



**GREEN
CLIMATE
FUND**

Meeting of the Board
10 – 12 March 2020
Geneva, Switzerland
Provisional agenda item 6

GCF/B.25/Inf.02

18 February 2019

Report on the activities of the Independent Evaluation Unit

Summary

This is a report of the Independent Evaluation Unit's (IEU) key activities for the period between mid-November 2019 and mid-February 2020. It reports on the IEU's outputs and achievements. This report also includes a summary of the 2019 activities of the Learning-Oriented Real-Time Impact Assessment programme. In summary, the IEU has achieved all its planned outputs for the reporting period.

I. Introduction

1. This document is a report of the key activities and outcomes of the Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) between 10 November 2019 and 15 February 2020. The objectives and key work plan activities of the IEU are presented in the Board-approved 2019 Work Plan and Budget and Update of its Three-year Rolling Work Plan of the IEU (see decision GCF/B.21/11) and its Board-approved Work Plan for 2020 (see decision GCF/B.24/17). This activity report is organized as follows:

- (a) Section 1: Introduction;
- (b) Section II: Overview;
- (c) Section III: Report on key activities;
- (d) Section IV: Budget and expenditure report;
- (e) Annex 1: Learning-Oriented Real-Time Programme Activity Report for 2019; and
- (f) Annex II: Communication materials produced and uploaded to the IEU website, November 2019 – February 2020.

II. Overview

2. At its twenty-first meeting, the Board by decision B.21/11 approved an overall budget allocation amount of USD 4,002,800 for the IEU for 2019. Additionally, through decision B.21/17 and BB.M/2019/04, the Board agreed that the IEU will be allocated an additional USD 847,400 to cover the costs of the Unit's forward-looking Performance Review of the GCF. In summary, the IEU completed all its activities for 2019 and has commenced work as planned for 2020.

3. At its twenty-fourth meeting, the Board by decisions B.24/12 approved an overall budget allocation amount of USD 5.58 million for the IEU for 2020 and "acknowledge(d) that the Independent Evaluation Unit may present to the Board for consideration at its twenty-sixth meeting an additional budgetary request to execute its workplan for 2020" (Decision B.24/06).

4. More information about the IEU budget for 2019 is available in section IV.

5. Key activities taken by the IEU for the reporting period, 10 November 2019 to 15 February 2020, were:

- (a) Building and strengthening the Independent Evaluation Unit;
- (b) Evaluations (including evaluations completed and/or commenced during the reporting period);
- (c) Engagement, partnerships and capacity building;
- (d) Learning papers, communication materials and outreach activities; and
- (e) This report also includes a summary of the 2019 activities of the Learning-Oriented Real-Time Impact Assessment programme.

III. Report on key activities

6. The IEU has commenced all of its promised activities for the period 15 November 2019 to 15 February 2020.

3.1 Building and strengthening the Independent Evaluation Unit

7. **Staffing:** In 2020, the IEU will undertake four evaluations and one synthesis review. Increasingly and as envisioned in its Board approved three-year rolling workplan, much of this work will be conducted in-house. During the reporting period, the IEU successfully recruited a Geographical Information Specialist (GIS) analyst and is in the process of completing its recruitment of two staff posts, a Communication and Editing Associate and Impact Evaluation Associate. It is important to note that the IEU stayed on course in terms of its mix of staff, HQ based consultants and interns.¹ As part of its team building efforts, the IEU Songdo team also attended a two and a half day off-site retreat, that was facilitated by an external expert. The main focus of the retreat was to take stock of its 2019 successes and also discuss ways to improve internal communication while building a vision for delivering its intense work program for 2020.

8. **Training and capacity strengthening within the IEU:** The IEU continues to emphasize the importance of building its capacity in using cutting-edge methods in its evaluation activities. In February, working with the Collaboration for Environmental Evidence, IEU staff attended a two-day training workshop in qualitative and mixed methods synthesis. This was also attended by several staff from the Secretariat and the GCF accountability units. Using GCF data and reports, the hands-on training provided participants with a knowledge of methods in qualitative synthesis by examining such topics as framing questions, coding data, working with software applications, and using alternative approaches.

9. The IEU also strengthened its data capacities during this period. The IEU DataLab provides high-quality databases and data analyses to support the IEU's rigorous, evidence-based evaluations. At B.24, the DataLab led a side event where it presented its initial findings on its soon-to-be published working paper, 'Show Me the Money', which follows the flow of climate finance, particularly GCF's finance, to developing countries and those particularly vulnerable to climate change. The DataLab contributed significantly to the evaluation of the GCF's environmental and social safeguards (ESS) and the environmental and social management system (ESMS), and the evaluation of GCF's country ownership approach (COA). Both evaluations will be submitted at B.25. For the coming year in 2020, the DataLab will similarly contribute to the five evaluations scheduled in the IEU's 2020 work plan.

10. The IEU also strengthened its GIS capacity during this period. In addition to the important role GIS plays in the IEU's evaluation of the level of GCF geographical coverage, the addition of the GIS analyst will broaden the DataLab's capacity to undertake more analytical work of emerging GCF project sites and lead to a greater role for GIS in LORTA.

11. **The GCF evaluation policy:** At B.24 the Board requested that the IEU and the Secretariat jointly clarify and delineate the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities in the policy. It is expected that the GCF Evaluation policy will be presented to the Board at B.27.

12. The Board also requested the IEU to present a set of detailed procedures and guidelines for the effective operation of the Unit for consideration by the Board at B.25.

3.2 Evaluations (including evaluations completed and/or commenced during the reporting period).

13. **Learning-Oriented Real-Time Impact Assessment programme:** Now in its third year, the LORTA programme continues to build capacity and develop methods for measuring causal

¹ Please refer to the IEU's 2020 workplan and budget document B.24/12/Rev.01.

changes attributable to GCF investments. A key activity during the reporting period was the visit to Songdo of LORTA collaborators, Center for Evaluation and Development (C4ED) to review LORTA's long-term strategy, data sharing standards and procedures, as well as reflect on past LORTA experiences and identify lessons learned. A LORTA activity report for 2019 was prepared for B.25 and is available in Annex I.

14. **Evaluation of the GCF's country ownership approach:** The IEU evaluation of GCF's COA was completed in early November and submitted to the Board at B.24. The evaluation examines GCF's success in incorporating country needs and country ownership in the design and implementation of GCF's policies and practices. Some of report's key recommendations for the Fund include: (i) operationalizing a clearer understanding of country ownership that represents the climate action needs while aligning with national climate change needs; (ii) incentivizing international and direct access entities to co-develop and co-implement GCF investments; (iii) providing continuous training to NDAs so they can also be in-country ambassadors for the GCF. The findings and recommendations of the report have been discussed with a variety of stakeholders including Secretariat staff, Board members, CSOs/PSOs, a shortlist of AEs and at COP. The [full report is now available on the IEU website](#) and, following advice from the GCF co-chairs, will be presented and discussed at B.25.

15. **Evaluation of the GCF's environmental and social safeguards (ESS) and the environmental and social management system (ESMS):** The IEU evaluation of ESS was submitted to the Board at B.25. The evaluation examines the how well the ESS and ESMS have helped mitigate key risks for the Fund given its unique context and mandate. To ensure widespread buy-in, the IEU has discussed the ESS with a range of stakeholders. The report's findings were discussed at a Global Environment Facility-GCF hosted event at COP25 in December 2019 attended by representatives from accredited entities, the Climate Investment Funds, indigenous peoples groups, civil society organizations, think tanks and a CSO Active Observer of the GCF. In keeping with standard practice at the IEU, the factual draft and country mission reports have also been shared with the entire GCF Secretariat for commenting. The Evaluation also contains a review of the PPF mechanism. The draft and emerging recommendations have also been discussed with the GCF Secretariat, in particular the Secretariat's Sustainability team of the ORMC and the Senior Management Team, as well as with the IEU's advisory group to the ESS evaluation. The evaluations key recommendations will be presented to the Board at B.25.

16. **Rapid assessment of the Simplified Approval Process:** The simplified approval process (SAP) seeks to provide easier access to the GCF. The IEU's rapid assessment of the SAP will examine such questions as: (i) is the SAP truly simplified? (ii) is it well suited to the needs of countries and to the size of the change it seeks to effect? and (iii) what can be done to ensure transparency, predictability and speed in SAPs? The IEU's staff are being supported by two consultants for the rapid assessment and the first draft of an approach paper is currently under review. The rapid assessment of SAP processes will be delivered at B.26.

17. **Independent evaluation of the relevance and effectiveness of GCF's investments in Small Island Developing States:** Many Small Island Developing States (SIDS) contribute far less to climate change than they suffer from it. Often, too, they need their own, unique climate interventions. IEU's evaluation will examine questions such as how well GCF caters to the special context of SIDS and how well GCF investments cater to the high potential for transformation within these economies? The IEU's staff will be supported by thematic consultants and procurement is currently underway. The IEU will deliver this evaluation to the Board at B.27.

18. **Independent synthesis of the GCF accreditation process:** This evaluation-related activity will focus on critically appraising, and objectively and systematically synthesizing key

findings and recommendations from IEU evaluations, Secretariat reviews and CSO reviews, related to GCF's accreditation process and strategy. The GCF's accreditation process is widely perceived as a bottleneck. The IEU's independent synthesis review will examine key elements of the accreditation process. The IEU has completed the approach paper that will be shared widely soon. The final review will be submitted to the Board at B.26

19. **Independent evaluation of the adaptation related investments of the GCF:** A key finding of the 2019 Forward-looking Performance Review of the GCF was the Fund's reliance on traditional forms of investment in its adaptation portfolio. The IEU's evaluation will examine the extent to which the GCF has dealt with meeting the adaptation needs of developing countries; explore linkages between development and adaptation and assess the GCF's use of modalities and technical expertise in supporting adaptation investments. The IEU is currently preparing for this evaluation, which will start in March, end in December 2020, and be ready for presentation at the first Board meeting in 2021 (i.e. at B.28).

3.3 Advisory services, learning and capacity strengthening

20. **IEU Lunch Talks:** This monthly event in Songdo is one of IEU's more important capacity building and outreach activities. All of IEU's monthly talks feature global experts and have attracted upward of 40 participants. Topics addressed by international experts addressed such topics as tailoring impact evaluation strategies to assess the effectiveness of real-world projects; how multiple benefit pathways can boost ambition in climate change interventions; and air pollution and coal consumption in Mongolia. All these talks are recorded and available on the IEU's website.

21. **Engagement, learning and capacity building:** The IEU's Songdo based team (consisting of staff, HQ based consultants and interns) attended a number of key events during the reporting period (predominantly November) to give keynote addresses, participate in international discussions, or facilitate capacity building.

- (a) At a United Nations Inter-agency meeting coordinated by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Bonn, November, the IEU provided **advisory assistance** to UN deliberations on the implementation pathways for the Resilience Frontiers Initiative, a foresight-driven initiative to harness frontier technologies and emerging social trends for global resilience.
- (b) In in November, the IEU LORTA team worked with the Rwanda Ministry of Environment and the GCF project implementing entity, the Rwanda Green Fund (FONERWA), to **build the measurement capacities of the project team** to develop an impact evaluation for the GCF project Strengthening Climate Resilience of Rural Communities in Northern Rwanda (FP073).
- (c) Two IEU staff attended the Annual American Evaluation Association Conference held in Minneapolis, November 2019. In addition to attending a range of training workshops, the IEU staff **presented a working paper** on geospatial analysis for impact evaluation, with an emphasis on the alignment between climate fund projects and country needs. Presenting the paper provided a rich opportunity to receive feedback from a community of evaluators representing not only the environmental field but also other interdisciplinary fields.
- (d) IEU staff visited the Honduras to lead and manage LORTA **capacity building workshop** for a GCF project in Central America managed by the Central American Bank of Economic Integration (FP097). FP097 aims to increase resilience to climate change among small- to medium-sized enterprises. Participants included representatives from

El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama and the Dominican Republic. Attendees received training from IEU and LORTA collaborators, C4ED, in impact evaluation and building a theory of change.

- (e) A strong IEU presence at the 25th **Conference of the Parties (COP)** to the UNFCCC in December 2019 provided the Unit with a perfect opportunity to encourage public discussion and share ideas emerging from its 2019 evaluations of the GCF. The **IEU presented or engaged** with several key side-events at the COP, including: (i) A successful start, an ambitious future. The Green Climate Fund Results over its Initial Resource Mobilization Period 2015-2019, (ii) Reconsidering adaptation: Opportunities to manage risks and build resilience in a transforming world, (iii) What works in climate finance? Lessons from CIF and GCF, (iv) What are we learning about transformational change and what are evaluations telling us? GCF and CIF share their perspectives, and (v) Environmental and Social Safeguards: Climate Finance, Indigenous People and Civil Society.
- (f) At B.25 the IEU led two side events aimed at policymakers and interested parties visiting Songdo, as well as the Secretariat. The first event introduced two IEU working papers, 'Where in the world is GCF?', which looked at the different socio-economic, geographical and environmental attributes of GCF investments; and 'Show me the money!' which examined GCF investment flows and how they complement other climate financing initiatives. The second event, 'IEU Deep Dive: an evaluation of GCF's country ownership', looked at the key findings, recommendations and challenges from the IEU COA evaluation.

3.4 Learning papers, communications and building partnerships

22. **Learning papers:** To foster institutional learning within the GCF and to enhance the knowledge capacity of stakeholders and national partners, the IEU regularly publishes learning papers on climate change and evaluation-related issues. During the reporting period, the IEU completed two Learning Papers and accompanying learning briefs and successfully submitted an article for publication on theory-based impact evaluations with the Elsevier-published World Development Journal.

- (a) **Good will hunting: Challenges of theory-based impact evaluations for climate investments in a multilateral setting.** Written by IEU's Dr. Jyotsna Puri, Dr. Archi Rastogi, Dr. Martin Prowse, and Dr. Solomon Asfaw, this article analyses the challenges of theory-based impact evaluations and discusses how the IEU's LORTA programme deals with the complexity of climate interventions and subsequent questions of measurement. The article was the result of a request from the World Development journal, published by [Elsevier](#), to select evaluation specialists to write about the use of randomized controlled trials in understanding effectiveness and efficacy. The request was in response to the awarding of the 2019 Nobel Prize for economics to three professors specializing in this area. The article is [available on the IEU website](#).
- (b) **Effectiveness of forestry conservation interventions: An evidence gap map. Learning Paper Number 2** looks at forest conservation interventions in low- and middle-income countries based on evidence published from 2016 to mid-2018. It is an update to a similar publication by the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie). Comparison of the two-gap maps reveals a number of interesting observations, including: (i) forest conservation outcomes have been increasingly evaluated in recent years but from a modest base, (ii) community-based management (especially in south Asia) and protected areas are well represented, (iii) evaluations of payment for

environmental services and REDD+ are less prominent, and the latter feature more welfare than forestry or carbon impacts, and (iii) Asia and Latin America generally publish much more evaluated evidence than Africa. Despite the budding progress witnessed, many essential knowledge gaps remain.

- (c) **Climate Change Adaptation Interventions in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: An evidence gap map. Learning Paper Number 3** examines evidence related to the effectiveness of adaptation measures in developing countries. The study reviewed 464 papers in detail. The results show (i) there is a large share of adaptation-related evidence in agriculture and within it on economic returns of technological efforts, and, on nature-based solution, (ii) the main evidence gaps include a scarcity of evidence for adaptation interventions in the water sector, and on measures aimed at reducing exposure to climate events, and (iii) few studies exist that examine social and institutional outcomes of climate change adaptation interventions.

3.5 Uptake, communications and partnerships:

23. **Communication and uptake:** Presenting the recommendations of IEU evaluations in different types of media is important to encouraging the recommendations' uptake. While it is important to show the substance of IEU evaluations by publishing highly detailed and often lengthy reports, it is important to identify and condense their key messages and present them customized ways to encourage uptake amongst stakeholders, decision and policy makers and others who need to quickly grasp complex issues. The IEU employs social media including its website, and print media that include executive summaries, two-page notes, four-page briefs, topical briefs, as well as slideshows, online presentations, webinars, short videos, blogs, and short website articles, among others.

24. The IEU has produced more than 150 communication related publications since January 2019, including 37, three a week for the current 12-week reporting period. Materials between November and February include: final reports of evaluations (COA, ESS) and accompanying GEvalNotes and GEvalBriefs; four topical briefs for the FPR; the IEU 2019 Annual Report; Learning paper 2 (Forestry EGM) and accompanying brief; Learning Paper 3 (Adaptation EGM) and accompanying brief; IEU Lunch Talk posters; B.25 posters and flyers; six articles or blogs and 10 videos for the IEU website. A full list of outreach materials is available in Annex II.

25. The IEU now translates key products into Spanish and French to foster outreach to GCF and IEU stakeholders in Francophone countries, predominantly in Africa, and Spanish-speaking countries, predominantly in Latin America. It is currently advertising for an Arabic translator.

26. **Building partnerships:** Partnerships and collaborations are critical to ensuring the IEU delivers effective evaluations, contributes to its own and the GCF's learning, and builds the capacity of in-country agencies. Its most recent partnerships have been in the form of LORTA Memorandum of Understandings with Ministry of Environment of Rwanda and Central American Bank for Economic Integration. With five evaluations in 2019, including a large number of LORTA collaboration with partner organizations, the IEU envisages signing a number of significant formal agreements in 2020.

IV. Budget and expenditure report

27. The overall IEU budget for 2019 was USD 4, 850, 200. The IEU's overall expenditure rate in 2019 was 95%. Overall this is testimony to the IEU's careful planning and vision as well as the

hard work of its team. The IEU is proud of its successes but remains humble and will continue to learn and consolidate as it continues into its fourth year.

28. The overall budgets and expenditures are explained as follows.

29. With decision B.21/11 the Board approved the IEU 2019 work plan, budget and update of its three-year rolling work plan, as contained in document GCF/B.21/13 and annex XII, for a total amount of USD 4,002,800 for the 2019 annual budget. Table 1 shows the IEU 2019 budget and expenditure report as of December 31 2019.

30. Separately, in October 2018, the Board requested the IEU to undertake a forward-looking performance review of the GCF and approved an additional USD 500,000 for the IEU budget, effective immediately and available for the remainder of 2018 and throughout 2019 (Decision B.21/17). In February 2019, the Board allocated a further USD 347,400 for the FPR, taking the total allocation for the review to USD 847,400 (Decision B.BM/2019/04). Table 2 shows the budget expenditure for the Performance Review of the GCF as of December 31, 2019 (USD).

Table 1: IEU Budget and Expenditure report (2019)

Items	2019 Budget	Actual	%	Remaining Budget
(1) IEU budget approved in 2018				
Staff costs				
Full-time staff	1,859,000	1,795,510	97%	63,490
Consultants	529,800	539,746	102%	-9,946
Sub-total	2,388,800	2,335,257	98%	53,543
Travel				
General	274,000	244,928	89%	29,072
Contractual services				
Legal & professional services	1,230,000	1,155,863	94%	74,137
Operating Costs	110,000	86,038	78%	23,962
Sub-total	1,340,000	1,241,901	93%	98,089
TOTAL (3)	4,002,800	3,822,085	95%	180,715
(2) FPR Budget				
Consultants /Intern costs	162,400	162,096	100%	304
Travel	96,000	91,324	95%	4,676
Professional services	495,000	482,100	97%	12,900
Other operating services	94,000	49,048	53%	44,952
Sub-total (4)	847,400	784,567	93%	62,833
Grand total (3+4)	4,850,200	4,606, 652	95%	243, 548

Annex I: Learning-Oriented Real-Time Impact Assessment (LORTA) Programme Activity Report for 2019

1. The IEU's three-year work plan includes LORTA as a multi-year activity. Now in its third year, LORTA continues to build capacity and help projects/investments build high-quality datasets, support real-time learning on the likelihood of impacts and measure causal impact. More specifically, LORTA helps projects measure the impact of GCF investments using mixed methods with 2-3 waves of survey data for the targeted population and, if relevant, in selected possible comparison areas. All data collection efforts are informed by well-defined protocols which, in turn, are predicated on well-planned formative fieldwork.
2. A key LORTA activity during the 2019 reporting period was the second IEU's LORTA Design Workshop, March 16-18, which was organised by GCF-IEU and its implementing partner, the Center for Evaluation and Development (C4ED) in Mannheim, Germany. It took place from 15 to 17 April 2019 in Mannheim, Germany. The workshop aimed at increasing the participants' knowledge about impact evaluation, including learning from case studies and being introduced to different impact evaluation methods. Another important aim was to identify GCF-funded projects to participate in the LORTA programme. The workshop was attended by 97 participants, including representatives of 21 GCF-funded projects (from AEs, implementing partners and project staff). Further workshop participants were from different divisions within the GCF as well as impact evaluation specialists from C4ED and other international organisations. Both the public sector, as well as private sector projects, are represented.
3. As in 2018, the LORTA Design Workshop consisted of different elements and capacity-building measures using different formats (e.g. keynote addresses, presentations in the plenum, group work). The keynote addresses were held by world-class experts on several topics including "The power of impact evaluation: implications for policy and development cooperation"; "An opportunity to lead: strategies for engaging the private sector in impact evaluation"; and The Behavioural Insights, "Evaluation for Humans: Why behaviour matters?".
4. In Mannheim, we discussed different impact measurement designs for selected GCF-funded projects. The workshop provided participants engaged in the project design and implementation with the opportunity to discuss and learn: (i) the importance of including rigorous evidence in the design process; (ii) case studies to allow participants to learn from impact measurement experiences in similar work areas; (iii) methods of impact measurement, with a focus on randomized evaluations as well as quasi-experimental designs using mixed methods; (iv) potential impact measurement designs by working in groups involving experts and project implementers and (v) engage in dialogue and build partnerships with IEU while engaging closely with implementing partners, research teams, GCF secretariat staff, Accredited Entities (AE) representatives and Focal Points/National Designated Authorities (FP/NDA).
5. Based on insights gained during this group work and considerations held with the Division of Mitigation and Adaptation (DMA) and the Private Sector Facility (PSF), six projects were consequently selected into the first phase of LORTA 2019 and this was done based for their commitment to measurement, quality, innovation, team capacity, design, and representativeness, among other criteria. These projects then underwent a formative research period in the remaining months of 2019, partly continuing in 2020, which constitutes Phase I of LORTA. During this period, evaluation teams made up by staff members of GCF-IEU and C4ED (referred to as the LORTA team henceforth) engaged with key stakeholders of the selected GCF-funded projects to ensure their interest, understanding and feeling of ownership for the planned theory-based impact evaluations.
6. While much of the formative research was based on remote collaboration, the LORTA team also conducted field missions to Guatemala, Honduras, Rwanda, and South Africa (field

missions to Bangladesh and DR Congo are still outstanding and planned for early 2020). During the field missions, the LORTA team delivered capacity-building workshops on the importance of impact evaluation, on the development of a theory of change, and methods of impact evaluation, going beyond the introductory insights provided at the workshop in Mannheim. It also conducted context analyses, elaborated on the theory of change of each project and defined evaluation questions together with the project stakeholders, examined the existence of appropriate counterfactuals (i.e. comparable project beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries), worked out impact evaluation designs, and assessed existing data sources. The table on the next page summarizes information on these six projects. They will transition into Phase II of LORTA in 2020.

PROJECT N°	PROJECT NAME	COUNTRY	Accredited Entity (AE)	OBJECTIVE / DESCRIPTION	EVALUATION QUESTIONS	EXPECTED EVALUATION RESULTS
FP069	Enhancing adaptive capacities of coastal communities, especially women, to cope with climate change-induced salinity	Bangladesh	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	The aim is to support the Government of Bangladesh in strengthening the adaptive capacities of coastal communities, especially women, to cope with impacts of climate change-induced salinity on their livelihoods and water security.	<i>Scoping mission scheduled for early 2020</i>	tbd
FP073	Strengthening climate resilience of rural communities in Northern Rwanda	Rwanda	Ministry of Environment	The aim is to strengthen the climate resilience of landscapes and communities through support for watershed protection, forest management, climate-resilient agriculture, and the construction of low-carbon social housing for highly vulnerable households.	Does the project contribute to incremental and transformational climate change adaptation and to mitigating GHG emissions?	2025
FP087	Building livelihood resilience to climate change in the upper basins of Guatemala's highlands	Guatemala	International Union for Conservation of Nature	The aim is to reduce the impact of climate change on the hydrological cycle in targeted areas of Guatemala's highlands through improved land-use practices.	Does the project increase the water security of farmers? Do farmers become more resilient and/or less vulnerable to extreme weather	2023/24

PROJECT N°	PROJECT NAME	COUNTRY	Accredited Entity (AE)	OBJECTIVE / DESCRIPTION	EVALUATION QUESTIONS	EXPECTED EVALUATION RESULTS
FP096	Green Mini-Grid Programme	Democratic Republic of Congo	African Development Bank	The aim is to increase access to and productive use of energy by providing finance for three solar power plants to replace fossil fuel use with RE sources, to facilitate capacity-building and enable a policy framework for further green mini-grid projects in the DRC.	<i>Scoping mission scheduled for early 2020</i>	tbd
FP097	Productive investment initiative for adaptation to climate change (CAMBio II)	Central America (7 countries)	Central American Bank of Economic Integration	The aim is to increase resilience to climate change of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Central America by removing barriers to access to financial and non-financial services for adopting and implementing adaptation measures.	Are MSMEs less vulnerable / better adapted to events of climate change due to the adaptation of climate-smart agriculture?	2025
FP098	DBSA Climate Finance Facility (CFF)	Southern Africa (4 countries)	Development Bank of Southern Africa	The aim is to provide projects related to climate change mitigation and adaptation with the required funding. The programme ultimately aims at supporting the emergence of a market for financial products for climate-related projects, thereby facilitating additional long-term GHG emissions.	Do investments by the private sector, which are funded by the CFF, lead to reduced usage of on-grid electricity? Do they lead to changes in the usage of total electricity?	2023/24

7. During the reporting period, the IEU LORTA team also published a 270-page synthesis report² for these seven projects in April 2019. The synthesis provides an overview of the LORTA programme activities since its Phase I commenced in early 2018. Information in the synthesis includes LORTA's phases, including its formative work; the selection criteria for projects participating in LORTA; engagement with project teams and key stakeholders; summaries of questions, designs and timelines; country updates; and lessons learned and recommendations. A feature of the synthesis is the mission reports for each of the eight evaluated countries: Malawi, Uganda, Paraguay, Madagascar, Vanuatu, Zambia, and Georgia:

- (a) FP002: Scaling up the use of modernized climate information and early warning systems in Malawi (AE: UNDP)
- (b) FP026: Sustainable Landscapes in Eastern Madagascar (AE: Conservation International Foundation, European Investment Bank)
- (c) FP034: Building resilient communities, wetland ecosystems and associated catchments in Uganda (AE: UNDP)
- (d) FP035: Climate information services for resilient development planning in Vanuatu (AE: Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme)
- (e) FP062: Poverty, reforestation, energy and climate change project in Paraguay (AE: FAO)
- (f) FP068: Scaling-up multi-hazard early warning system and use of climate information in Georgia (AE: UNDP)
- (g) FP072: Strengthening climate resilience of agricultural livelihoods in Zambia (AE: UNDP)

8. In 2019, these seven GCF-funded projects are already in a more advanced stage (Phase II) within the LORTA programme, as evaluation questions were defined, and evaluation designs developed in 2018. GCF-IEU and its implementation partner C4ED worked closely with the respective AEs throughout 2019. They provided technical advice on real-time implementation tracking and measurement systems, which are an integral part of an impact evaluation. The goal of this technical advice is to set up a data system (either through primary data collection or through drawing from secondary sources) that provides the necessary information to conduct the envisioned impact evaluation analysis. It is of utmost importance that the system allows for a deep understanding of the implementation of project activities and for measuring key impact indicators that help to answer pre-defined evaluation questions.

9. The technical advice delivered in 2019 comprised of support for the AEs on the operationalization of indicators (i.e. the information needed to calculate indicators), the definition of appropriate data sources (such as structured surveys among households, qualitative interviews with project beneficiaries, administrative records, or geo-information systems), the determination of adequate timelines and frequencies for data collection, the specification of data collection tools (e.g. questionnaires), among others.

10. A crucial element of the implementation tracking and measurement system in LORTA is information from baseline and endline surveys. Baseline data is collected before project activities are implemented and endline data at the end of a project. Baseline data were collected in only one of the projects mentioned above, FP026, in 2019 and had already been collected in 2018 in FP002. In the case of FP002, the survey firm hired for data collection also analysed the data and produced a baseline report in 2019. This report was quality checked by the LORTA team, and UNDP was advised on which additional analyses to request from the consultancy firm. In the case of FP026, in contrast, Conservation International was itself in charge of baseline data collection. The LORTA team provided advice on how to ensure data quality during fieldwork. It then collaborated with Conservation

² <https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/documents/977793/985626/LORTA+Synthesis+Report/99417431-1a87-8fbd-9c32-bd56be8835e4>

International, including building up capacity in the AE, in data cleaning, data analysis, and elaboration of a baseline report. The analysis contained in a baseline report serves two primary purposes: 1) describing the socioeconomic profile of future project beneficiaries and 2) comparing them to a comparison group, i.e. a group of households against which they will be assessed. The latter analysis allows for testing the validity of the proposed impact evaluation design, most importantly, by assessing that the treatment and comparison groups are indeed comparable before project implementation.

11. In 2020, the LORTA team will continue supporting the AEs in setting up high-quality real-time implementation tracking and measurement systems. The focus will be on collecting data for tracking project activities and on guiding those projects regarding which baseline or endline surveys will be conducted.
12. There are three broader lessons the IEU has taken from the LORTA process so far. First and foremost, the success of an evaluation for institutional learning requires close partnership and mutual trust between implementers and evaluators. Implementers must understand and trust that the evaluation will assist them in improving the programme and that the evaluators will strengthen the programme. Establishing such trust requires a close working relationship, which some consider a violation of an evaluation's impartiality and independence. Our experience in the LORTA programme is that once mutual trust is built, implementers are more likely to welcome advice and act upon it, understanding that such evidence provides significant opportunities for learning and improving the programme.
13. A second important lesson is the necessity to adopt a flexible approach to minimize the burden of the study on programme implementation. Once trade-offs between design options and internal threats to validity are clear, AEs and Executing Entities implementing the programme can decide if they value a sound design and decide how much they will 'pay' in terms of budgets, roll out or other implementation plans. High-quality impact evaluations incur high costs, and while LORTA activities are drawn from IEU budgets, baseline and endline data collection budgets themselves are supported by projects and AEs.
14. Third, and as specialists in use, uptake and learning know, influencing policy through evidence is a non-linear process, not least because policymaking itself is iterative and interactive. Evidence plays a relatively modest role and is dominated by political expediency. Cooperative relationships between evidence creators, advocates, and policy targets are essential. Effective communications are also crucial to strategic and iterative engagement, requiring multiple channels over time that increase the chance of positive outcomes. Perhaps the most critical consideration is the framing of the findings – tailoring presentations as solutions to topical policy challenges and existing political needs. Similarly, the effective integration of research findings, and even the research process itself, into the policy process, is essential to ensure research addresses the evidence needs of the GCF and, most importantly, the climate needs of developing countries.

Annex II: Communication materials produced and uploaded to the IEU website, November 2019 – February 2020

1. COA Main report
2. COA GEvalBrief 04
3. COA GEvalNote 04
4. ESS Main report
5. FPR Topical Brief: Fifteen Quick Key Take-Aways from the FPR
6. FPR Topical Brief: Summary of the Review
7. FPR Topical Brief: What are we learning about GCF's accreditation process?
8. FPR Topical Brief: What can the GCF private sector facility do faster, better, smarter?
9. IEU eNewsletter Issue 8, Oct-Dec 2019
10. IEU Newsletter Issue 8, Oct-Dec 2019
11. IEU in the News - Frankfurt School FS-UNEP Collaborating Centre for Climate and Sustainable Energy Finance 'GCF Monitor': Mobilising public and private co-finance. 1 January 2020
12. IEU in the News - UNFCCC Draft Decision: Report of the Green Climate Fund to the Conference of the Parties and guidance to the Green Climate Fund. 15 December 2019
13. IEU in the News: Forward-Looking Performance Review noted by Frankfurt School 'GCF Monitor,' 17 January 2019
14. IEU in the News: UNFCCC Draft Decision Notes Forward-Looking Performance Review, 16 January 2019
15. Learning paper 2: Effectiveness of forestry conservation interventions: An evidence gap map
16. Learning Paper Number 3: Climate Change Adaptation Interventions in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: An evidence gap map
17. PRESS RELEASE: IEU Report urges significant changes to the GCF - FPR
18. PRESS RELEASE: IEU issues evaluation of GCF's ESS
19. Video: 19th Global Development Conference Knowledge for Sustainable Development Plenary
20. Video: COP 25 IEU Side Event: Environmental and Social Safeguards (Part 1)
21. Video: COP 25 IEU Side Event: Environmental and Social Safeguards (Part 2)
22. Video: IEU Year in Review
23. Video: IEU's Forward-looking Performance Review: Main Findings
24. Video: LORTA Mannheim Workshop: Dr. Edward Jackson – Engaging Private Sector in Impact Evaluation
25. Video: LORTA Mannheim Workshop: Dr. Jo Puri – Becoming Faster, Smarter, Better
26. Video: LORTA Mannheim Workshop: Dr. Jorg Faust – Impact Evaluation in Development Cooperation
27. Video: LORTA Mannheim Workshop: Elspeth Kirkman – Evaluation for Humans: Why Behavior Matters?

28. Video: Lunch Talk: Dr. Markus Olapade – Harnessing Impact Evaluation Methods to Combat Poverty
 29. Video: Lunch Talk: Helena Molin Valdes – Boosting climate ambition
 30. Web article: Good Will Hunting: IEU colleagues publish an article in World Development Journal on challenges of theory-based impact evaluations
 31. Web article: IEU events at COP25 emphasize GCF effectiveness and inclusiveness
 32. Web article: IEU releases evaluation of the GCF's country ownership approach
 33. Web Blog - My pop moments from COP25
 34. Web Blog: Climate impact bonds and the GCF
 35. Web Blog: Mitigating emissions and reducing air pollution: act global, think local
 36. Webinar: Evaluating in the Nexus of Environment Climate and Development
 37. 2020 Work Plan and Budget – full report
 38. 2020 Work Plan and Budget – IEU Brief No. 1 2019
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