ANNUAL REPORT 2020



TRUSTED EVIDENCE. INFORMED POLICIES. HIGH IMPACT.

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GREEN CLIMATE FUND

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

INDEPENDENT EVALUATION UNIT

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Message from the Head of the INDEPENDENT EVALUATION UNIT A.L.



Andreas Reumann

It is pleasing to say that 2020 has been the IEU's most productive year. And we achieved it despite several daunting challenges.

The IEU has seen the departure of several staff members, taking valuable expertise with them. At the same time, it has seen the arrival of both young and more experienced staff, who bring their diverse skillsets and knowledge to contribute to fulfilling the IEU's mandate.

Most significantly, Dr. Jyotsna Puri (Jo), the inaugural Head of the IEU since 2017, bid the IEU farewell to advance her already esteemed career in international development. Jo has infused her knowledge, expertise and professional passion in virtually everything associated with the IEU. She has set a wonderful benchmark that will spur the IEU team on to even greater achievements.

Certainly, the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the usual pattern of IEU's daily workflow. But it did not prevent the team from fulfilling its work plan and achieving success.

Using various online conferencing and messaging tools, we found ways to keep communicating at safe distances, whether across 50 metres of the GCF's office or five thousand kilometres of the Pacific Ocean. Keeping discussion channels open was essential for IEU's internal and international communications with its various stakeholders and partners. Against this backdrop, the IEU produced and submitted each of the evaluations in accordance with the 2020 Board approved work plan. Prior to the twenty-sixth meeting of the Board (B.26), the IEU submitted three evaluations to the Board. Firstly, its 2019 evaluation of the GCF's Environmental and

Social Safeguards and Environmental and Social Management System. Secondly, its Synthesis of the GCF's Accreditation Function. And, thirdly, its Rapid assessment of the GCF's Simplified Approval Process Pilot Scheme.

Another major evaluation in 2020 was the IEU's evaluation of the relevance and effectiveness of the Green Climate Fund's investments in the small island developing states, submitted at B.27. The IEU also finalized its evaluation of the Adaptation Portfolio and Approach of the Green Climate Fund, in time for submission at B.28. We will present these evaluations for Board discussion based on the advice from the Co-Chairs of the Board.

The IEU also completed the third year of its Learning-Oriented Real-Time Impact Assessment programme (LORTA). In 2020, the LORTA team's output included an impressive online, modular workshop to build the capacity of GCF accredited entities and project implementing agencies in assessing the impact of their GCF-approved projects. Further details of all these activities are available in the following pages. Apart from fulfilling the IEU's primary role of evaluating the GCF's results and effectiveness of its activities, the IEU has successfully met all of its goals in the Board approved 2020 work plan. These goals include strengthening the IEU, building partnerships and communicating the IEU's findings. The IEU's success was only possible through the generous support of the GCF Board and Secretariat and the many organizations it regularly engages with. The IEU team looks forward to even closer collaboration with its many partners in 2021. Thank you.

Message from the Co-chairs OF THE BOARD OF THE GREEN CLIMATE FUND

Confronted by the human, work and logistical channelling climate finance to developing countries challenges presented by COVID-19, two of the three and supporting their country-driven climate projects, GCF Board meetings in 2020 were held virtually, for through its evaluations and capacity-building activities. the first time. Against this backdrop, it is pleasing to Achieving a paradigm shift in the world's climate note that the GCF Board approved USD 2 billion in new change response requires time to learn what works climate finance during 2020, making it a record year best, for whom and why. It requires time to identify for GCF programming. As Co-Chairs of the Board, it the risks and how to handle them. This is where the was also gratifying that the Board endorsed during its IEU comes in. By evaluating GCF operations, actions twenty-seventh meeting the Updated Strategic Plan and policies, the IEU informs the GCF of the internal of the GCF. Both of these are significant achievements. adjustments necessary to transform the existing, They will help the GCF promote a low-emission and outdated paradigms used to combat the climate climate-resilient future in a more effective, systematic crisis. The GCF is a learning institution. And the IEU's way. Equally, these achievements will contribute to evaluations contribute significantly to that learning. the GCF's aim of driving a paradigm shift in the global Already it has completed four significant evaluations response to climate change. in 2020. Its Board approved 2021 work plan will see it They are also achievements that are highly pertinent complete three new evaluations in the next 12 months. to the IEU. The importance of the IEU's evaluations will grow as The GCF's Updated Strategic Plan reflects many of the the GCF grows. It plays a critical role in ensuring the IEU's recommendations contained in its first Forward-GCF's climate actions better reflect the country needs, Looking Performance Review of the GCF, for which support women, children and people with disabilities, the IEU should feel proud. And if the GCF is to build and deliver impact at the local, regional, country and on and improve its USD 2 billion commitment in 2020, transnational levels. We congratulate the IEU on its the evidence-based advice in the IEU's evaluations can notable achievements, despite the many internal potentially help the Fund deliver increasingly larger and external challenges in 2020, and hope the high volumes of efficient and effective climate investments. standards it has set for itself and the GCF will continue As Co-Chairs, we appreciate how the IEU has helped in 2021.

the GCF become better, faster and smarter in



Sue Szabo



Nauman Bashir Bhatti

GOALS AND ACHIEVEMENTS



DELIVER HIGH-QUALITY EVALUATIONS

INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF THE GREEN CLIMATE Fund's environmental and social safeguards

In carrying out its mandate of promoting a paradigm shift towards low-emission and sustainable, climateresilient development, the GCF is required to effectively and equitably manage environmental and social risks and improve the outcomes of all its funded activities. To this end, the GCF has adopted an Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS), comprising the Environmental and Social Policy and a set of internationally recognized Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) standards.

Evaluation guestions

As part of the Board approved 2019 work plan of the IEU, the IEU completed an independent assessment of the GCF's ESS and ESMS by the end of 2019 and submitted it to the Board ahead of its twenty-fifth meeting (B.25) in 2020. The evaluation's activities continued into 2020 as well as a Board requested rapid assessment of the GCF's Project Preparation Facility (PPF). The evaluation sought answers to the following:

- Are the GCF's ESS standards and policies relevant? Do they reflect international best practices?
- Do the GCF's processes assess AEs' capacity to ensure the effective implementation of the ESS?
- To what extent has the GCF's project design and approval processes effectively incorporated ESS?
- Is the monitoring and reporting on ESS of GCF funded projects effective?
- How compliant are the safeguard provisions in the GCF's pilot programme for REDD+ with the Warsaw Framework for REDD+?

Findings

The evaluation concluded that, while the GCF's current interim ESS standards and practices were appropriate for the early stage of the GCF's evolution, they are not fit for purpose and do not align with the GCF's climate mandate. The IEU submitted the evaluation report to the Board in time for B.25. Key findings included:

- A range of gaps exists in the GCF's interim ESS standards, including a limited focus on human rights, gender and equity.
- The ESMS does not focus on how to achieve positive social and environmental outcomes in the design, approval and monitoring stages of funded activities.
- The current accreditation approach does not verify the capacity of AEs to implement or monitor ESS policies for compliance and impact.
- The Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme helps entities build their ESS capacity but fails to



The ESS evaluation team and FPo16 project management unit talk with residents during a field visit, Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka ©Roshan Wimalasiri

monitor and report their progress adequately.

- The PPF takes too long to process and approve applications (a median of 353 days).
- While accredited entities identify co-benefits, the process is not systematic. There are inconsistencies in the understanding of sustainable development potential as investment criteria.
- The GCF has not operationalized the tools available in its monitoring and accountability framework to oversee accredited entities.
- Limited awareness of available grievance redress mechanisms exists at all levels accredited entities, projects and programmes.
- The GCF requires safequard requirements beyond those set out by the Warsaw Framework for REDD+.

Recommendations

- Develop and adopt a new set of policies and standards that reflect positive environmental, social and climate value in its actions and investments.
- Design the GCF's processes and operations regarding accreditation, readiness and project preparation, to accommodate environmental and social performance.
- Operationalize the monitoring and accountability framework and assign roles in the Secretariat to design, monitor, report and realize ESS.
- Strengthen and focus the PPF in supporting the preparation of promising and innovative projects.



INDEPENDENT SYNTHESIS OF THE GREEN CLIMATE FUND'S ACCREDITATION FUNCTION

Accreditation is central to the business model of the GCF. The GCF's Governing Instrument states Boardaccredited national, regional and international entities can access GCF resources. The Governing Instrument also states that recipient countries will determine the mode of access and may use international access entities and direct access entities simultaneously.

Evaluation guestions

As part of its Board approved 2020 work plan, the IEU conducted an independent synthesis of the GCF's accreditation function. The synthesis sought answers to the following:

- Is there a policy or strategy for accreditation? How is accreditation governed and operationalized?
- How efficient is the process for accreditation? What are some of the challenges in the process?
- Is the portfolio of AEs aligned with GCF priorities?
- Is the proposed strategic view of accreditation during GCF's first replenishment period relevant and sufficient?

Findings

The synthesis identified challenges in the accreditation function's governance and contained over 20 findings. The IEU shared it with the Board at B.26. Key findings included:

- The Accreditation Committee has been unable to deliver on several parts of its terms of reference. It has limited interaction with the Accreditation Panel.
- The GCF does not have an accreditation strategy, leading to a mission overload for accreditation.
- Securing accreditation is lengthy. For 95 entities, receiving Board approval for accreditation took a median of 506 days. Causes of delays included: the design of the process, implementation, legal negotiations and AEs' capacity.
- International AEs account for 86 per cent of the GCF's committed USD portfolio. Fifty-two per cent of direct access entities (DAEs) do not have a funding proposal in the pipeline.
- Although expected by the Board, AEs lack incentivization to align their portfolios with the GCF's mandate or build capacities of DAEs.
- AEs apply inconsistent methodologies when reporting the GCF's results.

Median duration for Board approval for accreditation from B.09 to B.25





Recommendations

For the GCF Board:

- Strengthen the governance structure for accreditation by putting the terms of reference of the Accreditation Committee into practice.
- Strengthen the Accreditation Panel and provide policy and strategic guidance to the Panel, as stated in the reference terms.
- Develop a strategy on accreditation that resolves its mission overload and clarifies how the accreditation function fits within the overall GCF vision.
- Re-examine the role of accreditation within the GCF. For the GCF Secretariat:
- Make the accreditation process more efficient and establish standards for the turnaround and processing times and communicate them to the GCF partners.
- Examine institutional performance in accreditation and re-accreditation.
- Ensure the accreditation process assesses and incentivizes capacity-building and alignment of an AE's portfolio with the GCF mandate.



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GOALS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF THE GREEN CLIMATE FUND'S SIMPLIFIED APPROVAL PROCESS PILOT SCHEME

The GCF's simplified approval process (SAP) pilot scheme aims to reduce the time and effort needed to prepare, review and approve funding proposals for smaller-scale activities and sizes. It achieves this by ensuring review and approval processes are streamlined and using simplified templates for concept notes and full funding proposals that require fewer pages and are easier to complete.

Evaluation questions

At its twenty-fourth meeting, the GCF Board requested the IEU to conduct an independent assessment of the SAP pilot scheme. The assessment sought answers to a range of questions, including the following:

- What has been the quality of the implementation of the SAP pilot?
- What is the value added of SAP?
- Is there an overall strategy for SAP?
- Are there comparable fast track mechanisms?

Findings

The assessment found that SAP approvals are, on average, only 34 days quicker than the GCF's regular project approval processes (365 versus 399 days). It also found that half of the SAP portfolio includes projects involving the least developed countries but only two involving the small island developing states. The IEU submitted the final report and its numerous findings to the Board at B.26. Key findings included:

- The SAP has not led to simplified requirements or accelerated the project cycle process.
- The SAP's median time to process a project is only eight per cent shorter than for comparable projects through the regular project approval process.
- Institutionally, Secretariat staff lack incentives to process SAP proposals.
- None of the SAP projects support research on innovative ideas or proofs of concept.
- The SAP modality has not been utilized much by the small island developing states.
- The presence of private sector entities in the SAP portfolio is minimal.
- The SAP lacks a strategy that defines how it contributes to the GCF's overall mandate.





This figure from the SAP evaluation depicts where the objectives of SAP approved projects sit along a spectrum from research and innovation through to readiness for scaling up or replication.

Recommendations

For the GCF Board:

- Simplify the SAP review criteria and develop tailored investment criteria.
- Consider delegating authority to the Executive Director for speedier approval of projects that meet the SAP eligibility criteria.

For the GCF Secretariat:

- Further simplify and accelerate the SAP review and post-approval processes. Clearly explain key GCF concepts such as 'climate rationale' and 'ready for scale-up'.
- Use a consistent set of guidelines for the Secretariat and iTAP reviews.
- Implement elements of Board decisions not yet enacted: simplified financial terms, approvals in the absence of Board meetings, iTAP reviews on a rolling basis and robust monitoring systems in SAP proposals.
- Include a capacity development programme to support DAEs in understanding simplified and accelerated procedures.
- Develop a SAP strategy, which clearly defines its value added and its fit into the overall GCF mandate, including near-term objectives (see the graph above).

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INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF THE RELEVANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE GREEN CLIMATE FUND'S INVESTMENTS IN SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

I grew up in Tonga, in the vastness of the Pacific. Islanders were among the first peoples to raise the alarm on the impending climate threat.

The time for action was yesterday!

Climate change is not fiction but fact. And it knows no boundaries. SIDS have hardly

contributed to global emissions, and yet they bear among its heaviest consequences.

From the foreword to the Independent Evaluation of the Relevance and Effectiveness of Green Climate Fund's Investments in the Small Island Developing States. IEU Evaluation Report No. 8, October 2020

Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu High Representative for the United Nations Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States



The small island developing states are an exceptionally diverse group of countries. But they have one thing in common: they are highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. SIDS face numerous climate threats, including rising temperatures, changing rainfall patterns, flooding, drought, coral reef decline and rising sea levels. SIDS suffer far more from climate change than they contribute to it through greenhouse gas emissions.

Evaluation guestions

As part of its Board approved 2020 work plan, the IEU conducted an independent evaluation of the relevance and effectiveness of the GCF's investment in the SIDS. The evaluation asks if the GCF is fit for purpose for the SIDS and whether it is achieving the intended results. It sought answers to the following:

- Is the GCF's portfolio relevant to the specific needs and urgency of climate action in the SIDS?
- Is the GCF's business model fit for the specific needs and urgency of climate action in the SIDS?
- Is the GCF's support effectively delivering sustainable results and learning from those results?
- Is the GCF's funding complementary and coherent with other climate finance delivery channels?

Implementation challenges reported by SIDS and non-SIDS



This figure from the SIDS evaluation shows the most commonly reported challenges SIDS face related to transactional and operating costs for disbursement projects.

Source: Annual Performance Reports, as of 31 July 2020, analysed by the IEU DataLab

Findings

Several factors are critical to the SIDS' climate finance: urgency, the importance of adaptation, capacity constraints, high transaction/operational costs, and the need for flexibility. Key findings included: The GCF's modalities and processes do not effectively consider the unique, urgent climate challenges that the

- SIDS face (see the graph above).
- The GCF's policy landscape can accommodate the SIDS, but some policies crucial to the SIDS require Board decisions.
- The current GCF model for accreditation impedes the SIDS' DAEs with low capacity, experience or confidence in seeking direct access to the GCF.
- Insufficient capacity to develop concept notes and funding proposals can limit access.
- The GCF's SIDS portfolio focuses on grant-funded adaptation; it is premature to assess if it is achieving intended results.
- The GCF's approach to the SIDS' private sector is insufficiently coordinated and tailored.

Recommendations

- Direct the readiness and preparatory support programme to build the capacity of SIDS' DAEs, with a renewed focus on regional DAEs.
- Build capacity in the SIDS through trained personnel working with government and DAE staff; assist entities in preparing climate action programmes.
- Approve a policy on single and multi-country programmatic approaches that recognize the SIDS' unique climate challenges and climate financing needs.
- Ensure the GCF's private sector approach is coordinated across the Secretariat and accurately reflects the SIDS' local private sector.
- Leverage private sector capital for scaling up by improving the local private sector's resilience and de-risking its climate-related investments

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INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF THE ADAPTATION PORTFOLIO AND APPROACH OF THE GREEN CLIMATE FUND

[In progress] As part of its Board approved Workplan, the IEU conducted the Independent Evaluation of the Adaptation Portfolio and Approach of the GCF. The evaluation asks what it would take for the GCF to make significant contributions in adaptation finance. By learning from the climate finance landscape and illustrating how to make frontier innovation work for all, this thematic evaluation of the GCF's portfolio demonstrates how adaptation can be conceived, funded, implemented, measured and shared.

Evaluation questions

The IEU shared the evaluation's approach paper with the GCF Secretariat for comments in June 2020. The IEU's evaluation team held webinars on the approach paper with GCF Board members and advisers, the GCF Secretariat and AEs, and members of civil society and private sector organizations in July 2020. The evaluation has explored what it would take for the GCF to contribute to a paradigm shift in adaptation. It sought to answer the following questions:

- In what (sub)spaces can the GCF be additional and/or be a leader?
- Is the GCF effective and efficient (and what are the trade-offs between the two) in meeting its objectives regarding adaptation finance and support?
- Is the GCF responding to the global and national adaptation needs?
- Is the GCF pursuing relevant and innovative strategies and policies regarding the types of adaptation approaches it takes?

The IEU team also held a webinar with the Secretariat on the emerging findings from the evaluation's factual draft in December 2020. It shared the factual draft with the Secretariat shortly after this webinar. The evaluation report will be available for submission at B.28. The IEU will conduct webinars on the emerging findings and recommendations in February/March 2021. A 2-page brief of the evaluation, a short video and the approach paper are available on the IEU microsite. The full evaluation report, country case studies and concise summaries of findings and recommendations will be available in March 2021.



The IEU publishes an introductory brief on the Adaptation evaluation.



webinar.

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The IEU publishes the Adaptation evaluation approach paper.

LEARNING-ORIENTED REAL-TIME IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME

[Ongoing] This multi-year programme helps GCF projects build the measurement and data systems that the GCF needs to better understand its climate investments and report their impacts in a quantified, verifiable manner. LORTA's most significant activity in 2020 was delivering the LORTA Virtual Design Workshop, an eight-module, online workshop for 16 GCF projects, as explained in the capacity building section in the following pages. In March, the LORTA team, in partnership with Conservation International, produced the Sustainable Landscapes in Eastern Madagascar Baseline Household Survey Report. In June, the IEU published a synthesis of LORTA's 2019 projects that discusses the programme's selection process, evaluation design, lessons learned and sample size issues.

In 2021, the IEU will submit the LORTA synthesis reports for 2019 and 2020, reports from two baseline studies and one impact assessment to the Board for its learning. Reports and other LORTA materials are available on the programme's microsite page.



GCF INDEPENDENT EVALUATION UNIT



The IEU's LORTA programme delivered an on-line workshop in project design for accredited entity representatives, project managers and monitoring and evaluation specialists from 16 GCF funded activities.

The **first** household baseline survey has been published.

for the year 2020.

The synthesis report of LORTA's 2019 projects has been released.

An article on **16** projects has been selected LORTA has been published on World Development special edition.

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The IEU published a synthesis of its 2019 LORTA projects in June.



PARTNERSHIPS, CAPACITY-BUILDING AND **ADVISORY SERVICES**

ADVISORY SERVICES AND ENGAGEMENT

Evidence reviews and learning papers

To fulfil its advisory services function, the IEU believes it is vital for the GCF to learn from global evidence on what works, what doesn't and why. It presents this evidence in two formats: evidence gap maps and systematic reviews. The IEU's evidence reviews assemble global evidence on topics relevant to the GCF, such as climate change, evaluation and complexity in assessing climate projects. They use a structured literature search guided by a protocol. The reviews appraise the guality of evidence and illustrate the evidence base in an easy-to-understand manner. In 2020, the IEU completed an evidence review on climate change adaptation and on results-based payments, initiated an evidence review on private sector investments in mitigation, and continued its evidence review on transformational change in the energy and public health sectors. The IEU published the findings from its evidence review on adaptation and a learning paper on behavioural science. The full list of evidence reviews published by the IEU can be seen in Appendix 4.

Evidence Gap of Climate Change Adaptation in Low to Middle Income Countries



In collaboration with 3ie (International Initiative for Impact Evaluation) and DEval (German Institute for Development Cooperation), the IEU produced an interactive gap map where users can select adaptation interventions and identify research studies into their outcomes.

A REVIEW OF THE ATTRIBUTES OF TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE IN THE ENERGY AND PUBLIC HEALTH SECTORS

(ongoing) This evidence review examines the attributes and determinants of transformational change in the energy and public health sectors. It will identify evidence and gaps within each sector and synthesize this information into transformational change maps.

CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION **INTERVENTIONS IN** THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

(ongoing) The study uses an evidence gap map, intervention heat map and meta-analysis to examine private sector mitigation interventions in developing countries. The study will help ensure the GCF makes informed decisions on mitigation projects.



EVIDENCE GAP AND INTERVENTION HEAT MAPS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

Prepared jointly with DEval (German Institute for Development Evaluation), this evidence gap map indicates the presence or absence of high-quality evidence about adaptation in developing countries. Overlaid with this information are the areas where the GCF and Germany invest in adaptation, and hence creating an intervention heat map.

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EVIDENCE REVIEW ON RESULTS BASED PAYMENTS

This paper examines the effectiveness of results-based payments for climate action across all sectors where they have been used, such as agriculture, education and health. It also looks at multiple levels, including beneficiaries, service providers and investors GOALS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Traditional wooden house near the lake in the Kuching to Sarawak Culture village. Borneo,

CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION

This learning paper makes a case for including behavioural science analysis and interventions in project design. It particularly points out that the current approach to behaviour change in the GCF portfolio is likely to ignore several psychological barriers. This paper is a revised and extended version of the award-winning paper presented at the Climate 2020 online Conference.



Advisory services and engagement

Events and engagements

IEU Head among the best

The contribution evaluations make to learning was recognized on Women's Day 2020 when the Global Landscape Forum (GLF) included Dr. Jyotsna Puri in its inaugural list of '16 women restoring the Earth'. The list acknowledges women's social, economic, cultural and political achievements and their unceasing efforts for gender equality. The GLF recognized Dr. Puri for her outstanding



work at the GCF, describing her as an exceptional evaluator who goes a step beyond the data to ask how bias, benefits and behaviour affect people's decisions in treating the planet.



VESTMENTS IN CLIMATE CHANGE

ITIGATION AND ADAPTATION

Top marks for behaviour paper

The IEU's Dr. Jyotsna Puri and Cornelius Krüger were winners of the 'best paper' in the climate finance category at the Climate 2020 online conference, organized by the Research and Transfer Centre at the Hamburg University of Applied Sciences, in March 2020. The paper argues that climate action is relatively absent on the ground because most climate projects do not address people's failure to change their behaviour during a project's final stage when desires and plans must turn into action. The IEU published a revised version of the paper in November (pictured).

IEU LUNCH AND VIRTUAL TALKS

Despite COVID-19 suspending the IEU's monthly in-person lunch talks, the IEU continued to deliver this important advisory and capacity building activity through online conferencing platforms. The IEU's six virtual talks held in 2020 attracted audiences of up to 120 participants and reached an even larger audience via video through IEU's social media networks afterwards. They covered diverse topics, such as wildmeat consumption, crop insurance and the global water cycle role. A list of lunch and virtual talks held in 2020 is available in <u>Appendix 6</u>.



IEU Evaluation Specialist, Dr. Archi Rastogi, delivers a presentation to the Convention on Biological Diversity FAO, Rome. © Elise Rebut

WEBINARS AND SIDE-EVENTS

The IEU conducted more than 25 webinars in 2020. It also held six side events for the three Board meetings in 2020: one (in-person) side event at B.25, two virtual side events at B.26 and three virtual side events at B.27. Audiences included representatives from the Secretariat, GCF independent units, the Board, the Accreditation Panel, civil society, the private sector, AEs, research organizations and others. The webinars and side events provided participants with an overview of all IEU evaluations and their findings and recommendations. Appendix 3 lists the IEU's webinars, including the eight webinars from the LORTA Virtual Design Workshop and side events held in 2020.

INDEPENDENT PUBLICATIONS

IEU staff, in collaboration with experts from other organizations, published other articles including for submissions to journals such as World Development and Ecological Economics. A list of independent publications is available in <u>Appendix 5</u>.

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The IEU conducts a virtual talk on "Healthy planet, healthy people – looking at the Global Water Cycle."

ENGAGEMENT WITH STAKEHOLDER AND PARTNERS

Before the arrival of COVID-19 travel restrictions, IEU representatives delivered presentations and workshops in Honduras, the Asian Development Bank in Manila and the Convention on Biological Diversity in Rome. Following the restrictions, the IEU used video conferencing to engage with stakeholders, partners and GCF beneficiaries on evaluation-related matters regarding GCF investments, processes, policies and activities. A list of engagement activities is available in <u>Appendix 3</u>.



The IEU conducts a webinar with a range of stakeholders on its evaluation of the GCF's investments in the SIDS.

PARTNERSHIPS

The IEU places considerable emphasis on partnerships and collaboration. Close engagement with key stakeholders is integral to the IEU's advisory services and partnership functions. They are critical to ensure that the IEU delivers effective evaluations, contributes to its own and the GCF's learning, and builds in-country agencies' capacity. Formal agreements reached with key partners during 2020 include Memorandums of Understanding with the King Climate Action Initiative of the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab, Seoul National University Global **Research & Development Business** Center, the University of Warwick, Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management and the Busara Center for Behavioral Economics Inc. Appendix 3 lists the IEU's formal partnerships for the period 2017 – 2020.

5 MOUs have been signed with partners.



The IEU hosts a virtual talk with its partner Busara Center for Behavioral Economics on behavioural science.



The IEU and the Seoul National University Global Research and Development Business Center sign a Memorandum of Understanding to promote cooperation in technical expertise and knowledge exchange, Songdo, Korea. ©Iben Hjorth

CAPACITY BUILDING

Online project design workshop

A significant 2020 capacity building activity was the LORTA programme's Virtual Design Workshop for accredited entity representatives, project managers and monitoring and evaluation specialists from 16 GCF funded activities. Although these workshops were typically conducted in-person outside South Korea in the past, COVID-19 saw the LORTA team transform its materials into a nine-week workshop with an online course consisting of live webinars, recorded lectures, slideshows, readings, guizzes and breakout group discussions in 2020. The team conducted webinars each Monday over eight weeks, and the workshop enabled participants to examine their GCF-approved project's theory of change and study different impact evaluation methods. The workshop's 80 participants from 20 countries rated their learning experience highly.

Workshop for Secretariat and Independent Units

Early in 2020, the IEU partnered with the Collaboration for Environmental Evidence to deliver a two-day training workshop in qualitative and mixed methods synthesis. In addition to IEU team members, participants included several staff members from the Secretariat and the GCF's other accountability units. Drawing on data and reports from the IEU and GCF, the hands-on training provided participants with an in-depth knowledge of methods used in qualitative syntheses, such as framing questions, coding data and using specialist software.

The IEU conducted a workshop in Honduras for a GCF-funded project to develop a theory of change and monitoring and evaluation plan.

Measurement and data workshop in Honduras

In February, the IEU conducted a workshop in Honduras for a GCF funded programme involving representatives from the Honduras government and the United Nations Development Programme. The capacity building exercise included helping to develop a theory of change and a monitoring and evaluation plan. The GCF programme concerned aims to secure livelihoods for women's groups and provide drinking water through rainwater harvesting systems.



COMMUNICATIONS, OUTREACH AND UPTAKE

The IEU's communications, outreach and uptake workstream produces an extensive and wide range of materials that play a crucial role in promoting learning and facilitating dialogue on the findings and recommendations of the IEU's evaluations. These materials help inform policy- and decision-makers to consider evidence-based findings and recommendations from IEU evaluations and evidence reviews. They achieve this by translating technical aspects into an easy-to-digest language and content, utilizing a wide range of communication channels for effective and timely communication and organizing various outreach activities to foster dialogue and knowledge-sharing.

A shortlist of the IEU's communications and outreach products includes final evaluation reports, evaluation executive summaries, evaluation approach papers, evaluation briefs, evidence trees, blogs, op-eds and articles in the mass media, social media platforms, side events at key forums, webinars, lunch and virtual talks, videos, website articles and press releases, among others. Some of the key items for 2020 are described here, with a full list in <u>Appendix 6</u>.



Iben Hjorth and Asha Warsame from the IEU's communications, outreach and uptake workstream record an interview with IEU colleague, Andreas Reumann, Songdo, South Korea. © Yeonji Kim

New micro website

November's roll out of a new and improved microsite signified a major achievement in 2020. The site's intuitive navigation and accurate search engine make it easier to find evaluation reports, evidence reviews, learning papers and other IEU information. Visitors can also access interactive visualizations of the data that underpin the IEU's evaluations.

Podcasts and blogs

The communications, outreach and uptake workstream broadcast seven podcast episodes in 2020 as part of a new series called "The Evaluator". The Evaluator is available from the IEU microsite, Apple, Anchor, Spotify, Google podcasts, RadioPublic and Breaker. The IEU's weblog output was also notable, with 13 new blogs appearing on the IEU microsite during the year.

Video outreach

The IEU's video production reached new heights in 2020, with its 57 videos marking a significant increase on 2018 and 2019. Views of IEU's videos on YouTube in 2020 increased by 300 per cent to more than 8000. What has made the videos in 2020 unique is their in-house production, from concept development and filming to post-production. One hundred and twenty-three videos covering evaluation findings, data activities, webinars, side events, Board presentations and learning activities are available through the IEU's microsite and its YouTube channel.

In the news

During 2020, The Korea Herald and Korea Times published articles about the IEU and columns written by IEU members, while South Korea's global news channel Arirang TV interviewed an IEU representative regarding COVID-19 and climate change. Articles by India's The Statesman and Bangladesh's Daily Star also referred to the IEU. Several IEU blogs, given their excellent quality, were also published by traditional and digital media outlets, including The Korea Herald, Korea Times, Live Mint.com and Outlook India. com.

Publications

During 2020, the IEU published 47 publications either online, in print or both. These include final reports, summary briefs, approach papers, evidence trees, among others. Evaluation reports are professionally copyedited and designed. To help ensure their key messages reach their target audiences, the IEU produces executive summaries and easy-toread two- and four-page summaries for each evaluation. Increasingly, the IEU plans to translate key publications into French, Spanish and Arabic.

GOALS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Social media metrics

The IEU's vibrant social media presence grew strongly in 2020. Its LinkedIn page disseminated 260 updates and increased its followers from 240 to 909. Views of the IEU's videos on YouTube reached over 8000, a 300 per cent increase on 2019. The IEU posted 280 tweets and saw its followers grow from 443 to 1,036. User-interaction with the IEU's tweets increased 181 per cent. Since its roll out in November, the new microsite has received 2,849 users and 13,724 page views.

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THE IEU



IEU STRUCTURE

THE IFU'S OBJECTIVES

The IEU has three core objectives, derived from the GCF's Governing Instrument:

- Inform decision-making by the Board and identify and disseminate lessons learned, contribute to guiding the Fund and its stakeholders as a learning institution, and provide strategic guidance to the Board.
- Conduct periodic independent evaluations of the Fund's performance to provide an objective assessment of the Fund's results and the effectiveness and efficiency of its activities.
- Provide evaluation reports to the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to periodically review the financial mechanism of the Convention.

Building and strengthening the IEU

The IEU ensures it is functioning effectively by sharing its vision and practices internally and externally and clearly articulating its evaluation policy and procedures. IEU staff are to reflect the best standards in evaluative training, practice, theory and ethics.

high-quality performance, portfolio, thematic, country and programmatic and project evaluations identified by the IEU as useful for the Board, GCF Secretariat and the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP). These evaluations serve as building blocks for fund level evaluations that assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the GCF and are shared

with the GCF's replenishment

process.

Evaluations

The IEU undertakes

GCF Secretariat

Capacity-building and advisory services

IEU

GCF BOARD

The IEU's evaluation-based learning and capacity building programme responds to evaluation-related capacity needs of the GCF Board, Secretariat, accredited entities (AEs), nationally designated authorities and other stakeholders in the evaluation and climate change. The IEU ensures that GCF's programmes and activities maintain sufficient quality regarding data, design and evaluation information.

Uptake, communications and partnerships

Notably, the IEU ensures that the high quality evidence and recommendations from its independent evaluations are effectively communicated, used and incorporated into the GCF's functioning and processes. Further, the IEU collaborates with GCF stakeholders and engage them in the IEU's activities to ensure that it stays at the forefront of evaluation practice and theory. It builds and strengthens partnerships to leverage the partner organization's geographic presence, thematic expertise and capacities to help with the IEU's other objectives in

the context of capacity building.

THE IFU'S FOUR PILLARS

The IEU provides objective assessments of the performance and results of the GCF, including its funded activities and their effectiveness and efficiency. The unit's mandate is to evaluate, review and assess and to support decision-making by the Board. The IEU fulfils this mandate through four pillars: (i) Building and strengthening the IEU; (ii) Evaluations; (iii) Capacitybuilding and advisory services; and (iv) Uptake, communications and partnerships.

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BUILD AND STRENGTHEN THE IEU



In 2020, the IEU recruited a Data and Geographic Information Systems Analyst, Communications Officer and Executive Assistant to the Head of IEU. At the time of reporting, the IEU had 11 staff, seven Songdobased consultants and several interns. It is currently recruiting a Junior Researcher, an Impact Evaluation Officer and a Team Assistant. In November, Dr. Jyotsna Puri stepped down as the Head of the IEU to take on a new career challenge. The Board is overseeing a global recruitment search to find a suitably qualified and experienced professional, capable of meeting or exceeding the high standards expected of this position.

STRENGTHENING OPERATIONAL CAPACITY

The IEU enhanced its evaluation capacity via an online course with the Busara Center for Behavioral Economics, Inc that studied human behaviour and climate change actions. Team members also undertook two-day training with the Collaboration for Environmental Evidence in qualitative and mixed methods synthesis. LORTA team members also participated in a Center for Evaluation and Development (C4ED) workshop that helped the IEU develop LORTA's strategic plan. A key operational strengthening initiative was implementing a weekly evaluation meeting to discuss experiences and lessons learned from the IEU's evaluations. Designating communication staff as focal points to each evaluation team as knowledge curators and brokers also boosted operational capacity and enhanced the IEU's communication, outreach and uptake efforts. With increasing institutional experience, the IEU started the development of checklists for evaluations and data. These checklists allow for predictability, transparency and traceability in regular operations, and the IEU continues to build and improve upon them.

THE IEU

The IEU hosts a lunch talk on using a randomized controlled trial approach to measure the impacts of a G-saverproject in Mongolia to retain heat and reduce air pollution. Songdo, South Korea. ©Iben Hjorth



All members of the IEU in 2020



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BUILD AND STRENGTHEN THE IEU



In July, the IEU conducted a two-day retreat to review the key elements and activities for inclusion in its 2021 work plan. Retreat sessions addressed evaluations, advisory services, evidence reviews, capacity building, data, communications, outreach and uptake, and partnerships. A session on the IEU's organizational culture examined the values and behaviours to guide the unit moving forward. Weekly team meetings regularly host learning sessions on evidence gap maps, tips for effective video communication, the global climate finance landscape and flows and randomized controlled trials.



Included in the IEU's terms of reference, is a request from the Board to develop and update the GCF evaluation policy. At the time of writing this report, the IEU and GCF Secretariat had jointly clarified their roles and responsibilities, shared the draft with the Board, and received written feedback from the Board. The draft policy covers the evaluation function of the GCF, defines the evaluation criteria and main types of evaluations, and identifies roles and responsibilities.

Members of the IEU team engage in a group discussion about the IEU's values, Songdo, South Korea. ©Iben Hjorth







The IEU conducts a workshop to discuss its 2021 workplan and activities, Songdo, South Korea. ©Iben Hjorth

BUILD AND STRENGTHEN THE IEU



In 2020, the DataLab provided updated data sets and data analyses for IEU evaluations and learning papers. In 2020, the lab expanded its external data pool to now include ND-GAIN Index (University of Notre Dame), NDC partnerships, Climate Fund Update (Heinrich Boll Stiftung), Debt ratio (IMF), Migration (United Nations Population Division), Remittance Inflow and Outflow (World Bank) and Global Landscape of Climate Finance (Climate Policy Initiative). The DataLab has expanded its geospatial contributions to the IEU's evaluations and established quality assurance procedures.

COP INCORPORATING BEHAVIOURAL ANALYSIS

The Behaviour and Design Lab (BaD Lab) applies insights from behavioural science to the IEU's evaluations and the GCF's investments. Key achievements for the BaD Lab in 2020 include its collaboration with the Busara Center for Behavioral Economics in supporting the integration of impact evaluation designs in the virtual LORTA design workshop, its assistance to the IEU's ongoing adaptation evaluation, and its publication of the IEU learning paper, "Going the Last Mile: Behavioural Science and Investments in Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation".

THE IEU

IEU team members explore the use of geospatial information systems in their evaluations, Songdo, South Korea. ©Iben Hjorth



Members of the IEU discuss topics of evaluations to be conducted in 2021 at the 2021 workplan workshop, Songdo, South Korea. ©Iben Hjorth



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APPENDICES



APPENDIX 1.IEU'S BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE IN 2020

APPENDIX 2. IEU'S FORMAL PARTNERSHIPS

The table below shows the IEU's 2020 budget and the expenditure report as of 31 December 2020 in USD.

Category	Budget	Disbursed	%	Remaining budget
Staff costs (a)	3,328,057	2,701,285	81	626,772
Full-time staff ¹	2,649,897	2,003,159	76	646,738
Consultants ²	678,160	698,126	103	-19,966
Travel (b)	375,228	59,341	16	315,887
Contractual services (c)	1,878,700	1,231,194	66	647,506
Legal and professional services	1,540,000	1,028,332	67	511,668
Operating costs	338,700	202,862	60	135,838
Total (a+b+c)³	5,581,985	3,991,820	72	1,590,165

Staff costs include staff salaries, benefits, staff training and development costs. 1

Consultants costs include consultants' fees, benefits and travel costs. 2

The expenditure report was not audited as of December 31, 2020. 3

Partner
Busara Center for Behavioral Economics Inc
Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI)
Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR)
Climate Investment Fund (CIF)
Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA)
German Institute for Development Evaluation (DEval)
Global Development Network (GDN)
Government of Antigua and Barbuda, represented by the Environment (DoE)
Incheon National University (INU)
International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
International Development Evaluation Association (IDEAS
International Union for Conservation on Nature and Natur
Office of Evaluation (OED) of the Food and Agriculture Or Nations (FAO)
Rwanda Ministry of Environment
Seoul National University Global Research and Developm
Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI)
The King Climate Action Initiative of the Abdul Latif Jame
University of Warwick
United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG)
Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural

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	Type of partnership
	MOU
	MOU (LORTA)
	MOU
	Learning partnership
	MOU (LORTA)
	MOU
	MOU
e Department of	MOU
	MOU
ent (ICIMOD)	MOU
S)	Membership
ral Resources (IUCN)	MOU (LORTA)
rganization of the United	MOU
	MOU (LORTA)
nent Business Center	MOU
	MOU
eel Poverty Action Lab	MOU
	MOU
	Observer
l Resource Management	MOU

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Appendices

APPENDIX 3. PRESENTATIONS AND SEMINARS CONDUCTED/ATTENDED BY THE IEU STAFF IN 2020

Time	Activities
December	[Webinar] Emerging findings IEU evaluation of the GCF's Adaptation Portfolio & Approach
November	[B.27] Virtual Side Event: Are the GCF investments in the SIDS relevant and effective?
November	[LORTA] Design Workshop Webinar 8: Rapid-fire presentations and closing remarks
November	[LORTA] Design Workshop Webinar 7: Timeline and Budget
November	[LORTA] Design Workshop 6: Sample size and power calculations
October	Sanctuary Global Debate 2020
October	[B.27] Virtual Side Event: How does the IEU DataLab enable and support evaluations?
October	[Webinar] IEU evaluation of the Relevance and Effectiveness of GCF Investments in the SIDS
October	[LORTA] Design Workshop Webinar 5: Non-experimental impact evaluation
October	[LORTA] Design Workshop Webinar 4: Experimental Impact Evaluation
October	[LORTA] Design Workshop Webinar 3: Evaluation Question and Indicators
October	[LORTA] Design Workshop Webinar 2: Theories of Change
September	[LORTA] Design Workshop Webinar 1: What is LORTA? Why is it important?
September	[Asian Evaluation Week 2020] Evidence Gap Maps
August	[B.26] Virtual Side Event: Bridging the gap: How can the GCF improve access?
August	[B.26] Virtual Side Event: IEU's Accreditation Synthesis: What You Need to Know

Time	
August	[Show and Tell Session] The IEU's ma
July	[Webinar] Inception Report IEU evalu
June	[Webinar] IEU assessment of the GCF
June	[Webinar] IEU synthesis of the GCF's
April	[SLEVA Webinar] Measurement & Ev
March	[Webinar] IEU evaluation of the GCF's
March	[Webinar] IEU evaluation of GCF's Co
March	[Climate 2020 online conference] Goi
February	[Biodiversity 2020 Conference] Exper
February	[LORTA] Capacity-building workshop (Bangladesh)
February	Debate: Randomized control trials - I
February	Presentation: Evaluation Community
February	Presentation on reporting and monit
February	[LORTA] Assist GCF funded UNDP pro (Honduras)
January	Presentations on impact investing, FI
January	Climate finance landscapes and linka

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Activities

ain recommendations and plans for accreditation

uation of the GCF's Adaptation Portfolio

F's Simplified Approval Process

Accreditation Process

valuation: Complexity, Technology, Behavioral Science

's ESS and ESMS

ountry Ownership Approach

bing the Last Mile: Behavioural Science

rience with Evidence in the IEU

op on impact evaluation of climate change projects

Dr. Puri, Australasian Aid Keynote (Canberra)

cy of India presentation: Evalfest (New Delhi)

toring: Convention on Biological Diversity – (Rome)

roject set up measurement and data systems

FPR, LORTA, evidence reviews - ADB (Manila)

ages to the GCF

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 4. IEU'S EVIDENCE REVIEWS IN 2020

APPENDIX 5. IEU'S OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Evidence review	Product
Evidence gap map on the effectiveness of forest conservation interventions	Evidence gap map
Evidence gap and intervention heat map on climate change adaptation	Evidence gap map and intervention heat maps
	Interactive virtual evidence gap map
	Meta-analysis
Evidence gap and intervention heat map on private sector in mitigation	Approach paper
	IEU Brief
	Approach paper
Evidence gap and intervention heat map on results- based payments	IEU Brief
	Evidence gap map and intervention heat map
	Approach paper
Evidence gap map on transformational change in the energy and public health sectors	IEU Brief
	Protocol

Christen, Daniela Rey and others. Results Based Payments for REDD+ under the Green Climate Fund: Lessons Learned on Social, Environmental and Governance Safeguards. Forests, Volume 11, 2020.

Henson, Spencer and others. The Development Impacts of COVID-19 at Home and Abroad: Politics and Implications of Government Action. The European Journal of Development Research, Volume 32, 2020.

Asfaw, Solomon, and others. Distributional impacts of soil erosion on agricultural productivity and welfare in Malawi. Ecological Economics, Volume 177, 2020.

Puri, Jyotsna, and others (2020). Good will hunting: Challenges of theory-based impact evaluations for climate investments in a multilateral setting. World Development, Volume 127, 2020.



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APPENDIX 6. IEU'S COMMUNICATIONS MATERIALS

Blogs

Greening North Korea - An opportunity for the GCF?

ESG commitments are useful. But have they translated into action?

Designing monitoring and evaluations for Impact Evaluation: Tips for program designers and evaluators!

If I could time travel: does access to credit help the decision to adapt to climate change in developing countries?

Vertical and horizontal work cultures: A first-hand account

What can the GCF learn about innovation from institutional economics: Lessons for multilaterals

Interviewing for Evaluations: 3 Tips for success

Let's talk about evidence - behavioural insights to help us communicate

Life in the time of COVID - A snapshot from the IEU

We must know what works in a crisis and what doesn't

Country ownership in times of international assistance - what are we learning?

A moon-shot approach? What can the GCF learn from the example of frontier investments?

Interviews

[The Korea Herald Interview] Private investor engagement key to climate-resilient world

Evaluation and the new reality of COVID-19

[Landscape news] A decade old, the world's largest climate fund receives its first pulse-check

News updates

The IEU's Dr. Jyotsna Puri (Jo) and Cornelius Krüger win 'best paper' at Climate2020 online conference

The IEU's Dr. Jyotsna Puri (Jo) honored in list of '16 women restoring the earth'

IEU in the news

IEU's Yeonji Kim highlighted in blog by Korea's Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MOFA) [Ariang TV] Covid-19 and climate change [The Korea Times] Behavioral insights to help us communicate

[The Korea Herald] Evaluations and research during crisis?

[*Impactalpha*] The Week in impact investing: Resilience

[Mongabay] Leaders on the cutting edge of conservation recognized on International Women's Day

[The Statesman] How's Green Climate Fund doing?

[GCF Monitor] Mobilising public and private co-finance

Lunch and virtual talks

Overview of evidence gap, intervention heat maps of climate change adaptation Using behavioural science to mitigate climate shocks a case study Wildmeat, health, climate and environment Healthy planet, healthy people looking at the Global Water Cycle Climate change and biodiversity-related action in North Korea COVID-19 in focus

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Measuring impacts from diverse angles: The case of good sharing in Mongolia

Harnessing impact evaluation methods to combat poverty

Podcasts

'The Evaluator' Episode 7: Towards reforestation in the DPRK

'The Evaluator' Episode 6: Measuring change with randomized controlled trials: The story of the G-Saver

'The Evaluator' Episode 5: Dr. Jyotsna Puri (Jo) on the importance of trusted evidence

'The Evaluator' Episode 4: Dr. Jyotsna Puri (Jo) on the past, present and future of the IEU

'The Evaluator' Episode 3: COVID-19, Governance and the New Normal

'The Evaluator' Episode 2: Behavioural Science and Climate Change

'The Evaluator' Episode 1: COVID-19 and Developing Countries

The IEU's Dr. Jyotsna Puri (Jo) debates the role of Randomised Control Trials (RCTs) at Australasian Aid Keynote

Videos

Year-end edition of IEU News

The IEU's BaD Lab: Exploring how behavioural insights can improve climate investments and action

Spotlight: Climate Change and COVID-19

Spotlight: Independent Evaluation of the GCF's Environmental and Social Safeguards

Spotlight: Independent Synthesis of the GCF's Accreditation Function

Spotlight: Independent Assessment of the GCF's SAP Pilot Scheme

What is the IEU DataLab?

1-year anniversary of the Forward-Looking Performance Review of the GCF

IEU at the Global Programming Conference

IEU's mandate and role in the Green Climate Fund

GEVal Briefs and Notes

GEVal Brief and Note on SIDS

GEVal Brief and Note on SAP

GEVal Brief and Note on Accreditation

Newsletters

Newsletters issue 9-11 (pdf and MailChimp)

IEU Briefs

IEU Brief on Adaptation

IEU Brief on SIDS

IEU Brief on SAP

IEU Brief on Accreditation

IEU Brief on workplan 2020

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GREEN CLIMATE FUND | Independent Evaluation Unit



INDEPENDENT EVALUATION UNIT

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