



GREEN
CLIMATE
FUND

Independent
Evaluation
Unit



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COVID-19 is shaping our lives in ways not known before.

My colleagues and I are now distributed over more than 10 countries and three continents. This is challenging for any office.

However, crises such as these also give us an opportunity to think about the role evaluation can play during a pandemic and its aftermath. My own opinion is that evaluations become even more important during these times. Here are a few reasons:

First, since budgets can easily go from spending on climate change to spending on other types of funding, it becomes even more important to understand what is working in climate change. Evaluations can help us do that.

Second, evaluations can tell us what works and what doesn't and therefore helps us

understand WHERE money should go.

Third, evaluations start from an understanding of 'values' – of what matters to us – such as equity, sustainability and prosperity. They also help to understand then what actions can help to best serve these values and how. Indeed, my own work previously, at the intersection of humanitarian contexts and evaluation thinking revealed that operational teams become far more interested in understanding HOW programmes can be more effectively delivered.

Evaluations and specifically the branch of implementation research within it, can help to do this too.

At the office, it gives me so much pleasure to see how well everyone in the team is adapting to the new work reality. I am buoyed by everyone's willingness to use the various online tools available through the GCF to

keep communication channels open and workstreams flowing. Not only are we talking about work related conversations, but we are also supplanting 'corridor' conversations with pictures, side messages and impromptu nudges on MS Teams.

Before closing, I want to thank the Global Landscape Forum for including me as one of 16 women leaders globally championing the cause of restoring the earth. This is such a privilege but also a responsibility. COVID-19 is teaching us that both leadership and science are required to adapt to uncertainties.

This accolade has made me more committed to both of those.

*Dr. Jyotsna Puri (Jo)
Head of the Independent
Evaluation Unit, Green Climate
Fund*

B.25 a success for the IEU

The recent GCF Board Meeting in Geneva provided the IEU with a good opportunity to engage with Board members, representatives from civil society organizations and other official GCF observers.

Discussions focused mainly on the IEU's assessments of the GCF's country ownership approach and its environmental and social safeguards, as well as the dissemination of early findings of the IEU's review of the Simplified Approval Process. Both evaluations, although due to be tabled at B.25, have been postponed and will be presented at B.26. A key activity for the IEU at B.25 was the [delivery of its Activity Report](#), which highlighted the IEU's



The IEU'S Joseph Mutunga and a representative from Paraguay's national designated authority discuss the use of environmental and social safeguards in the GCF-funded 'Poverty, Reforestation, Energy and Climate Change Project.' The project aims to replace the use of kiln-fired charcoal burning and other deforestation-related practices.



Members of the IEU Team celebrate a successful B.25.

achievements since the preceding Board Meeting in November 2019.

Another key IEU activity in Geneva was the IEU side-event on the "GCF's Environmental and Social Safeguards: What You Need to Know". This event, presented by the IEU's Jo Puri, explored the limits and gaps of the interim standards and how new standards ought to address social and environmental performance and foster co-benefits.

UPDATE – IEU EVALUATIONS 2019-20

Evaluation of the GCF's environmental and social safeguards and the environmental and social management system –2019-20

This key evaluation from 2019-20 was submitted to the Secretariat for tabling at B.25. GCF's Co-chairs deferred discussion of the report until a later meeting. The evaluation assesses how well the GCF:

- Manages the potentially **adverse environmental and social impacts** of the projects and programmes it funds.

- Promotes **environmental, social, economic and development co-benefits**, and takes a gender-sensitive approach.

- Monitors and **reports on environmental and social impacts and co-benefits**.

The full report, executive summary and a 4-page GEvalBrief are [available on the IEU website](#).

Independent assessment of the GCF's country ownership approach – 2019

Completed in 2019, the IEU's assessment of the GCF's Country Ownership Approach (COA) was first slated for submission at B.24. In light of Covid-19, the Board's Co-chairs postponed it until B.26. Recent COA materials uploaded to the website include the full report, an executive summary, a 4-page GEvalBrief and 2-page GEvalNote. [All of these materials are available on the IEU website](#).

Rapid assessment of the GCF's simplified approval process pilot scheme –2020

This year the IEU is conducting a rapid assessment of the GCF Simplified Access Approach (SAP) – a GCF modality for providing easier access to GCF funding. The IEU's rapid assessment will ask if the SAP is: Truly simplified? Suited to the needs of countries and the size of the change it seeks? And if the SAP modality is able to ensure transparency, predictability and speed in SAPs? The assessment will also examine if the findings from a recent Secretariat review of the SAP are unbiased, evidence-based and sufficient. [A 2-page brief of the rapid SAP assessment and the formal approach paper are available on the IEU website](#). The assessment's findings will be presented at B.26.

Learning-Oriented Real-Time Impact Assessment programme –2018-21

Now in its third year, the Learning-Oriented Real-Time Assessment programme (LORTA) is currently helping 13 GCF projects set up independent baselines and real-time measurement systems. In 2020, the IEU will consult the Secretariat regarding the next group of projects to consider, produce four baseline reports in 2020 and host its annual LORTA design workshop in August. [A report on LORTA's achievements was submitted at B.25 as part of the IEU Activity Report](#).

Synthesis of the GCF accreditation process – 2020

Accrediting entities to manage GCF funded projects is central to GCF operations. But several stakeholders regard it as a bottleneck, and many have expressed concerns that need verification. This IEU study will synthesize key findings from IEU evaluations, Secretariat reviews and other documents, regarding the GCF accreditation processes. [The synthesis' approach paper and a two-page brief are available on the IEU website](#). The final report of the desk-based study will be presented at B.26.

Evaluation of GCF investments in Small Island Developing States – 2020

An important evaluation in 2020 is the IEU's assessment of the GCF's investments in Small Island Developing States (SIDS). SIDS contribute far less to climate change than they suffer from it and often they need unique

climate interventions. IEU will examine how well GCF investments cater to both the special context of SIDS and their high potential for transformation. Countries selected for the evaluation include Barbados, Belize, Saint Lucia, Comoros, Kiribati, and the Marshal Islands. The IEU will deliver its evaluation at B.27.



Kiribati in the Pacific is one of many small island states threatened by rising sea levels due to global warming.

Evaluation of GCF adaptation-related investments – 2020-21

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. This IEU evaluation will examine how well the GCF has met 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 evaluation started in March and ends in December. It will be presented at the first Board Meeting in 2021.

The IEU building capacity for itself and others

The IEU's key capacity building exercise for the first quarter of 2019 was a Qualitative and Mixed methods Synthesis Workshop, delivered by experts from the Collaboration for Environmental Evidence. Capacity building has been further enhanced through a memorandum of understanding with Seoul National University on partnering in training events and capacity building efforts.

The IEU's capacity has also been strengthened with the arrival of Data and Geographical Information Specialist, Galyna Uvarova, and Communications and Editing Associate, Yeonji Kim. To learn more about Galyna and Yeonji, [visit the IEU's team page](#).

IEU team members and consultants from C4ED travelled in December 2019 to Honduras to deliver a capacity building workshop on impact evaluation with Government officials and staff from the United Nations Development Programme working on a GCF project that is enhancing adaptive capacities of coastal communities to cope with climate change induced salinity.



Dr. Solomon Asfaw leads a capacity building workshop on impact evaluation in Honduras.

IEU engaging and collaborating

The IEU continues to remain active in engaging and collaborating with partners and climate finance stakeholders. Recent examples include:

- Representing the IEU at the Thematic Consultation on Transparent Implementation, Monitoring, Review and Reporting in Rome (Dr Archi Rastogi).
- Delivering a keynote at the EvalMENA2020 Conference in Jordan (Dr. Jo Puri).
- Presenting IEU's work to the Independent Evaluation Department of the Asian Development Bank (Drs. Puri, Asfaw and Prowse).
- [Delivering a keynote](#) and a technical session at EvalFest 2020, organized by the Evaluation Community of India (Dr. Jo Puri).
- Participating in the Australasian AID Conference, Canberra. [Listen to the podcast](#).
- [Hosting monthly IEU Lunch Talks](#), featuring Dr. Hyun Shin of Hanyang University discussing, in February, his research on

reducing air pollution and coal consumption in Mongolia. In January, Dr. Markus Olapade, Managing Director of the Center for Evaluation and Development (C4ED), presented C4ED's approach to tailoring impact evaluation strategies to assess the effectiveness of real-world projects.

Communications and uptake

As part of IEU's mandate to remain at the cutting edge and forefront of theory and practice, the unit has worked on developing, accumulating and consolidating evidence from around the world about what we might learn from other's mistakes so we can inform the GCF of what does and does not work. This helps the GCF learn in a strategic and nimble way.

Accordingly, the IEU strives to deliver the knowledge gained from its evaluations in the medium that best suits the decision makers targeted. Since January, the unit has produced and disseminated two final evaluation reports (COA, ESS) and accompanying GEvalNotes and GEvalBriefs; four two-page [summaries of the Forward-Looking Performance Review](#); a [learning paper on forestry-related evidence](#); [blogs](#); and several [videos](#).

The IEU recently began using QR codes that allow people to link quickly to articles on the IEU website via their cell phone. Why not try them out now and see where they take you in the IEU's publications ecosystem? Open the QR code scanner on your phone and start scanning.



The IEU's Dr. Jo Puri recognized for efforts to restore the Earth

All members of the IEU team were delighted when the internationally recognized Global Landscape Forum announced that Head of the IEU, [Dr. Jo Puri, was listed as one of its '16 women restoring the earth'](#). The list recognizes women who are making huge strides in their respective fields to protect the planet. Jo, this is a real honour. Each and every one at IEU and the GCF feel enormous pride in your achievement. But don't slow down! There is still a lot of restoring to be done!