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Report of the independent evaluation of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme – Addendum I Secretariat management response

Summary

This document presents the Secretariat management's response to the report of the independent evaluation of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme.

I. Introduction

1. In accordance with decision B.17/07, the Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) carried out an independent review of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programmes (hereinafter “Readiness Programme”). A draft of the report containing only the findings only (and excluding the recommendations and conclusions) was shared with the Secretariat on 10 September 2018, and the full report, titled “Report of the independent evaluation of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme” (hereinafter “Evaluation Report”) was shared with the Secretariat on 25 September 2018. This management response, which focuses mainly on the findings of the Evaluation Report, was prepared by the Secretariat to support discussions on the Evaluation Report by the Board at its twenty-second meeting (B.22).

2. The Secretariat welcomes the Evaluation Report shared by the IEU on 25 September 2018, which presents the methodology, evaluation findings on relevance and coherence, country ownership, effectiveness, efficiency, cross-cutting – gender and environment, and innovativeness and scaling-up potential as well as recommendations. This management response is organized under four themes: (i) process; (ii) data and facts; (iii) overall response to findings; and (iv) overall response to recommendations and specific responses to findings in the annex of the Evaluation Report.

II. Process

3. The Secretariat and the IEU share the same objective of ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of the Readiness Programme so as to prepare and empower countries to design, develop and implement transformational projects to achieve low-carbon emission and resilient development in the future. We also mutually agree that the evaluation conducted by the IEU is a learning exercise for both the Secretariat and the IEU, as it is the first evaluation performed by IEU and of the Secretariat. Based on the common objective and understanding, the Secretariat has been providing timely support to the IEU throughout the evaluation process to ensure the accuracy of data used for the evaluation, facilitate communications between the IEU and country partners, and provide comments and feedback on facts and data in the draft reports.

III. Data and facts

4. Despite the strategic intent of the Readiness Programme, it was only launched in 2014, with its first grant approved in May 2015. As at 31 August 2018, the Readiness Programme has received proposals from 132 countries; approved 197 in grants/technical assistance totalling USD 110 million and covering 113 countries; disbursed USD 39.7 million for 142 grants, with 5 grants and 15 technical assistances completed. From the implementation aspect, the majority of grants are still working under the first disbursement. For example, as at 13 July, the cut-off date of the evaluation, as shown in table 1, only 10 national adaptation plan (NAP) grants received disbursement, 40 grants of other readiness activities have not received first disbursement yet, and only 29 grants of other readiness activities received the second disbursement.

5. In addition, the data in the technical reports for these grants has not been stored in a systemic manner and the indicators for measuring the results of these grants have not yet been developed or mutually agreed with country partners. All these make the evaluation of the effectiveness of the Readiness Programme very difficult. The Secretariat is very grateful to IEU, which conducted a survey among the national designated authorities (NDAs); visited nine countries during the evaluation process to collect more data, facts and evidence for the evaluation; and developed a theory-based evaluation methodology.

IV. Overall response to findings

6. The Evaluation Report consists of 43 findings under each criteria/theme used in this evaluation (presented in table 2). Despite the challenges in terms of data and evidence of success, the report recognizes the relevance of the Readiness Programme in the climate financing landscape, the positive effects of the Readiness Programme in sharing the information and operational modalities of GCF, helping countries building their capacity to access GCF funding, establishing coordination mechanisms and no-objection procedures in countries, and supporting NDAs/focal points to engage with multi-stakeholders including the private sector, among other things. The Evaluation Report also pointed out that the Readiness Programme is a fast-learning programme, which has made significant improvement in operations over the years and has the potential to facilitate the development of enablers of transformational changes and paradigm shift in climate mitigation and adaptation interventions. The Secretariat is well encouraged by these findings and will ensure related measures taken in the future for the continuity and success of the Readiness Programme in these areas.

7. As previously mentioned, the majority of the grants are still under implementation, thus the evaluation finds that either it is too early or there is not enough evidence to judge if the Readiness Programme has been successful in a couple of areas, for example, supporting countries to develop country programmes and pipelines of projects, engaging the private sector, providing NAP funding to the priority countries. The Secretariat will dive into these areas after B.21 and ensure appropriate measures are in place as soon as possible so as to deliver the objectives of Readiness Programme.

8. The evaluation also pointed out the space and opportunity to improve the effectiveness in a few areas, such as on the development of domestic policies and institutions that improve the incentive environment for crowding-in private sector investments, support the direct access entities for pipeline development, and support for country programme development. The Secretariat welcomes such findings, although it disagrees with a couple of them or partially disagrees with some of them: table 3 provides the detailed explanations of the Secretariat's position.

9. The Secretariat is very grateful to the IEU for its work in such a relatively short period. As shown in table 3, we find that 63 per cent of the findings are either positive or truly reflect the current status of the Readiness Programme, 32 per cent of the findings that either need to be backed up by more facts and data or are due to the immaturity of evaluating the effectiveness of the Readiness Programme. Only 5 per cent of findings are non-agreeable by the Secretariat, largely due to a different understanding of the mandate of the Readiness Programme and the implementation process.

V. Overall response to recommendations

10. The Evaluation Report presents three groups of recommendations. The Secretariat agrees that the first two groups and actions are already underway to address these recommendations. For example, the Secretariat is strengthening efforts for the Readiness Programme to promote peer-to-peer learning, strengthen capacity support to accredited direct access entities, improving guidelines for country programming, and make readiness information available to countries through the country portals. With respect to the second group of recommendations, and based also on the finding of the initial review of the Readiness Programme, the Secretariat has embarked on developing a theory of change for the Readiness Programme and will further develop a vision, strategy and targets when presenting a revised work programme and request for funding for the Board's consideration at its twenty-second meeting (B.22).

11. The third group of recommendations proposes discontinuing business-as-usual and developing a specific strategy for a new phase for the Readiness Programme. The Secretariat has included the development of Readiness Programme Phase 2 in its Work Programme 2019. Specifically, on the approach to better cater to different countries based on their national contexts, needs and results, the Secretariat will evaluate measures by which such an approach can be implemented so that the Readiness Programme may provide more fit-for-purpose solutions to countries. An initial analysis of options in this regard and potential resource implications will also be presented to the Board at B.22.

VI. Conclusion

12. The Secretariat would like to thank the IEU once more for this evaluation, the opportunity to discuss the findings and learnings, and our response to them, and for the valuable recommendations to further strengthen the programme. The Secretariat strongly believes that the Readiness Programme will pave the path for countries to engage with GCF and other climate financiers to deliver transformations and paradigm shifts towards a low-emission and resilient world in the future.

Table 1: The Readiness Programme Portfolio as of 13 July

	Number of Grants approved		Approval Volume (USD)		Number of Grants receiving 1st disbursements		Disbursed Volume (USD)		Number of Grants receiving 2nd disbursements		Disbursed Volume (USD)	
	NAPs	Other readiness activities	NAPs	Other readiness activities	NAPs	Other readiness activities	NAPs	Other readiness activities	NAPs	Other readiness activities	NAPs	Other readiness activities
2015		36		\$ 7,942,811		9		\$ 412,326				
2016	2	30	\$5,198,817	\$ 6,864,172		27		\$ 2,774,304		1		\$ 60,000
2017	2	79	\$ 5,969,674	\$ 26,777,610	2	47	\$1,270,094	\$ 7,544,809		7		\$ 827,617
2018*	14	32	\$ 38,373,541	\$ 15,653,554	8	54	\$4,023,177	\$ 11,062,050		21		\$ 2,104,923
Total	18	177	\$ 49,542,032	\$ 57,238,147	10	137	\$5,293,271	\$ 21,793,489	0	29	\$	\$ 2,992,540
Overall Total	195		\$ 106,780,179		147		\$27,086,760		29		\$ 2,992,540	

* Up to 13 July - the same cut-off date as the IEU report.

Table 2: Overall response to the findings

Evaluation criteria	Relevance and coherence	Country ownership	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Cross-cutting - gender and environment	Innovativeness and scaling-up potential	Number of findings and % of Secretariat position
Number of findings	5 on relevance, and 4 on complementarity & coherence	8	9	9	4	4	43
Finding that the Secretariat agrees	Findings 1, 2, 3, 4 under relevance Finding 1, 2, 4 under complementarity & coherence	Findings 1, 2, 3, 8	Findings 4, 5, 9	Findings 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9	Findings 3, 4,	Finding 1, 2, 4	27 (63%)
Finding that the Secretariat partially agrees	Findings 5 under relevance Finding 3 under complementarity & coherence	Findings 4, 5, 6, 7	Findings 2, 3, 6, 8	Finding 8	Findings 1, 2	Finding 3	14 (32%)
Finding that the Secretariat disagrees			Findings 1, 7				2 (5%)

Table 3: Detailed response to each finding

No. of Finding	Finding	Page	Comments	Secretariat position
	IV. RELEVANCE AND COHERENCE			
	A. Relevance			
1	The expressed demand for RPSP support has been strong and fairly uniform across different groups of countries: 76 per cent of eligible countries have so far accessed some RPSP resources. Of these, 80 per cent were African countries, 77 per cent were SIDS, 74 per cent were LDCs, and 72 per cent were “other countries” (those which fall into none of the above mentioned categories).	23	We agree with this finding and recognition of the country relevance of the RPSP.	Agree
2	The objectives, design and activities of the RPSP have been well aligned with the objectives of the UNFCCC, GCF, SDGs and the Paris Agreement. The distribution of approved RPSP grants has been appropriate for the priorities of the GCF and of the Paris Agreement, particularly on vulnerable countries, including SIDS, LDCs, and African states.	23	We agree with this finding and the recognition of the RPSP's relevance and alignment with the global mechanisms.	Agree
3	Compared to the programmes of other climate-related global funds, the RPSP has been supporting a broader and more ambitious range of readiness activities, including capacity strengthening of NDA/FPs, accreditation of DAEs, and developing initial pipelines of project proposals.	23	We agree with this finding. In addition to supporting accreditation of DAEs, RPSP also supports capacity building of DAEs (in closing accreditation conditions, addressing institutional challenges and pipeline development). Support to direct accredited entities is currently very limited and with the revised readiness guidelines, this is expected to increase.	Agree

No. of Finding	Finding	Page	Comments	Secretariat position
4	Structured Dialogues and other RPSP outreach activities are designed to inform countries of the distinctive features of the GCF, including the GCF project cycle for Funded Projects although these could also incorporate and align better with other climate agencies.	23	We agree with this finding, although the objectives of Structured Dialogues are also to align countries and entities in developing projects & programmes for the GCF, fostering peer-to-peer learning among countries, and more recently also to promote complementarity & coherence with other climate funds.	Agree
5	About one-quarter of eligible countries have not yet accessed RPSP grant support, for a variety of different reasons. If GCF wants to harness them, it needs more tailored approaches and a better understanding of the political, economic and social context of the individual countries if it wants to galvanize (a subset of) these countries to actively participate in the RPSP.	23	<p>We agree with this finding, and the RPSP wants to provide technical and funding support to more countries. As planned in the Readiness Work Programme, the RPSP will help to provide funding support to at least 10 new countries. Currently the RPSP pipeline consists of applications of 19 countries who haven't received the RPSP funding support yet. This means that the RPSP has reached out to 132 countries, including 113 countries with approved grants.</p> <p>It is also noteworthy that the GCF is a country-driven fund. The reason for a country not accessing any given activity area or RPSP at all may be vary based on country context. The RPSP will look into how provide targeted and tailored technical support to countries with low capacity.</p> <p>However, we're cautious about the suggestion to galvanize all of these countries to participate in RPSP, in particular those with strong capacity such as South Korea and Singapore.</p> <p>Note: the 19 countries in the RPSP pipeline: Afghanistan, Benin, Botswana, Comoros, Eritrea, Fiji, Iran, Malawi, Mexico (they've received technical assistance through PwC but not any other specific readiness grants), Nicaragua, Philippines, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Syria, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Yemen.</p>	Partially agree

No. of Finding	Finding	Page	Comments	Secretariat position
	B. Complementarity and Coherence			
1	Prior readiness support has helped. Early financial support for climate finance readiness activities from two German ministries (BMZ and BMU) has helped some countries to become front-runners in terms of engaging with the GCF. Subsequently, the GCF Secretariat and implementing partners (GIZ, KfW, UNDP, UNEP, and WRI) agreed on a joint coordination mechanism in April 2015, to maximize the coherence and collective impact of readiness support provided by all partners.	27	We agree with this finding. As pointed out by the Evaluation Report that raising awareness and building capacity on climate financing does take time. It's only about three years since the first RPSP grant was approved in May 2015, and the RPSP is a new and young programme.	Agree
2	Explicit coordination between climate agencies at the country level is not widespread. Strong in-country ownership and capacity, based on well thought-out priorities and strategies for climate action, is key to coordinating, in a complementary way, the support provided by the principal climate-related global funds (GCF, GEF, CIF, and AF) as well as other sources of climate finance.	27	We agree with this finding, and will investigate the good practices in some countries, and facilitate the learnings across the countries. Many (if not most) countries have tended to build on existing coordination structures for finance or climate when establishing their coordination mechanisms for the purposes of GCF financing.	Agree
3	Country programming supported by the RPSP has so far focused on countries engaging with the GCF, and not more broadly with other sources of climate finance.	27	RPSP supports countries on country programmes based on the scope the country in question deems necessary within their country. Irrespective of the scope chosen, the Secretariat advises countries to include elements to inform their GCF programming consistent with initial general guidelines for country programmes approved by the Board at its eighth meeting.	Partially agree

No. of Finding	Finding	Page	Comments	Secretariat position
4	Countries retain a lot of flexibility in institutionalizing their own processes for intra-governmental coordination, the NOP, and stakeholder consultations, and therefore in determining what country ownership means to them. In the future, the GCF might consider some other models that enhance ownership. One example is provided by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria.	27	We agree with this finding that, under the country-ownership principle, the countries have the flexibility to decide their institutional arrangement for climate financing and related processes. We will investigate the Global Fund model in the future.	Agree
V. COUNTRY OWNERSHIP				
1	The DCP progress reports on RPSP give only input data for all countries, that is, which projects have been approved for these areas, for how much, and what has been disbursed. These do not indicate what has been achieved, what has been put in place, what is working and the results of RPSP. It is therefore highly challenging to report on country ownership across the portfolio. Results-based reporting from the RPSP will be important for GCF as the RPSP progresses.	33	While we agree with this finding, it's also true that most grants only received their first disbursement in 2017, thus most of the expected results have not yet been achieved. In the recent Progress and Outlook Report of the RPSP, related sections, e.g. "Implementation at the Outcome Levels" and "Monitoring of the Readiness Grants" have been added to capture the results achieved so far. DCP and OPM have agreed to look into the qualitative measurements of the RPSP in the future.	Agree
2	While the RPSP offers support for the creation of several fairly standard instruments within country that promote country ownership, the choice of their development, timing, combination, concrete shape and sequencing is situated with the country concerned.	33	The RPSP does recognize the different context in each country, promotes the country ownership and country driven-ness in determining what need to be done in each country.	Agree
3	The RPSP has strengthened the NDA/FPs, but their placement in most cases in environment ministries has not always been accepted by countries' finance ministries. Many are poorly staffed.	33	It is up to the country to decide which ministry to nominate as mandated by the Board, hence this is out of the Secretariat's hands.	Agree

No. of Finding	Finding	Page	Comments	Secretariat position
4	Country programmes are still few (eight have been completed) and they remain general, without clear concept notes and with vague climate rationales, in particular for adaptation projects. The goals of country programmes under development remain unclear.	33	We partially agree with this finding. It's widely recognized by countries that country programme is a tool for driving their future pipelines with the GCF and engaging stakeholders to build support for their programming plans. So the goal of country programmes is clear. However, the modality of providing them grants with some basic guidelines from the Secretariat has yielded country programmes that are neither analytically robust nor are they being produced in a timely manner. To address these issues, the Secretariat is strengthening its support to countries through direct engagement as well as through additional expert support from a roster of firms under procurement.	Partially agree
5	The GCF focus on DAEs is seen as a main tool for promoting country ownership. However, there are no criteria for how many DAEs are needed/make sense per country. Partially as a consequence of that, international AEs have retained a significant role within countries, with differing implications for the RPSP and Funded Project proposals, given the resource requirements and amount of time required for proposal preparation.	33-34	While criteria for an optimal number of DAEs have not been formalized yet, depending in part on country climate priorities and country programmes, the Secretariat provides advice to NDAs and Focal Points on strategic nomination of direct access entities for accreditation, taking into account accreditation scope the applicants could qualify for and thus their potential contribution to the country's priorities.	Partially agree

No. of Finding	Finding	Page	Comments	Secretariat position
6	Support for DAEs has not yet translated into significant GCF pipeline development and it is unclear whether RPSP financial and capacity development support is sufficient for this objective.	34	<p>We partially agree with the finding. The awareness of DAE support as part of the readiness preparatory support programme still needs further outreach targeted towards both NDAs and DAEs. Currently there are only 7 DAEs (out of 32 DAEs) that have requested (and received approval) for capacity building support that would assist in institutional strengthening as well as pipeline development. Pipeline development is at a nascent stage that is being undertaken through RPSP. Most DAEs have expressed their interest to request for possible support for both institutional strengthening and pipeline development; where RPSP could be very helpful. Additionally, to accommodate DAEs request for pipeline development, in 2018, DCP has put in place a roster of 3 consultants who are being deployed in short term to help DAE develop concept note. For 2019, DCP is planning to develop structured trainings, create a roster of qualified experts to be deployed as long-term consultants to support DAEs starting from pipeline development to implementation of projects.</p>	Partially agree

No. of Finding	Finding	Page	Comments	Secretariat position
7	Country ownership includes high-level political commitments from governments for the successful coordination of climate action; it is not yet clear whether (and to what extent) the RPSP is helping in this respect.	34	<p>The RPSP have been engaging with government at high level, namely the perception of the Structured Dialogue. The level of country coordination depends on the governance context in each country, varying from parliament or cabinet level, to ministry or department level.</p> <p>The GCF Board has approved recommended criteria for country consideration as they conduct country coordination and multi-stakeholder engagement at the level of national priorities and strategies (or in the development of funding proposals, as appropriate). These criteria speak to the need to engage all relevant stakeholders in ongoing processes, also based on previous country experiences in the coordination of strategic matters. Many of the approved readiness requests propose setting up interministerial coordination mechanisms that are expected to ensure high-level political support as seen as appropriate for each country.</p>	Partially agree
8	Full country ownership requires appropriate participation in climate action by the private sector, by CSOs, and by vulnerable, marginalized and indigenous peoples and local communities. So far, this participation is rudimentary in most countries.	34	The RPSP has been fully advocating and encouraging the engagement and participation of these stakeholders. However, the level of their participation varies from country to country that is highly determined by the culture, governance of the country, and the capacity of these stakeholders. The RPSP will continue to develop measures to ensure and enable their participation in the future.	Agree
VI. EFFECTIVENESS OF PROGRAMME				

No. of Finding	Finding	Page	Comments	Secretariat position
	2) Findings			
1	Overall, the RPSP is more effective in GCF non-priority countries (i.e. non-SIDS, LDC and African countries) than in priority countries. This is true in terms for nearly every major causal link identified in this section to examine the effectiveness of the RPSP. As the report pointed out that it's take time for the countries build their readiness under the RPSP support. The capacity in the priority countries is generally low compared with other non-priority countries, thus it will take more time for them to establish the institutions and capacitate for readiness and for accessing climate finance.	57	This is contradict with the Finding 7 & 8 which point out that the RPSP is more effective in SIDS in helping DAEs in the accreditation process and in priority countries in advancing NAP. As the report pointed out that it's take time for the countries build their readiness under the RPSP support. The capacity in the priority countries is generally low compared with other non-priority countries, thus it will take more time for them to establish the institutions and capacitate for readiness and for accessing climate finance.	Disagree
2	The RPSP was most effective in organizing information-sharing events that have enabled engagement with the GCF. Indeed, the RPSP has supported a range of Structured Dialogues as well as workshops and events around the world. Among those who participate in such events, there is a strong perception of these having been very effective in enabling their work, including engagement with the GCF. However, a still too-high proportion of NDA/FPs appear not to have participated in any such events, which suggests that the RPSP should be leveraged more for these purposes and directed toward ensuring widespread participation. Aside from the higher political momentum generated, by far the biggest and most cited benefit of participating in such events was learning from peers and the experience of other countries.	57	We welcome the recognition of the events in sharing information and enabling countries to engage with GCF and agree with most part of this finding. But, we disagree with the statement in the middle of it, ", a still too-high proportion of NDA/FPs appear not to have participated in any such events, which suggests that the RPSP should be leveraged more for these purposes". The participation rates of NDAs/focal points in structured dialogues is very high. So, this finding seems to be misinformed by inaccurate data. Recall, the NDAs/focal points are offices. While the principal official may not always participate in the dialogues, there are other representatives from the NDAs/focal points.	Partially agree

No. of Finding	Finding	Page	Comments	Secretariat position
3	The programme is more effective in its support of consultations with stakeholders than in the preparation of country programmes, which have only recently been launched in most countries. In particular, stakeholder engagement is planned or underway in countries of all types to a high level. Nonetheless, the participation of civil society in RPSP is still rudimentary and inconsistent.	57-58	There are a few statements in this Finding, and we partially agree with it. From our side, it's natural that most of countries started with readiness activities on institutional development, followed by country programming and pipeline development. Thus, in most countries, the preparation of country programme has only been launched recently. Regarding the participation of CSOs, we have commented already.	Partially agree
4	The effectiveness of the RPSP in areas of NDA/FP strengthening, pipeline development and private sector engagement is uneven across countries.	58	There are many other factors determining the effectiveness of our support in these areas, e.g. the awareness and capacity of countries, similar support by other readiness support programmes received by the countries.	Agree
5	The contribution of the RPSP to strengthening NDA/FP is heterogeneous, and occurs the most infrequently for SIDS, LDC, and African countries. This is the case for both the establishment of NOPs and national coordination mechanisms.	58	We agree with the overall finding that the GCF must determine what does a "strong NDA" mean. DCP will develop measures to addresses specific needs of LDCs/SIDS and African countries. The high number of readiness programmes with delays in implementation makes it difficult to assess - on a global scale - the success rate on the processes that NDAs have requested readiness grants to strengthen, i.e. establishment of a national coordination mechanism, development of an ongoing national multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism, development of a no-objection procedure, identification of their national strategies for the GCF (through a country programme).	Agree

No. of Finding	Finding	Page	Comments	Secretariat position
6	It is unclear if RPSP provides sufficient support for pipeline development to DAEs, either financially or through capacity building. SIDS and LDCs are soliciting RPSP support for pipeline development the least. Also, the process of country programme development and of pipeline development is not necessarily linear, at least at the beginning of a country's engagement with the GCF.	58	Similar to comment V.6 - This finding is acknowledged. The awareness of DAE support as part of the readiness preparatory support programme still needs further outreach targeted towards both NDAs and DAEs. Currently there are only 7 DAEs (out of 32 DAEs) that have requested (and received approval) for capacity building support that would assist in institutional strengthening as well as pipeline development. Most DAEs have expressed their interest to request for possible support for both institutional strengthening and pipeline development; where RPSP could be very helpful. Additionally, to accommodate DAEs request for pipeline development, in 2018, DCP has put in place a roster of 3 consultants who are being deployed in short term to help DAE develop concept note. For 2019, DCP is planning to develop structured trainings, create a roster of qualified experts to be deployed as long-term consultants to support DAEs starting from pipeline development to implementation of projects.	Partially agree

No. of Finding	Finding	Page	Comments	Secretariat position
7	<p>Strong efforts have been made in relation to engaging the private sector with RPSP support. The involvement of the private sector in consultative processes is growing. In a few cases, RPSP funds have been distributed through accredited financial intermediaries, which has proven an important way of working with the private sector. However, the results and effectiveness of RPSP support are limited, owing in part to the broader challenge of GCF engagement with the private sector. For the time being, the RPSP has been ineffective at creating a suitable policy environment for crowding-in private sector investment, though some progress is evident in non-African middle-income countries, and in some parts of Africa. While ad hoc progress is underway with RPSP support, RPSP activities are not yet contributing much to putting in place domestic policies and institutions that will improve the incentive environment for crowding-in private-sector investments. So far, the programme is contributing little in terms of structurally transforming the global system to encourage climate-sensitive private sector investment.</p>	58	<p>While the RPSP has been providing funding support to countries for the NDAs/FPs to engage with the private sector on financing climate actions, and all NAPs approved have an explicit set of activities to engage and catalyse adaptation investment with the private sector, the creating national policy environment and the global system were not explicit objectives of the RPSP. The RPSP, together with PSF could look into the strategy and measures in these aspects.</p>	Disagree

No. of Finding	Finding	Page	Comments	Secretariat position
8	The RPSP has provided valuable support to countries in identifying and nominating potential candidates for accreditation. It has been less effective in moving them through basic or upgraded accreditation, with the exception of SIDS, where the RPSP is considered significantly more effective in this respect than other priority country types. The Secretariat needs to especially strengthen its effort in Africa on this. Country contexts and types, as well as prior readiness support, are key factors in determining chances of accreditation.	58		Partially agree
9	As the NAP window is fairly recent, there are few demonstrable outcomes (e.g. NAPs in place), but progress has been made in terms of programme outputs with increasing momentum, particularly from mid-2018. NAP funding is perceived by NDA/FPs as having advanced national adaptation planning the least among GCF priority countries, up to July 2018. It may very well be that the recent upswing in NAP approvals and endorsements to GCF priority countries will alter this perception. While most RPSP NAP-approved projects and proposals are close to the USD 3 million maximum, it is increasingly believed that smaller, phased support enables learning and ensures that each proposal builds on the previous one.	58-59	We agree with this finding and most of NAP grants is for three years - with the first NAP grant being approved in 2016. We will look into the effectiveness of funding size for individual NAP grant.	Agree
	VII. CROSS-CUTTING: GENDER AND ENVIRONMENT			

No. of Finding	Finding	Page	Comments	Secretariat position
1	<p>The integration of gender equality considerations has varied considerably among the RPSP projects across the case study countries. Of the 28 projects reviewed, five projects significantly integrated gender into their design and also allocated resources for the hiring of a gender expert and implementation of gender specific activities. However, 11 projects only partially integrated gender while the remaining 12 did not address gender issues at all.</p>	63	<p>We acknowledge the findings and would like to indicate that initially there were issues in integration of gender in the RPSPs. However going forward efforts are being made to mainstream gender issues in the RPSP by ensuring the guidance document address it effectively and also supporting specific readiness support to address challenges in mainstreaming gender issues in countries.</p>	Agree
2	<p>Both the portfolio review and survey data suggest that the RPSP is lagging behind in integrating gender considerations in its portfolio in Africa, when compared to other regions.</p>	63	<p>We take note of the lagging behind in the integration of gender issues and as indicated above with additional guidance documents and support given by the gender expert, there will be improvements in the area.</p> <p>Nevertheless, we view this finding as important to understand where we can enhance our technical support and advisory service to the Africa region.</p>	Agree

No. of Finding	Finding	Page	Comments	Secretariat position
3	The approach and capacity of the GCF on ESS, and vulnerable/marginalized/local community/indigenous peoples is improving and increasing, but is only being leveraged slightly in the context of the RPSP.	63	We take note of this findings. On the whole, the internal capacity of the Secretariat has improved and is expected to be strengthened further supported by institutional mandates, policies and the development of guidance and tools. This is also manifested in the heightened awareness in the Secretariat particularly those involved in programming and project pipeline development on the need to incorporate ESS, gender and indigenous peoples' requirements. Support to countries through the RPSP is largely driven by the needs as determined by the countries and guided by the Secretariat on the need to consider environmental and social sustainability, gender equality and indigenous peoples concerns. This finding creates a space for improving how the Secretariat provide advisory services while balancing the countries' needs.	agree

No. of Finding	Finding	Page	Comments	Secretariat position
4	<p>Nationally Designated Authorities/FPs believe they are able to meet ESS requirements, and that RPSP support is available to provide additional experience if and when needed. NDAs and FPs are well aware that their projects must be in line with the policy and act accordingly. This reflects the business model of the GCF, which is that NDA/FPs are relied upon to ensure proposed activities comply with their own safeguards as well as those of the GCF. National Designated Authorities/FPs in turn also rely on accredited entities' own environmental and social management systems to meet the ESS of the GCF. It is unclear, however, the extent to which such compliance stays true once GCF funding proposals start to become implemented.</p>	63-64	<p>We assume that the term "GCF proposals" means "GCF proposals for funding projects".</p> <p>We take note of this response from the NDAs and stakeholders. We will consider this as among the baseline by which the Secretariat will improve the support on environmental and social sustainability, integration of indigenous peoples concerns and gender mainstreaming not only in the programmes and projects but also in terms of the institutional capacities of countries, entities and stakeholders.</p> <p>We recognize that a more detailed review will need to be undertaken to inform improvements in policies, standards and the implementation of the Environmental and Social Management System of the GCF particularly on (i) how the safeguards and gender action plans are implemented; (ii) how the stakeholders have been engaged; and (iii) how the results management framework will incorporate more gender-responsive performance indicators. For example, the Annual Performance Reports submitted in 2018 for the 18 projects under implementation reveal that actions mostly related to project mobilization and initiation were undertaken with relatively few actions on safeguards such as further stakeholder consultations and refinements of the management plans. Actions on safeguards and gender mainstreaming, however, are expected to pick up as the projects advance the implementation of their activities.</p>	agree

No. of Finding	Finding	Page	Comments	Secretariat position
	VIII. EFFICIENCY			
1	The revised RPSP Guidebook was well received by the large majority of NDA/FPs. However, some criticism exists on the language still being bureaucratic, and that only English is used.	76	<p>We noticed the comment on language, and will improve it in the future. In addition, we also plan to translate the next version and other key documents into other languages.</p> <p>Jason: Good point. We need to quickly get the Guidebook translated into all UN languages. This is not a big expense, and it will have big impact on improving our user-friendliness.</p>	agree
2	The Structured Dialogues and the DAE workshops are much appreciated by NDA/FPs and DAEs, but they would like to see peer-to-peer learning privileged more, inspired by the “coffee shops” made available at the Structured Dialogue in Mali in March 2018, and/or in the hosting of sub-regional network meetings.	77	<p>Within GCF budgetary and geographic constraints, fewer meetings with more participants is calculated to be more efficient at overcoming entity obstacles to engaging with the GCF than more smaller meetings which would still require a full complement of GCF specialists to be able to advance on multiple fronts: legal, operational, technical, sectoral etc. The agenda and time allocation to subjects at Structured Dialogues and DAE workshops has been adapted in each iteration to survey results on client satisfaction. DAE satisfaction with the productivity of these events, as measured by surveys, has increased.</p>	agree

No. of Finding	Finding	Page	Comments	Secretariat position
3	The NDA/FPs perceive that the RPSP application process requires disproportionate efforts and costs in relation to the size of support provided for projects.	77	We noticed the complaints, and have put into place key measures to simplify the application documents, and shorten the approval process. We will deeply look into this and identify any immediate measures could be taken, and consider this fully into the design of the revised work programme to be submitted to B.22. In fact, a crucial factor in pace of approvals remains to be quality of the proposal upon submission and speed & completeness of the NDAs with support of their Delivery Partner in responding to Secretariat comments in the approval process. There has been great improvement i in this area in 2017 and 2018.	agree
4	The lack of SOPs (e.g. regarding turnaround times on reviews, etc.) has made it difficult for NDA/FPs and DPs to plan accordingly and make best use of time and resources for RPSP planning and implementation.	77	We welcome this comment, and will also consider this fully into the design of the revised work programme to be submitted to B.22.	agree
5	The Secretariat has significantly reduced the median processing time from submission to first disbursement from 422 days in 2015 to 254 days in 2016 and 172 days in 2017, which represents more than seven months less time in 2017, or 41 per cent of the time needed in 2015 to process RPSP grants. However significant disparities remain amongst regions and priority country blocs.	77	<p>We appreciate the analysis on the processing time. Significant improvement has been made in efficiency, together with the rigorous proposal assessment that improves the quality of proposals. We will seek continuous improvement in the future, so as to provide timely and speedy support with high quality to the countries.</p> <p>As for the disparities, again, the approval process highly depends on the quality of the grant proposal, the speed and completeness of the NDAs/FPS to address the Secretariat's comments in the process, which varies amongst regions and priority country groups.</p>	agree

No. of Finding	Finding	Page	Comments	Secretariat position
6	For DPs with FWAs, which concerns about 50 per cent of the project portfolio, the processing times were significantly shorter. The recently signed contract with UNOPS for the management of post-approval processes for the other half of projects is expected to diminish the work load for DCP and accelerate implementation.	77	For further clarification on the processing times by the Secretariat for approved proposals where the NDA/FP is the DP, in such cases the finalization of grant agreements with FP/NDA's (i.e. Government Ministries) has required longer processing times as some countries require clearance of the grant agreements from their Law ministries/Solicitor General's office and some countries may have certain regulations/laws where they cannot accept some provisions of the RPSP GCF's grant agreement template. Therefore, negotiation of such agreements have taken time. Additionally, under the grant agreement a legal opinion is required to make the grant agreement effective, which is a part of the legal due diligence process. Often this has not been not issued as per the requirements of the agreement and the OGC requires it to be resubmitted in accordance with the requirements of the signed grant agreements. In other cases, some countries have taken time to have it issued by the relevant ministry/ legal official of the country. Furthermore, NDAs of Latin American countries can only sign agreements which contain a Spanish version under their national laws, therefore translation and review of the legal text in such has resulted in additional time for execution of these agreements.	agree

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7	Regional Advisors are providing important advice to NDA/FPs on the RPSP and the GCF in general. There have been a number of obstacles to their efficiency, in particular their previously short contracts. Over the past few months, the RA team has been expanded and their contract situation has become more regular. Their role has to be clarified with regard to the Country Dialogue Specialists and the newly hired Regional Desk Officers, Associate Professionals and others, who are covering the same regions. Within the Secretariat as the size and roles of different divisions change, it is important to clarify roles and responsibilities.	77	The role of the regional advisers (as GCF consultants) and other staff have rapidly evolved over the course of four years as the Secretariat added capacity. This has naturally resulted in shifting roles and responsibilities and a degree of disruption with such rapid changes. The Secretariat continues to consolidate its capacities and finetune roles and responsibilities. The Secretariat also remains very judicious in authorizing travel but have generally been responsive to requests from NDAs/FPs by deploying regional advisers in most cases.	agree
8	The accreditation process was frequently described as lengthy and complicated, in spite of the generally well-appreciated support by PwC. A number of accredited DAEs managed the accreditation process without RPSP assistance, and a number of DPs that have no intention or possibility of obtaining accreditation passed the FMCA, though some with difficulties.	77	This finding is acknowledged. Institutional Gap Assessment Support (currently provided by PwC) has helped 2 DAEs to get accredited. Currently a total of 30 readiness support for Institutional Gap Assessment has been approved; among which 15 DAEs have submitted accreditation application under this support, 8 DAEs are in Stage 1 and 5 DAEs are in Stage 2 as of 31 August 2018. The difficulties of DPs obtaining accreditation is not clear. As of now, 9 direct access AEs are also DPs (OSS, SPREP, CABEL, CAF, CCCCC, EIF, UCAR, SANBI and XacBank) In addition, three other DPs are in the accreditation pipeline (OECS, EPIU and SPC).	Partially agree

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9	The learning curve for the RPSP has been steep and the adjustments continuous. Two thirds of NDA/FPs responding to the online survey either strongly agreed or agreed that the screening and approval mechanisms of the RPSP have improved over time. At the same time, many NDA/FPs and even the DPs experienced difficulties in absorbing all of these changes. In other words, while learning and adjustments have been coming fast, clarity is required in certain areas of operation to manage, integrate and operationalize this learning effectively.	77	We welcome this finding and the recommendations on ensuring the clarify of related operational areas, and will take actions on this in the future.	agree
	IX. INNOVATIVENESS AND SCALING-UP POTENTIAL			
	Findings			
1	While the RPSP was not designed for enabling a paradigm shift and scaling, it comprises elements with the potential to contribute to a paradigm shift beyond individual projects.	84	We welcome this finding, and will incorporate specific measures on enabling paradigm shift and scaling in the revised RPSP Work Programme for B.22.	agree
2	The RPSP has been evolving from a narrow original remit to a broader and potentially more effective instrument to support a country-driven pipeline of transformational projects through increasing emphasis on diagnostic work and comprehensive strategies, learning, more targeted capacity building and more structured engagement with the private sector.	84	We welcome the recognition of the growth and development of the RPSP, and will ensure related measures being incorporated in the revised RPSP Work Programme for B.22.	agree

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3	For the RPSP to serve as a supporting tool for transformational change, including building scale, diagnostic work needs to be more targeted to identify gaps, barriers, and opportunities; capacity building needs to be more transformational; learning and planning needs to be supported with suitable tools, and the private sector mobilized more effectively.	84	We welcome the suggestions in this finding, and will explore the measures to be put into place, for which we believe some foundational work, e.g. defining "transformational change" in GCF community, developing GCF Private Sector Engagement Strategy, Country Engagement Strategy, Entity Engagement Strategy, have to be done. All of these will guide the RPSP to develop tools and provide support to countries.	Partially agree
4	As understanding of what transformational capacity building and scaling tools entail, in particular for climate resilient development, is still at the initial stages, further analytical work and targeted learning is required.	84	<p>We are not sure about the term "transformational capacity building", and assume it means "capacity building for transformational changes for climate mitigation and adaptation".</p> <p>In terms of targeted learning, the Secretariat and the RPSP shall facilitate the countries and the climate communities to learn from other transformations, so as to promote transformation in GCF community.</p>	Agree
