the Independent Evaluation Unit

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## **Summary**

This document provides an update on key activities of the Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) for the period 1 March to 31 August 2017.

## I. Introduction

1. The Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) is mandated in paragraph 60 of the Governing Instrument for the GCF: "... the Board will establish an operationally independent evaluation unit as part of the core structure of the Fund. The head of the unit will be selected by, and will report to, the Board. The frequency and types of evaluation to be conducted will be specified by the unit in agreement with the Board".
2. The Board, at its sixth meeting, adopted the terms of reference of the IEU<sup>1</sup> in which the following objectives are envisioned:
  - (a) Informing decision-making by the Board and identifying and disseminating lessons learned, contributing to guiding the GCF and stakeholders as a learning institution, providing strategic guidance;
  - (b) Conducting periodic independent evaluations of GCF performance to objectively assess the results of the GCF and the effectiveness and efficiency of its activities; and
  - (c) Providing evaluation reports to the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement for purposes of periodic reviews of the Financial Mechanism.<sup>2</sup>
3. The IEU is mandated to be operationally independent of the Secretariat. The work plan and budget of the IEU will be developed with the advice of the Board and are subject to review and approval by the Board.
4. Document GCF/B.16/18 presented key elements of the four-month work plan for the IEU. This document presents an update on IEU's activities in section II and outlines some key challenges in section III. An outline of the Independent Evaluation Policy is also presented in annex I.<sup>3</sup>

## II. Update on the activities of the IEU (March – August 2017)

5. This section provides an update on IEU's key activities and achievements over the past six months. It includes a progress report on its key areas of work, namely evaluation, advice and capacity support, learning and engagement.<sup>4</sup> The IEU has accomplished all its promised key activities and objectives for this period.

### Staffing and evaluation

6. As planned, one team assistant has been hired and joined the IEU on 12 June. At B.16, four consultancies were foreseen for the IEU. At the time of this writing, none of the four approved consultants required to support the head of the IEU during this initial phase to support her in producing deliverables, have been brought on board. Internal processes including budget approval have held up further steps.
7. The IEU has finalized an external advisory group consisting of leaders in the evaluation space, who will provide advice on technical areas to the head of the IEU and will ensure that the

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<sup>1</sup> Annex III to decision B.06/09 (annex III to document GCF/B.06/18).

<sup>2</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>3</sup> Decision document GCF/B.06/Annex III

<sup>4</sup> Please refer to the IEU organigram presented at B.16.

IEU is at the frontier of practice and policy as required by its TORs. They are: Rob Van den Berg (ex-GEF IEO Head), Dean Karlan (Professor of Economics, Yale University), Paul Winters (Professor of economics, American University and Director, Strategy and Knowledge management, IFAD) and Vinod Thomas (ex-Director General ADB Independent Evaluation Group).

8. The outline of the Independent Evaluation Policy is presented in document GCF/B.18/16 titled “Work plan and budget of the Independent Evaluation Unit for 2018”. If all processes go as planned, a draft document of the Independent Evaluation Policy will be circulated for Board approval at B.21.

9. Preparations are underway for the Independent evaluation of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme.<sup>5</sup> In order to prepare the Terms of Reference, IEU reviewed documents and also organized eight webinars to engage with a variety of stakeholders including board members and advisers. The Terms of Reference for the Independent Evaluation were sent to the Co-Chairs on 15 August 2017. Pending timely approval and efficient procurement processes, this evaluation will go forward as planned.

10. The Head of IEU has also circulated a document titled “Policies and procedures for ensuring the Independence and Effective functioning of the IEU” to the Co-Chairs on 23 July 2017.

### **Engagement and ensuring complementarity and coherence**

11. Ensuring complementarity with other evaluation offices and cooperation in and with evaluations is a key element of IEU’s mandate. The IEU has worked extensively to start building cooperation and complementarity through focused engagement. The head of IEU met with heads of independent evaluation offices of the WB, IDB, UNDP, GEF, ADB, HQAI (Humanitarian Quality Assurance Initiative), WSSCC (Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council), UNEP, 3ie (International Initiative for Impact Evaluation), as well as the relevant offices of the WB (DIME), Climate Investment Fund (CIF), the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI), NORAD Evaluation Office, DFID, Children’s Investment Foundation Fund (CIFF), the Behavioral Insights Unit (BIU), CEE (Collaboration for Environmental Evidence), Campbell Collaboration, the Global Data Pulse Lab and Incheon National University. A partnership agreement has been finalized with Incheon National University to ensure that IEU is leveraging learning and sharing across a diverse set of actors in this field. Several others are anticipated especially with the Independent Office of Evaluation of the ADB, Seoul National University and 3ie.

12. The IEU is also now a member of the Learning Partnership for Transformational Change led by the Climate Investment Fund (CIF), expert advisory board member for an agency wide WFP evaluation focused on Resilience and is a member of IDEAS (International Development Evaluation Association) and the American Evaluation Association (AEA).

13. An important part of engagement is creating understanding around the role of the IEU and the contributions that credible evaluations can make to ensuring learning and adaptive course correction. This has started and the IEU is drafting content for its informational brochure and a video. The IEU has also put together drafts of content for its website. It has hosted two external speakers as part of its ‘IEU talk series’ to increase understanding around evaluation and its uses. An IEU newsletter that will be circulated every three-months is also being prepared and starting 2018 will be disseminated regularly.

### **Advisory and Evaluation related capacity support**

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<sup>5</sup> Decision B.17/07.

14. Evaluations are only useful if they lead to uptake and learning. Following consultations internally and externally, the IEU is planning a multi-year evaluation-based learning programme. The IEU has organized several webinars on learning and uptake in the past five months. It is also preparing evaluation maps of evidence related to transformational change to inform learning in this space. Several awareness raising seminars and workshops have also been held to illustrate how evaluations may be used to generate and inspire change and adapt.

15. To create awareness about the role that evaluations can play in improving effectiveness and efficiency, the IEU conducted two learning workshops and delivered several presentations within the Secretariat. The IEU also led workshops on building theories of change for successful projects and measuring causal impact. Over the past five months, it has also advised PMU, PSF and DMA on selected topics including building high quality monitoring and evaluation systems. The need for building capacity in this area has been highlighted both by Secretariat staff as well as accredited entities. IEU's 2018 work plan draws on these engagements and presents an initial plan for tailored evaluation capacity strengthening. A full plan for capacity building will be presented at the end of 2018, pending adequate staff recruitment at the IEU.

### **III. Key challenges for the IEU**

16. The IEU is still at its inception stages. While the IEU is making good progress in establishing a credible and independent evaluation function for GCF, there are a few challenges that will be good to address so its 2018 work plan is executed effectively and in a timely manner.

17. A designated board committee: It is requested that a designated Board committee be proposed and appointed to work with, and advise the IEU. This will enable the IEU to engage in depth over time, and will ensure that the IEU is effectively communicating with and listening to key concerns within the GCF Board. A designated board committee will also contribute important perspectives and institutional continuity to the IEU.

18. Policies and procedures to ensure effectiveness and independence of the IEU: It is important for the IEU to be able to work and deliver its processes and procedures in a timely manner. Current procedures are limited to the extent that they stretch the capacity of the Secretariat to provide timely support and information to the IEU. One critical implication this is that it will likely jeopardize the independence of the IEU especially as it looks forward to hiring staff and procuring experts and consultants. The Head of IEU has circulated a document titled "Policies and procedures for ensuring the Independence and Effective functioning of the IEU" to the Co-Chairs on 23 July 2017.

19. IEU's operations during this reporting period were impacted by the delays accounted in approving its budget. In order for the IEU to function effectively, it will be important that the 2018 work plan and budget are approved at the B.18 meeting. This will help resolve uncertainties for the IEU and its planning.

20. In a new organization such as the GCF, as well as its key stakeholders and partners, an understanding of how evaluations may be used for adaptive course correction and change is especially important. Engaging with evidence right from the beginning and ensuring that data and information systems are built into processes and budgets at the start is one critical component of this. This will require time and effort from the IEU and support from the Board.

#### IV. Budget utilization report

|     | Item  | Budget<br>(USD)* | Expenditures<br>(USD) | Percentage<br>utilization<br>(%) |
|-----|---|------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1.  | <b>Salaries and consultants</b>                               |                  |                       |                                  |
| 1.1 | Full-time staff   | 240,930          | 184,781               | 76.7                             |
| 1.2 | Consultancies   | 70,000           | 4,742                 | 6.8                              |
| 2.  | <b>Travel</b>   |                  |                       |                                  |
| 2.1 | Travel  | 20,000           | 20,661                | 103.31                           |
| 3.  | <b>Engagement to support evaluation capacity and learning</b> |                  |                       |                                  |
| 3.1 | Support for evaluation related international meetings         | 20,000           | 250                   | 1.25                             |
| 4.  | <b>Operating costs</b>  |                  |                       |                                  |
| 4.1 | Other costs   | 20,000           | 350                   | 1.75                             |
|     | <b>Grand total</b>  | <b>370,930</b>   | <b>210,784</b>        | <b>56.8</b>                      |

\*approved for March – June 2017