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Gender

Final evaluation report

June 2026

Independent Evaluation of the GCF's Gender Approach



GREEN CLIMATE FUND
INDEPENDENT EVALUATION UNIT

Independent Evaluation of the GCF's Approach to Gender

FINAL REPORT

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FOREWORD

Climate change is not gender-neutral. The evidence assembled over the past decade leaves little room for doubt: structural inequalities in access to resources, finance, and decision-making shape who is most exposed to a changing climate and who is best positioned to respond to it. Women and girls, particularly those in the least developed and vulnerable communities, too often bear disproportionate burdens, even as they remain among the most effective agents of adaptation and resilience. Responding to this reality is not peripheral to climate finance; it is central to its effectiveness and impact.

The international community has steadily built an architecture to act on this understanding, from the Paris Agreement and the enhanced Lima Work Programme on Gender to the Belém Gender Action Plan (2026–2034) adopted at COP30. The Green Climate Fund has been part of this trajectory from the outset.

This Independent Evaluation of the GCF's Approach to Gender examines how far that ambition has been realized. The evaluation found that while the GCF has established a strong policy framework for gender, it has yet to fully translate that framework into strategy, systems and practice. Gender remains insufficiently embedded into the planning, design and financing of climate action. Limited institutional capacity, reliance on consultants and limited engagement with gender-focused institutions limit ownership and implementation. While some projects demonstrate gender outcomes, fragmented monitoring and reporting systems leave the Fund unable to systematically track outcomes or demonstrate its contribution to gender-responsive climate action.

The evaluation's recommendations respond to a core challenge: shifting from compliance-driven approaches to results-oriented systems and operations. They call for institutional reforms, clearer accountability, and strengthened incentives and capacities so that the Gender Policy can more effectively support the inclusive paradigm shift envisioned in climate-resilient and low-emission development pathways.

This report arrives at an opportune moment as the GCF renews its Gender Action Plan and begins developing its next strategic plan. The evidence presented here can help the Fund move towards meaningful, measurable and sustainable results for women and marginalized groups.

I extend my gratitude to the evaluation team and to the many partners and stakeholders whose insights made this work possible.

Andreas Reumann
Head, Independent Evaluation Unit
Green Climate Fund

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We extend our sincere gratitude to the members of the GCF Board, the GCF Observer Network of Civil Society Organizations, and the Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group who generously shared their time and perspectives through interviews and consultations.

The evaluation team is deeply grateful to the national designated authorities, focal points, accredited entities, executing entities, government partners, civil society organizations, private-sector actors and community beneficiaries consulted across the six deep dive countries, Benin, Brazil, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Liberia, Mexico, and Nepal, as well as stakeholders engaged through the broader portfolio review of 20 sampled projects. Their openness and willingness to engage were instrumental in shaping the findings of this evaluation. We also thank the GCF liaison officers who responded to the evaluation's online questionnaires.

We appreciate the valuable perspectives shared by stakeholders at comparator climate finance institutions, including the Adaptation Fund, Climate Investment Funds, Global Environment Facility and the International Fund for Agricultural Development, as well as from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Children's Fund and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, whose insights enriched the benchmarking analysis and broadened the evaluation's comparative lens.

Particular thanks go to our Advisory Group, Heather Bryant and Kathryn Steingraber, who reviewed the evaluation’s approach paper and draft report and provided valuable comments. We also thank Andreas Reumann, Head of the IEU, for providing strategic guidance, feedback, and oversight throughout the evaluation. Special thanks are due to our colleagues from Universalia Management Group, who provided essential analytical and operational support to this evaluation.

This evaluation was prepared by Eric Abitbol, Alejandro Gonzalez-Caro, Booyoung Jang, Chandi Kandirgamar, Genta Konci, Andreas Reumann, Esther Rouleau, Meaghan Carly Shevell and Robitsher Simon. The evaluation task manager was Genta Konci.

The IEU takes full responsibility for the report, including for any errors. The views expressed in the evaluation do not represent the official views of the GCF Board, its members, or the countries they represent.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AE	Accredited entity
AF	Adaptation Fund
AfDB	African Development Bank
AI	Artificial intelligence
APPR	Annual portfolio performance report
APR	Annual performance report
B-GAP	Belém Gender Action Plan
B.[XX]	[XX]th meeting of the Board
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CIF	Climate Investment Funds
COA	Country ownership approach
COP	Conference of the Parties
CSO	Civil society organization
DAE	Direct access entity
DMEL	Department of Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
DP	Delivery partner
EDA	Enhancing Direct Access
EE	Executing entity
ES	Entity support
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan
ESS	Environment and social safeguards
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FP	Funding proposal
GAP	GCF's institutional Gender Action Plan (2020–2023)
GBV	Gender-based violence
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GI	Governing Instrument
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
HQ	Headquarters
IAE	International accredited entity
IEU	Independent Evaluation Unit
IF	Investment Framework
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IPP	Indigenous Peoples Policy

IPs	Indigenous Peoples
IRM	Independent Redress Mechanism
IRMF	Integrated Results Management Framework
KII	Key informant interview
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
L-GAP	Gender Action Plan of the Lima Work Programme on Gender
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
Lao PDR	Lao People's Democratic Republic
LDC	Least developed country
LORTA	Learning-Oriented Real-Time Impact Assessment Programme
LTS	Long-term strategy
LWPG	Lima Work Programme on Gender
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MAF	Monitoring and Accountability Framework
MCF	Multilateral climate fund
MDB	Multilateral Development Bank
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NDA	National designated authority
NDC	Nationally determined contribution
OCSIO	Office of the Chief Strategy and Impact Officer
OSI	Office of Sustainability and Inclusion
PPF	Project Preparation Facility
RAF	Revised Accreditation Framework
RESP	Revised Environmental and Social Policy
RFP	Request for proposals
RPSP	Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme
RRMF	Readiness Results Management Framework
SAP	Simplified approval process
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEAH	Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment
SIDS	Small island developing State
SPR	Second Performance Review
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
USP-2	Strategic Plan for the Green Climate Fund 2024–2027
USP-3	Strategic Plan for the Green Climate Fund 2028–2031

MAIN REPORT

Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION

A. PREPARATION FOR THE EVALUATION

1. At its fortieth meeting (B.40), held in Songdo, South Korea, from 21 to 24 October 2024, the Board requested the Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) to undertake an evaluation of the GCF's approach to gender in 2026.[1] As part of the preparatory work for the evaluation, the IEU conducted the *Independent Synthesis of the GCF's Gender Approach* in 2025.[2] As requested by the Board, the synthesis drew on "the existing evaluative evidence generated from past evaluations, assessments and studies."[3]
2. This *Independent Evaluation of the GCF's Approach to Gender* was informed by three key inputs from the 2025 synthesis: (i) a synthesis of available evaluative evidence drawing on internal GCF documentation and key informant interviews with GCF staff, (ii) a review of external academic and grey literature on climate and gender, and (iii) a benchmarking study examining the gender frameworks of four comparators comprising the Adaptation Fund (AF), Climate Investment Funds (CIF), Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The benchmarking study is available separately on the IEU's gender web page.[4]
3. This evaluation was also preceded by the IEU's *Progress Report on the Implementation of the Gender Action Plan*,[5] presented as part of the IEU's activity report to B.44.[6] The report reconstructed and assessed progress against gender action plan (GAP) indicators drawing on available documentation, internal reporting, interviews, portfolio data, and artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted analysis, and serves as an input to the current gender evaluation.

B. BACKGROUND

1. MAPPING THE GLOBAL LANDSCAPE: THE GENDER-CLIMATE NEXUS

4. Mounting research evidence has solidified the link between gender inequality and climate vulnerability, underscoring that climate impacts are not gender-neutral. Studies consistently illustrate that structural inequalities in access to resources, decision-making and economic opportunities shape climate exposure, vulnerability, and adaptive capacity, resulting in

[1] Document GCF/B.40/23: Decisions of the Board – fortieth meeting of the Board, 21–24 October 2024. https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/decisions-board-fortieth-meeting-board-21-24-october-2024-gcf-b40-23.pdf.
[2] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Independent Synthesis of the GCF's Gender Approach* (September 2025), https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/ieu-gender-synthesis-2.pdf.
[3] Document GCF/B.40/24: Report of the fortieth meeting of the Board, 21–24 October 2024, 142, https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/report-meeting-fortieth-meeting-board-21-24-october-2024-gcf-b40-24.pdf.
[4] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Gender Synthesis: Benchmarking Exercise*, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/document/gendersynthesis-benchmarking%20study.
[5] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Progress Report on the Implementation of the Gender Action Plan*, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/progress-report-implementation-gap_4.pdf.
[6] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Report on the Activities of the Independent Evaluation Unit*, GCF/B.44/Inf.10, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/b44-activity-report.pdf.

disproportionate impacts on women.[7] Additionally, women's leadership is increasingly recognized as critical to effective adaptation and resilience. Despite compelling evidence, women remain underrepresented in climate governance structures with persistent barriers, including sociocultural norms and institutional biases. Limited access to information and financing, and a lack of enabling environments for women's leadership, further constrain their participation.[8]

5. At the twenty-fifth Conference of the Parties (COP25), through the enhanced Lima Work Programme on Gender (LWPG) and its Gender Action Plan (L-GAP), a five-year agenda was set to embed gender-responsiveness in national climate strategies, capacity-building, and data systems.[9] At COP29, Parties agreed to extend the enhanced LWPG for 10 years, setting the frame for a new gender action plan. At COP30 in Belém, Brazil, Parties adopted the Belém Gender Action Plan (B-GAP), a nine-year framework (2026–2034) under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) aimed at operationalizing gender-responsive climate action, with priority areas including capacity-building, gender balance and leadership, and gender-responsive implementation, monitoring and reporting.[10]

2. GCF'S MANDATE ON GENDER

6. Paragraph 3 of the GCF Governing Instrument (GI, 2011) states that "the Fund will strive to maximize the impact of its funding for adaptation and mitigation, and seek a balance between the two, while promoting environmental, social, economic and development co-benefits and taking a gender-sensitive approach."[11] Building on this mandate, the first *Gender Policy* and accompanying *Gender Action Plan* were adopted in 2015, establishing a gender-sensitive approach focusing on inclusion and do-no-harm principles. A 2019 update, adopted by the Board as part of B.24/12[12] and hereinafter referred to as "the updated Gender Policy", marked a strategic shift towards a gender-responsive approach that requires mandatory project-level gender assessments and gender action plans.[13]
7. The updated Gender Policy established mandatory gender-responsiveness requirements across all GCF Result Areas and set out accountability expectations through accreditation, requiring accredited entities (AEs) to demonstrate compliance with GCF gender requirements. The updated Gender Policy recognized the diversity of AE institutional contexts, permitting AEs to apply stronger gender commitments beyond GCF's minimum requirements where consistent with the updated Policy's principles and aligned with national gender equality priorities. The updated Gender Policy introduced explicit accountability mechanisms, requiring AEs to integrate gender actions into project design and report annually on progress against project-level gender action plan indicators.

[7] Terry Cannon, "Gender and Climate Hazards in Bangladesh," *Gender and Development* 10, issue 2 (2002): 45–50; Khurshid Alam and Md. Habibur Rahman, "Women in Natural Disasters: A Case Study from Southern Coastal Region of Bangladesh," *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction* 8 (2014): 68–82.
[8] Nina Kolybashkina, Andrew Norton and Farah Outeldait, *Harnessing Climate Finance to Advance Women's Climate Leadership* (Climate Investment Funds, July 2023), https://www.cif.org/sites/cif_enc/files/knowledge-documents/wcl_report_ac2.pdf; Women's Environment and Development Organization, *Women's organizations' and climate finance: Engaging in processes and accessing resources.* (Women's Environment and Development Organization, 2019), https://content.wedo.org/uploads/2019/06/WomensOrgsClimateFinance_EngaginginProcesses.pdf.
[9] United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, "Decision 3/CP.25" (March 2020).
[10] United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, "Decision 7/CP.30: Bélem Gender Action Plan" (November 2025).
[11] Green Climate Fund, *Governing Instrument for the Green Climate Fund* (2011), para. 3, https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/governing-instrument.pdf.
[12] B.24/12: Updated Gender Policy and Action Plan 2020–2023, November 14, 2019, https://www.greenclimate.fund/decision/b24-12.
[13] The updated Gender Policy applies to the GCF Secretariat and Board, AEs, national designated authorities (NDAs) and focal points, as well as delivery partners and executing entities engaged in GCF-financed activities.

Project-level gender assessments and gender action plans are mandatory annexes to individual funding proposals (FPs), outlining project-specific gender measures. This report refers to them as "project-level gender assessments" and "project-level gender action plans" respectively, to distinguish them from the GCF's institutional GAP for 2020–2023. The institutional GAP operationalizes policy commitments through defined priority areas, indicators, and timelines to guide implementation, monitoring and accountability.

C. MANDATE, PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF GENDER EVALUATION

8. The purpose of this evaluation was to examine the GCF's overall approach to mainstreaming gender across its operations, both at the organizational level and within its portfolio of funded activities. The IEU evaluation team drew on the Interagency Gender Working Group gender continuum framework (see Annex 6 of the evaluation report) to contextualize the GCF's approach to gender mainstreaming, but did not apply it to assess the Fund's progress in this area. Gender-responsiveness is the primary accountability standard for the GCF and the central focus of the evaluation's analysis. Where AEs have gone beyond this standard by implementing gender-transformative approaches, the evaluation sought to identify good practices and lessons learned, without expecting the GCF to have committed to approaches beyond its updated Policy.
9. The evaluation provides accountability to the GCF Board on the extent to which the updated Gender Policy and its associated GAP were implemented across the Fund's operations, systems, and institutional arrangements, assessing progress against the updated Policy's stated commitment to promote gender-responsive climate action. It also generates learning to support more effective implementation going forward. It was strategically timed to inform the update of the future institutional GAP.

Chapter 2. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

A. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

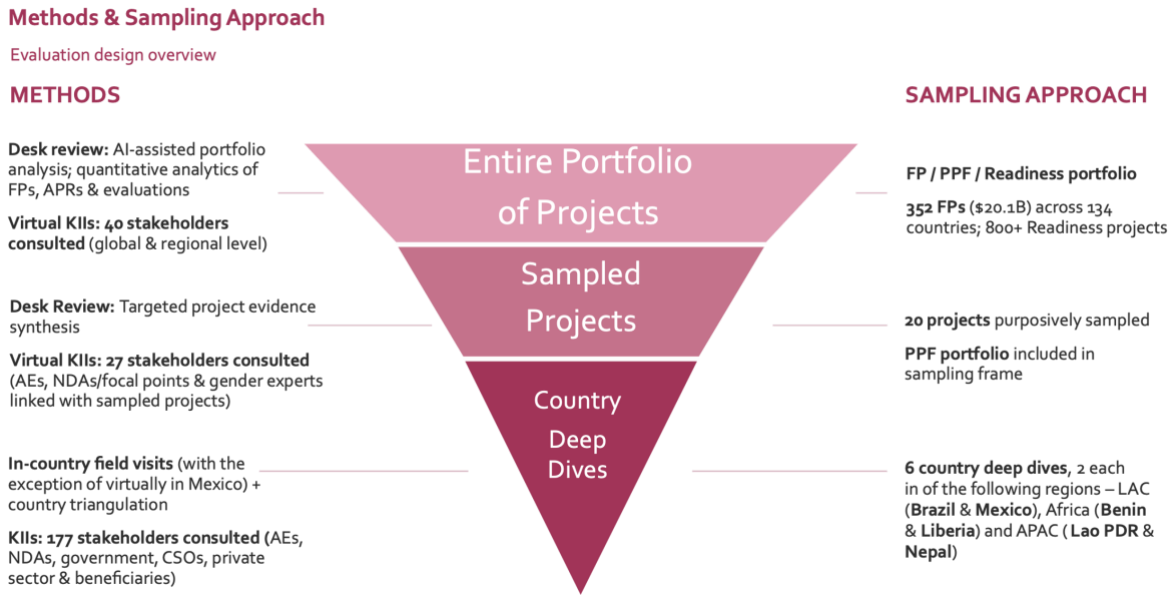
10. The evaluation was guided by the criteria of relevance, coherence, efficiency, country ownership, sustainability, effectiveness and impact, replicability and scalability, and innovation. Implementation of the evaluation was grounded in the IEU's mandate of ensuring rigour, independence, and learning, as articulated in the IEU's updated terms of reference[14] and aligned with the principles, objectives, and evaluative criteria set out in the Evaluation Policy of the Green Climate Fund[15] and the Evaluation Standards. The full evaluation matrix of this evaluation is included in Annex 3 of the evaluation report.
11. The evaluation was designed as a strategic evaluation, examining how the GCF's updated Gender Policy and GAP guided the organization in establishing the institutional, organizational, and system-level conditions required to realize its gender mainstreaming ambitions. It adopted a combined analytical approach drawing on the Institutional and Organizational Assessment model to analyse variations in how these conditions were implemented across the organization. The institutional GAP priority areas and indicators were used as reference points and sources of evidence.
12. The Investment Framework (IF) gender criteria served as an additional analytical entry point for project-level reporting, and the Readiness Results Management Framework (RRMF) was used as the primary reference for assessing gender-related outcomes from Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme (RPSP) grants.
13. Throughout, the evaluation maintained a commitment to inclusion and intersectionality. Specifically, the evaluation examined how the GCF has integrated intersectionality, adopting it as a broader analytical lens. For example, deliberate efforts were made to incorporate the perspectives of women, Indigenous Peoples (IPs), persons with disabilities, stakeholders of various age groups and socioeconomic status, as well as other marginalized groups. The evaluation was further informed by relevant international normative frameworks, including the UNFCCC Gender Action Plan and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

B. METHODS

14. The evaluation drew on a mixed-method approach combining several complementary lines of evidence to address the key evaluation questions. A tiered design applied different methods and layers of stakeholder engagement, as seen in Figure 1. Each of the methods is briefly described below.

[14] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Updated Terms of Reference of the Independent Evaluation Unit*, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/document/updated-terms-reference-ieu.
[15] Green Climate Fund, *Evaluation Policy for the GCF*, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/document/evaluation-policy-gcf.

Figure 1. Tiered methodological approach



Source: IEU evaluation team.

- **Desk review** informed the assessment of policy commitments, implementation arrangements, and institutional performance related to gender mainstreaming. The documents reviewed varied across the three layers of the tiered methodological design in Figure 1, with the greatest diversity of document types examined for deep dives. Document types reviewed include the following:
  - At the ex-ante stage, FPs, readiness proposals, Project Preparation Facility (PPF) proposals, project-level gender assessments, project-level gender action plans, and stakeholder consultation records.
  - At the monitoring stage, the desk review covered annual performance reports (APRs).
  - At the ex-post stage, a review was conducted of mid-term evaluations, final evaluations, IEU evaluations, and IEU impact evaluations through the Learning-Oriented Real-Time Impact Assessment (LORTA) programme.

  Consulted documents are listed in Annex 2 of this report.
- **A portfolio review** of 20 purposively sampled projects were selected for deeper examination of gender-related organizational processes across the project cycle and the types of gender outcomes achieved in practice through a combination of desk review and virtual key informant interviews (KIIs) with AEs, national designated authorities (NDAs), focal points, or gender experts associated with the 20 projects. Sampling of projects ensured diversity across the gender continuum, AE type, modality, regional and national context, and results areas, enabling analysis of how gender-responsiveness and outcomes varied across operating environments. The list of projects examined through this portfolio review is included in Annex 6 of the evaluation report.
- **Deep dives:** In-country field visits were conducted between 15 March and 5 April 2026 in Brazil, Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), Benin, Nepal, and Liberia, complemented by one virtual deep dive in Mexico. Projects were selected for deeper examination in each country, providing the basis for deep dives that examined project-level

gender results, the effectiveness of RPSP and PPF support in strengthening gender integration, and links between gender, readiness, pipeline development, and AE involvement.

- **Stakeholder engagement** was undertaken at multiple levels in alignment with the tiered methodological design in Figure 1, with a total of 246 stakeholders consulted across all levels. For the deep dives, consultations were undertaken with a total of 177 stakeholders (27 in Benin, 45 in Brazil, 22 in Lao PDR, 32 in Liberia, 27 in Mexico, and 24 in Nepal), including AEs, NDAs, focal points, government entities, private-sector actors, civil society, and beneficiaries. Across the 20-project sample globally, virtual interviews were conducted with a total of 27 stakeholders, specifically AEs, NDAs, focal points and gender specialists linked to the project sample. An additional 31 virtual interviews, both one-on-one and multi-participant were conducted at the institutional level with 40 global and regional stakeholders including GCF Secretariat staff, Board members, the GCF Observer Network of civil society organizations (CSOs), the Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities. A list of stakeholders consulted for this evaluation is found in Annex 1.
- **Online questionnaire:** Two online questionnaires were administered. One questionnaire targeted the GCF readiness focal points in regional desks with an intent to measure their level of familiarity with the GCF Gender Policy and the extent to which they understand how RPSP resources can be used to support the implementation of the updated Policy. This survey was sent to 32 RPSP focal points, with a very low per cent response rate. A second questionnaire was sent to 51 GCF country liaison officers to assess whether they have sufficient knowledge to help countries understand the updated Policy's requirements and advise them on using RPSP and the PPF to support the updated Policy's implementation. The response rate was 56 per cent. The questionnaires included a mix of closed and open questions and were administered in English, French, and Spanish.

15. The evaluation assessed gender mainstreaming through a structured, comprehensive document-based design covering different stages and processes. A controlled corpus of GCF document types at the institutional and project levels, including FPs, gender assessments, gender action plans, APRs, evaluations and country programmes, was used to capture evidence across the design and implementation of gender mainstreaming. Design-stage integration was assessed through targeted analysis of FPs and project-level gender assessments and gender action plans, while institutional and process-level embedding was examined through accreditation conditions, country programmes, and stakeholder engagement at origination. The approach was implemented through a consistent taxonomy, defined units of analysis, including AEs, projects and countries, and AI-assisted content analysis that extracted and validated evidence in a comparable way across documents and stages, enabling systematic tracking of gender mainstreaming across GCF processes and decision points.

C. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

16. The evaluation team operated according to the GCF Evaluation Standards[16] and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation. The evaluation was carried out in line with core principles of evaluation ethics, including integrity, accountability, respect, beneficence, and do-no-harm, with particular attention to any gender and power dynamics that shaped participation.

[16] Green Climate Fund, *Green Climate Fund Evaluation Standards*, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/220428-gcf-evalluation-standards-web.pdf.

17. The evaluation team respected participants' autonomy and right to confidentiality, seeking voluntary informed consent from all stakeholders prior to data-collection and providing the option to decline or withdraw at any point without consequence. Anonymity was safeguarded across all data-collection methods, with interview notes kept strictly confidential to the evaluation team, findings triangulated to prevent identification of individual sources, and all materials securely stored.
18. Throughout, the team upheld the principles of human rights, gender equality, and environmental responsibility, remaining sensitive to diversity across cultures, identities, and contexts. These measures helped ensure that all voices, particularly those of marginalized groups, were heard and fairly represented.

D. LIMITATIONS

19. This evaluation contended with a series of unavoidable limitations, outlined below along with the mitigation measures taken. The evaluation team is confident that the evaluation has been prepared without compromising a high standard of quality.
20. **Time and resource constraints**: The compressed timeframe and resource constraints limited the depth of country-level engagement and breadth of stakeholder consultations. However, the multi-method approach provided a suitable diversity of data-collection and triangulation.
21. **Lack of portfolio-level gender outcomes**: A fundamental limitation was the absence of clearly defined gender-related outcomes in the GCF's results architecture. The absence of portfolio-level gender outcome objectives, indicators, and causal pathways across the Gender Policy, GAP, and the Strategic Plan for the Green Climate Fund 2024–2027 (USP-2)[17] provided an insufficient basis for aggregating gender results. To overcome this limitation, the evaluation relied on AI-assisted analysis of documentation spanning the full project cycle, complemented by field visits and interviews, to examine how and why gender outcomes were achieved across different contexts and modalities.
22. **Use of AI-assisted analysis**: As noted in the Methods section, the evaluation leveraged AI-based text analysis tools to systematically scan and classify information from a large volume of project documents. While this enabled broader coverage of the portfolio's evidence base, it also introduced potential limitations. AI outputs depend on the quality and clarity of source documents, and the approach may misclassify or overlook more nuanced evidence that is not explicitly documented. Human analysts reviewed and validated the AI-generated results to mitigate these risks, but the approach still carries a degree of uncertainty and ultimately relies on the available textual record.
23. **Reliance on self-reported data**: A cross-cutting limitation was the heavy reliance on project data self-reported by AEs through APRs. Independent verification of APR content during implementation is limited, which introduces a potential optimism bias. APRs often emphasize activities and outputs delivered but tend to under-report shortcomings or unachieved outcomes. By contrast, independent project evaluations typically provide a more critical, evidence-based perspective, for example, identifying gaps such as superficial "paper compliance" with project gender action plans or insufficient budgets for gender activities that were not apparent in APRs. Without greater external verification or data triangulation, over-reliance on APRs risks overstating progress on gender results.
24. **Data availability and quality issues**: Inconsistent sex-disaggregated data, including missing baselines and heterogeneous project-level indicators, further constrained the analysis. Because many

[17] Green Climate Fund, *Strategic Plan for the Green Climate Fund 2024–2027*, July 2023, https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/strategic-plan-green-climate-fund-2024-2027.

projects did not consistently report sex-disaggregated outcomes or establish baseline values, it was difficult to aggregate or compare gender results across the portfolio.

25. **Gaps in the sample of 20 projects:** Coverage of the 20 projects in the portfolio review was constrained by limited responsiveness to requests for virtual interviews, reducing the availability of primary data for part of the sample. Although desk reviews were completed for all projects, KIIs were secured for 15 of the 20 projects; stakeholders for the remaining five either declined participation or did not respond despite repeated outreach. In addition, one project informed the team it was undergoing a cancellation process at the time of the evaluation.
26. **Institutional reporting gaps**: Limited monitoring information was available on GCF's organizational performance against its GAP targets. In particular, the lack of systematic reporting on GAP indicators meant the evaluation had only fragmentary evidence on gender mainstreaming at the institutional level.
27. **Attribution challenges**: GCF interventions operated alongside other funding sources, national policies, and partner activities, making it difficult to isolate GCF's precise contribution to observed gender outcomes.

Chapter 3. RELEVANCE

A. ALIGNMENT WITH KEY INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS AND COMMITMENTS ON GENDER

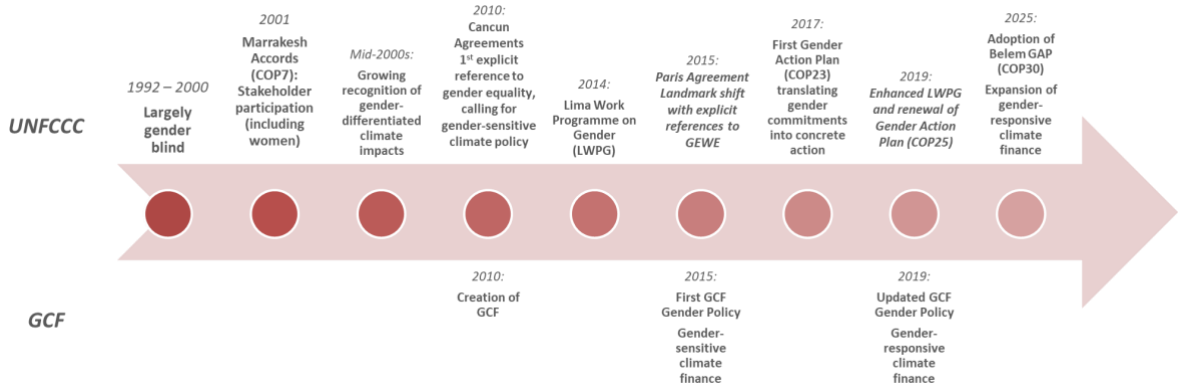
GCF has established strong policy-level alignment with international gender commitments, building on existing global discourse at the nexus of gender and climate action. It demonstrates close alignment with Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5) on gender equality and other related international agreements and guiding documents. The GCF is actively responding to UNFCCC gender expectations, including COP decisions and the Paris Agreement, and demonstrates varying degrees of alignment with the UNFCCC LWPG and Belém Gender Action Plan Priority Areas. However, there have been notable delays in responding to expectations urging GCF to update its institutional Gender Action Plan (2020–2023) and limited systematic reporting on its implementation.

28. The GCF's policy framework for gender primarily includes the updated Gender Policy (2019), GAP (2020–2023), and a suite of relevant policies such as its Revised Environment and Social Safeguards Policy (RESP, 2021) and the Indigenous Peoples Policy (IPP, 2018). These are anchored in core international commitments and frameworks on gender equality and women's empowerment within the climate agenda. Together, the integration of these global normative frameworks in the design of the updated Gender Policy and related guiding documents positions GCF's approach as part of a broader rights-based and equality-driven international architecture designed to ensure safeguarding and equitable access to climate finance and services.
29. At a high level, the GCF's approach to gender as articulated in its updated Gender Policy makes direct reference to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, CEDAW, International Labour Organization core conventions, and the United Nations SDGs, particularly SDG 5 on gender equality.[18] The updated Gender Policy's rationale is rooted in alignment with the SDGs' focus on leaving no one behind, by increasing capacities for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries (LDCs), small island developing States (SIDS) and African States, with specific emphasis on women from vulnerable communities. The updated Policy states that the "GCF will, to the extent feasible, develop specific targets and progress indicators aligned with the SDG framework, particularly SDG 5 and gender targets in the other goals"[19] with the expectation that GCF-funded activities are to systematically track gender-related outcomes in a structured manner.
30. The updated Gender Policy is explicitly guided by the UNFCCC in the design of its guiding principles, reinforcing the principle that gender equality must be respected, considered and promoted in all climate action.[20] Alignment with international commitments is further evidenced by the updated Gender Policy's integration of the Paris Agreement (2015) preambular commitments to human rights and gender equality, as well as Article 7.5 on gender-responsive adaptation.[21] This

[18] B.24/12: Updated Gender Policy and Action Plan 2020–2023, November 14, 2019, https://www.greenclimate.fund/decision/b24-12.
[19] Ibid., para. 25(g).
[20] Ibid., para. 15.
[21] Ibid., paras. 17–18.

strong alignment between UNFCCC COP guidance and GCF's adoption of its gender architecture is illustrated in Figure 2.[22]

Figure 2. Evolution of gender integration across the UNFCCC and GCF: Areas of alignment



Source: IEU evaluation team, based on UNFCCC COP decisions and GCF Board decisions on gender, 1992–2025.

31. Since its establishment in 2010, the GCF has iteratively built upon UNFCCC and related global discourse at the nexus of climate and gender. This momentum accelerated with the Paris Agreement, the adoption of the first UNFCCC Gender Action Plan (2017), the enhanced LWPG and the corresponding renewal of the L-GAP (2019). These instruments marked an important transition from gender equality in principle, towards practical guidance for how to operationalize these principles into measurable outcomes. The adoption of the GCF's initial Gender Policy (2015) mirrors the normative shift building towards the Paris Agreement. The GCF then embedded gender-responsiveness across its investment cycle in the updated Gender Policy in alignment with the LWPG and L-GAP. The updated Gender Policy remains the foundational GCF policy instrument on gender, signalling a deliberate shift from a gender-sensitive to a gender-responsive approach aligned with the evolving global normative framework on gender-responsive climate action, a shift confirmed by the IEU's 2025 Independent Synthesis of the GCF's Gender Approach.[23]
32. Across its tenth to fourteenth reports to the COP,[24] the GCF consistently met COP reporting requirements, reflecting sustained alignment with UNFCCC guidance on gender. However, the GCF was delayed in responding to COP29 (2024) decisions urging the Fund to update and operationalize its institutional GAP (2020–2023), having expired in 2023; noteworthy, approval of the updated GAP is expected at B.45 in 2026.[25] Additionally, tracking of the institutional GAP was only initiated in the twelfth COP report (2023), indicating that results-based measurement of gender outcomes has lagged far behind policy commitments. While the GCF remains broadly aligned with international gender-climate frameworks at a normative and reporting level, its timeliness in adapting institutional tools and tracking systems in a timely manner represents a key area of relative weakness.

[22] In its origins, the UNFCCC was largely gender-blind, with indirect acknowledgment of women's participation emerging in the Marrakesh Accords (2001). Following increasing advocacy for recognition of gender-differentiated impacts of climate change, the Cancun Agreements (2010) formally recognized gender equality as a priority. This catalysed a shift towards women's participation that was further institutionalized through the first 2014 LWPG.
[23] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Independent Synthesis of the GCF's Gender Approach*, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/ieu-gender-synthesis-2.pdf.
[24] GCF/B.29/03, GCF/B.33/13, GCF/B.36/10, GCF/B.39/14, GCF/B.42.09.
[25] United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, "Gender and Climate Change. Draft Decision -/CP.29," FCCC/CP/2024/L.12, November 23, 2024, https://unfccc.int/documents/643485.

33. Within an evolving global architecture, the GCF's gender alignment with the B-GAP (2026–2034)[26] under the UNFCCC is strongest where gender integration is institutionalized through mandatory procedures and underpinned by binding requirements, such as mandatory project-level gender assessments and gender action plans, budgeted activities, and accreditation oversight for gender compliance. It is comparatively less strong where it is conceptually embedded but not enforceable without direct compliance or enforcement levers, such as elective training to build capacities for gender (Belém Priority Area A: Capacity-building, knowledge management and communication), and limited tracking of the Coherence and Complementarity Framework (Belém Priority Area C: Coherence). Alignment is also weak regarding monitoring and reporting on intersectionality, given the limited collection and use of disaggregated data on multidimensional factors, such as race, disability and age, that shape differentiated experiences of climate change.
34. KIIs suggest that the development of the B-GAP is creating new momentum for collaboration and reflection across climate funds, although this remains at an early stage given the B-GAP's recent adoption. GCF Secretariat staff noted that the B-GAP places greater emphasis on issues such as women's entrepreneurship and gender-lens investing, which were seen as broadly aligned with emerging directions within the GCF. Interviews with representatives from comparator funds similarly indicated that the Belém process is prompting discussions on how the GCF and other climate funds may position themselves in relation to gender-responsive climate finance and provision of support to women-led organizations and vulnerable groups.
35. Several comparator fund interviewees noted that as part of these reflections, discussions on comparative advantages and complementarities across the funds are now needed as part of the operationalization of the B-GAP, but that these conversations are still emerging. In this context, some GCF Secretariat staff suggested that the GCF may hold a particular niche in leveraging its broader range of financial instruments, partnership network, and private-sector modalities to support more systemic approaches to gender-responsive climate finance, including through gender-lens investing and support to women entrepreneurs. However, some civil society stakeholders noted that while the B-GAP creates an opportunity to strengthen ambition, its current focus risks remaining limited if not accompanied by clearer commitments, resourcing, and accountability for results.

[26] United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), *Gender Action Plan*, FCCC/CP/2025/14 (advance unedited version) (2025), https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/COP30_14_Gender_AUV.pdf.

B. GCF Gender Policy within strategic planning

The GCF Strategic Plan for the Green Climate Fund 2024–2027 integrates gender primarily as a modality for delivering programming rather than as a strategic priority or measurable result, leading to limited prioritization of gender within core programming directions and targets. While the GCF's "50by30" vision[27] reinforces a focus on vulnerable populations, the application of gender-responsive approaches, particularly in the context of mobilizing private-sector investment, remains insufficiently defined.

36. As the Fund's primary Board-approved corporate planning instrument, the USP-2 sets out its programming priorities (section 3.2) and targeted results (section 3.3) for the Fund's second formal four-year funding and allocation cycle (GCF-2). A review of USP-2 indicates that the programming priorities for 2024–2027 do not include specific references to gender-responsive objectives. These priorities cover readiness, mitigation, adaptation and private-sector engagement. Furthermore, the projected results for metrics such as countries supported, beneficiaries reached, ecosystems restored, and private-sector engagement, do not include gender-responsive considerations or indicators.
37. Gender is instead primarily reflected in section 4 of the USP-2, which outlines the modalities, actions, and partnerships to deliver programming. Section 4 commits to keeping "equity and gender dimensions at the forefront of climate action" and to promoting gender-responsiveness through inclusive approaches.[28] This positions gender as a **modality or approach to implementation**, rather than as a strategic objective or set of expected results. Gender is further referenced in section 5 on operational and institutional priorities, where it is framed largely in relation to policies and safeguards, including commitments to mainstream gender in funded activities and align with UNFCCC gender frameworks.
38. This reflects a partial evolution when compared to GCF-1 (2020–2023) and its USP-1. While USP-1 primarily addressed gender at the level of operational requirements, such as safeguards and mandatory gender assessments and action plans, USP-2 introduces a stronger emphasis on gender-responsive approaches as part of programming modalities. However, in both cases, gender remains external to the core strategic architecture of the strategic plan, as it is not embedded in programming priorities or reflected in targeted results. Stakeholder interviews indicated that USP-2 targets function as key internal reference points for GCF staff performance. Consequently, the absence of gender considerations within these targets limits the extent to which gender outcomes are systematically prioritized or incentivized at the strategic level.
39. The "50by30" vision articulated by the GCF Executive Director places strong emphasis on scaling the Fund's impact, including through enhanced support for the most vulnerable people and communities and a strengthened focus on system-level transformation. This emphasis is broadly aligned with gender and inclusion objectives, as it implicitly recognizes the differentiated vulnerabilities and capacities of groups such as women, IPs, and other marginalized populations.
40. At the same time, the vision highlights a significant expansion of private-sector engagement as a core pillar for mobilizing climate finance at scale. Within this prioritized area, the positioning of

[27] The "50by30" vision refers to a GCF operational reform framework designed to scale up and efficiently manage a capitalization of USD 50 billion by 2030. It focuses on overhauling the Fund's operational model to accelerate project delivery, streamline programming, and expand private sector mobilization to deliver on the Strategic Plan 2024–2027. Green Climate Fund, "Efficient GCF," https://www.greenclimate.fund/about/efficient-gcf.
[28] Green Climate Fund, *Strategic Plan for the Green Climate Fund 2024–2027* (2023), section 4, https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/strategic-plan-green-climate-fund-2024-2027.

gender remains less clearly defined. While USP-2 includes strategic directions to increase private-sector participation and investment, these do not explicitly articulate how gender considerations are to be integrated into private-sector mobilization efforts.

41. In practice, private-sector AEs implementing GCF-funded projects are required to comply with GCF gender-related policies, including the preparation of project-level gender assessments and gender action plans. However, it remains unclear to what extent these requirements apply to broader efforts aimed at mobilizing private capital beyond directly funded activities. This is particularly true when GCF components are embedded within a larger, multi-faceted initiative underpinned by diverse financing approaches and funding sources. This suggests that while gender is embedded in direct GCF operations, its integration into broader private-sector mobilization efforts involving multiple partners remains ambiguous, despite being central to the "50by30" vision.
42. Such ambiguity is illustrated in Brazil, where GCF readiness resources supported the establishment of the Brazil Climate and Ecological Transformation Investment Platform Secretariat. While the Brazil Climate and Ecological Transformation Investment Platform Secretariat plays a matchmaking role between investors and originated projects, it is not directly involved in project preparation. Consequently, the enforcement of gender and environmental and social safeguards (ESS) once private capital is mobilized and implemented remains undefined.
43. Efforts to align the forthcoming GAP with the Fund's next high-level strategy for 2028–2031 (USP-3) provide a positive signal. However, because these two documents are being developed along different timelines, this separation raises serious questions about proper sequencing and depth. Ideally, gender commitments should be treated as a core, cross-cutting design parameter within USP-3 from its inception. The subsequent GAP would then be operationalizing those commitments through measurable outcomes, clear responsibilities, and a monitoring mechanism linked directly to USP-3 performance tracking. At the time of writing, it remained unclear if this direction and approach would be adopted.

C. GENDER IN RELATED GCF POLICIES

The IPP (2018) and RESP (2021) advanced the priorities of the updated Gender Policy (2019). However, these policies present some ambiguity as to their conceptual focus on gender-responsiveness.

44. The evaluation examined the extent to which the GCF's updated Gender Policy is coherent with the GCF's IPP (2018) and RESP. Overall, all three instruments address gender mainstreaming and promote working in tandem to advance GCF's principles of diversity, equity and inclusion, and gender-sensitive/gender-responsive sustainable development. However, a critical distinction exists between these frameworks. While the updated Gender Policy clearly distinguishes between a gender-sensitive approach that focuses on doing no harm and a gender-responsive approach that focuses on promoting equitable benefits for men and women, the IPP and RESP tend to use these terms interchangeably and imprecisely. This conceptual imprecision deviates from best practice in the climate finance community.
45. The IPP (2018) is framed by principles set forth in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which sets minimum standards regarding the survival, dignity and well-being of

IPs worldwide. The RESP (2021)[29] provides the basis for "a coherent, consistent and transparent management system founded on the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion, gender-sensitive sustainable development, for improving performance and outcomes, managing risks and impacts, and enhancing equitable access to benefits in all GCF-financed activities."

46. The updated Gender Policy (2019), RESP (2021), and IPP (2018) establish complementary assessment and planning requirements that operate together across the project cycle, each addressing different dimensions of risk, inclusion, and equity. Specifically, the updated Gender Policy mandates the preparation of gender assessments and gender action plans at the project level. In tandem, the RESP requires AEs to undertake environmental and social assessments, such as Environmental and Social Impact Assessments, and develop corresponding management plans, including environmental and social management plans (ESMPs). Within these frameworks, gender risks and impacts are evaluated, addressed and linked to project-level gender action plans.[30] In parallel, the IPP requires the preparation of IPs plans or frameworks where relevant. This ensures that activities are designed and implemented in a culturally appropriate, inclusive manner that prioritizes the rights and active participation of Indigenous communities, with particular attention to women and girls.[31]
47. Regarding sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (SEAH) explicit guidance is provided in the RESP and corresponding SEAH Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM), reflecting the elevated priority multilateral organizations now place on addressing these issues. The RESP has been guided by key principles in the updated Gender Policy, particularly in its emphasis on addressing power imbalances, protecting vulnerable groups, and promoting gender-responsive approaches. In this sense, the updated Gender Policy has provided a sufficiently broad and flexible framework to accommodate the subsequent integration of SEAH considerations within the GCF policy architecture.

D. Investment Framework

Gender is weakly integrated within IF criteria and not highlighted as a standalone investment consideration. Fundamentally, the GCF's IF provides insufficient incentives for the prioritization of gender-responsive outcomes in investment decision-making.

48. As GCF's core governance document for investment decision-making, the IF[32] structures how all FPs are assessed, prioritized, and approved through its defined set of investment criteria. Consequentially, the IF shapes institutional incentives and influences how gender is prioritized, weighted and ultimately reflected in funding decisions. An examination of IF criteria reveals a structural gap between the ambitions of the Fund's updated Gender Policy and its core investment logic, resulting in a weak entry point for gender considerations.
49. The Independent Evaluation of the Investment Framework found gender to be insufficiently embedded, inconsistently applied, and structurally under-prioritized within the investment decision-

[29] Green Climate Fund, *Revised Environmental and Social Policy* (2021), https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/revised-environmental-and-social-policy.pdf.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Annex XI to decision B.19/11: Indigenous Peoples Policy, March 1, 2018, https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/decision/b19/decision-b19-11-b19-a11.pdf.
[32] Green Climate Fund, *Investment Framework*, October 26, 2023, https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/investment-framework-gcf-2.

making architecture, leading to variability in how gender is assessed and weighted.[33] Gender is weakly integrated within IF criteria and not prioritized as a standalone investment consideration. Gender is not reflected in core criteria such as impact potential, limiting its role in defining what constitutes transformational climate impact and reducing its influence on funding prioritization. Instead, gender is largely subsumed under broader categories such as "sustainable development potential" as part of "gender-sensitive development impact" or embedded within the "needs of the recipient" as part of vulnerable groups.

50. This framing is subject to broad interpretation and inconsistent application across reviewers and proposals, weakening its analytical and operational visibility in investment decision-making.[34] There is also a discrepancy between reference to gender-sensitive development impact in the IF and the higher level of ambition for gender-responsiveness in the updated Gender Policy, resulting in inconsistent guidance.

[33] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Independent Evaluation of the Green Climate Fund's Investment Framework* (February 2024), https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/evaluation/IF2023.
[34] See Green Climate Fund, *Investment Framework* (October 26, 2023), table 2 ("Criteria for assessing programme/project proposals"), 3, https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/investment-framework_1.pdf.

Chapter 4. COHERENCE

A. COHERENCE ACROSS ORGANIZATIONAL REQUIREMENTS, TOOLS AND SYSTEMS

The GCF demonstrates generally strong internal coherence of its updated Gender Policy across policy frameworks, operational guidelines, and support mechanisms. GCF's policy architecture and organizational requirements establish a compliance-driven normative framework that institutionalizes gender integration as part of accreditation and FP development, drawing on readiness and other support. While these act as strong standard-setting mechanisms that are highly relevant as entry points for mainstreaming gender, their ability to drive consistent, sustained, and high-quality gender-responsive implementation across the project cycle is uneven.

51. GCF operationalizes global gender commitments to varying degrees through (i) its accreditation process, (ii) updated Gender Policy requirements tied to funding approval and performance tracking, and (iii) safeguards. Additionally, programmes such as the RPSP, tools such as the RRMF, and supporting modalities such as the PPF increasingly enable earlier engagement and clarification of gender requirements. This support helps ensure proposal development better aligns with gender requirements, including mandatory gender assessments and gender action plans at the project level.[35]

B. ACCREDITATION PROCESS: AE GENDER POLICY COMPLIANCE WITH GCF UPDATED GENDER POLICY

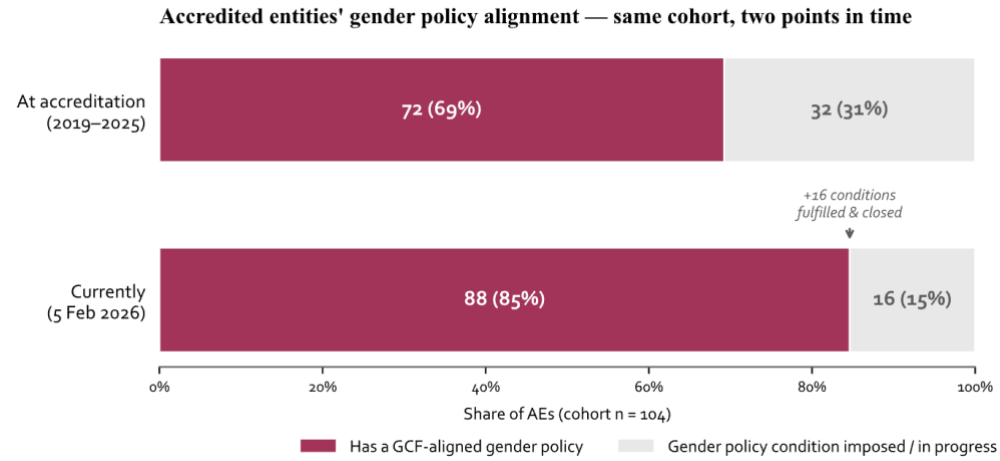
Central to the Fund's second-level due diligence approach, GCF's accreditation process serves a critical screening and capacity strengthening function ensuring that AEs, as GCF partners, have the policies and competencies required to implement the updated Gender Policy. With the adoption of the Revised Accreditation Framework (RAF), part of this screening is being shifted to the FP development process; implications for the gender capacities under this new model are unclear.

52. This accreditation screening process requires AEs to demonstrate alignment with the GCF suite of policies – including the updated Gender Policy – as a requisite for accessing GCF funding and financing. This includes having their own gender policies, procedures, and competencies that meet GCF's minimum standards, as well as a track record of implementing relevant activities.

[35] Between 2020 and 2024, the Operations Manual for the Project and Programme Lifecycle (2020) was the primary tool used by the GCF to operationalize the updated Gender Policy (e.g. providing detailed guidance across the project cycle, including a checklist for assessing the quality of project-level gender assessments and gender action plans). Following the 2024 Secretariat re-organization process, the Operations Manual was discontinued and reportedly replaced by a set of checklists and standard operating procedures for ensuring compliance with the updated Gender Policy across the project cycle. However, despite interviewing key GCF staff, the evaluation team was unable to obtain access to the standard operating procedures and was therefore unable to assess internal coherence with the updated Gender Policy.

53. With the introduction of the updated Gender Policy, accreditation conditions have raised the bar by shifting from one-line requirements, such as "develop a gender policy consistent with the GCF", to multi-part requirements covering an equivalent policy, procedures, action plans, staff training, sex-disaggregated data systems, independent audits, and SEAH integration. As Figure 3 outlines, multi-part requirements have helped ensure that AEs are increasingly aligned with the GCF Gender Policy over time.

Figure 3. AEs Gender Policy alignment

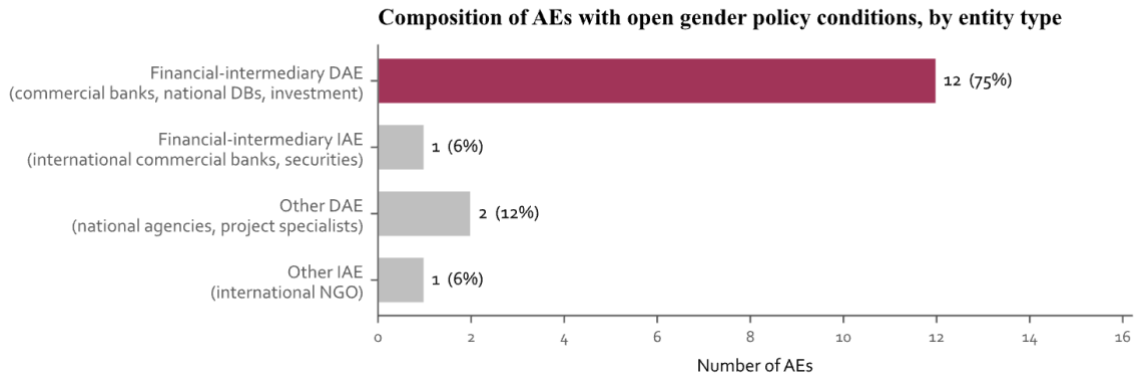


Source: GCF accreditation conditions database currently (February 5, 2026); GCF application log (October 31, 2025).
Note: Cut-off date February 5, 2026. Sample = 104 AEs that underwent an accreditation event in 2019–2025 — initial accreditation (Board approval date in the period, GCF application log, cut-off October 31, 2025) or re-accreditation (signalled in the GCF accreditation conditions database). 'At accreditation' counts AEs with no gender policy condition imposed; 'currently' counts AEs with no condition or whose conditions have been fulfilled and closed.

54. Data indicate that 69 per cent of AEs in the 2019–2025 cohort (72 AEs) had no gender policy condition imposed at accreditation, used here as a proxy for having a GCF-aligned gender policy at-entry. This proportion rose to 85 per cent (88 AEs) in 2026, reflecting entities that either had no condition or have since fulfilled and closed their gender-policy conditions. As of the most recent conditions extract on February 5, 2026, only 16 of the 104 AEs accredited or re-accredited in 2019–2025 had at least one gender policy condition recorded as in progress.[36] Overall, data reveals that the proportion of AEs accredited with gender-policy conditions has decreased over time: 31 per cent of AEs in the 2019-2025 cohort (32 AEs) had at least one condition imposed, compared with 15 per cent (16 AEs) in 2026. Refer to Figure 4 for more details.
55. In contrast, United Nations agencies and multilateral development banks (MDBs) are largely free of open gender-policy conditions. This suggests that international accredited entities (IAEs) already have strong gender policies and systems in place at-entry. Therefore, targeted capacity support after accreditation, particularly through the readiness programme, may be especially relevant for financial-intermediary direct access entities (DAEs).

[36] Green Climate Fund, GCF accreditation conditions database, cross-referenced with the accreditation application log, accessed April 2026.

Figure 4. AEs and Gender Policy conditions



Source: GCF Accreditation Conditions Database Currently (February 5, 2026); GCF Application Log (October 31, 2025).
Notes: Sample = 16 AEs in the extended 2019–2025 cohort (of n = 104) with at least one in progress gender policy condition. Cohort defined as entities that underwent an accreditation event in the period (initial accreditation via Board Approval Date, or re-accreditation tracked through the conditions database). Financial-intermediary sub-type assigned based on the entity's primary institutional function. DBs = development banks; NGO = non-governmental organization.

56. Following the adoption of the updated Gender Policy, the substantive scope of gender-policy conditions expanded, typically covering policies, procedures, action plans, institutional arrangements, and related capacity elements, while the overall accreditation approach continued to rely on conditionality rather than pre-accreditation exclusion. This suggests that the policy update elevated post-accreditation requirements, rather than altering the threshold for entry into the accredited entity network.[37]
57. In 2025, the GCF adopted its RAF,[38] aiming to enhance efficiency while improving access to GCF financing, in particular for DAEs, through a more targeted accreditation process and strengthened pre- and post-accreditation readiness support. According to interviewees, the RAF has also sought to clarify the distinction between accreditation, due diligence and institutional capacity-building functions, as the previous accreditation system combined these functions, creating duplication and inefficiencies. Under the RAF, accreditation is primarily a risk-based institutional screening process focused on a defined set of screening requirements, with more detailed assessments now being undertaken at the concept note and FP stages. Under the RAF, entities must continue to demonstrate that they have the institutional policies, procedures and competencies necessary to implement the updated Gender Policy. While institutional gender systems continue to be assessed during accreditation, implementation of the Gender Policy now carries less weight during accreditation and more during FP development. The implications of this shift remain unclear, particularly for the Operational Safeguards team and regional desks, regarding the additional screening capacity, technical expertise, and coordination that may be required.
58. The GCF also updated its Monitoring and Accountability Framework (MAF) in 2025 to complement the RAF and align monitoring, reporting and accountability arrangements of partner entities with the new accreditation model, including the removal of fixed accreditation terms and re-accreditation

[37] In addition, the accreditation reform approved in July 2025 further articulates accreditation as an institutional gateway and due diligence mechanism, with substantive quality assurance – including gender considerations – addressed through FP appraisal and implementation arrangements. As implementation is recent, its effects are not yet assessable and fall outside the 2019–2025 evidence base used here. See B.42/13: Accreditation matters, https://www.greenclimate.fund/decision/b42-13.
[38] Annex III to decision B.42/13: Accreditation Framework of the Green Climate Fund, July 2025, https://www.greenclimate.fund/decision/b42-13.

reviews. Accreditation is now granted for an indefinite period, with AEs subject to compliance and funded activity monitoring in accordance with the updated MAF. Under the previous MAF (B.11/10),[39] the initial framework focused on compliance with the Fund's ESS, fiduciary standards, and Gender Policy, comprising at least four compliance checks, notably annual self-reporting by AEs. Gender was referenced broadly as a compliance obligation but with no specific data or disaggregation requirements attached to performance reporting. The updated MAF (2025)[40] requires data disaggregation by subproject, gender, country, and vulnerable groups in performance reports, alongside monitoring instruments that enable more frequent, automated and near-real-time reporting and data quality assessments.

C. Gender Policy requirements: Project-level gender assessments and gender action plans

GCF requirements for project-level gender assessments and gender action plans have established a clear minimum standard for gender integration, further supported by guidance and toolkits for their development. However, their combined effectiveness varies widely, with practical use often constrained by AEs' institutional capacity, implementation context, and project modality. As a result, project-level gender assessments and gender action plans are frequently perceived as procedural, compliance-oriented requirements, rather than fully integrated mechanisms for effectively advancing gender mainstreaming across the entire project cycle.

59. The updated Gender Policy mandates that all FPs include project-level gender assessments and gender action plans, with compliance enforced at approval through procedural controls, effectively establishing a minimum standard for gender integration. The gender assessment is an analytical requirement that identifies gender-differentiated needs, roles, vulnerabilities, and opportunities relevant to the project context. According to the updated Gender Policy, the GAP (2020–2023) and related guidance for FP development, the gender assessment must assess structural barriers, institutional capacities, and potential gender-related risks, and must inform the project's theory of change, activities, risk management, and stakeholder engagement approach. Building on the project's gender assessments and gender action plans aims to translate the findings of the assessment's analysis of specific, time-bound, and budgeted actions with clear responsibilities and indicators to ensure gender results are implemented and monitored throughout the project cycle.[41]
60. The GCF provides guidelines through its *Mainstreaming Gender in Green Climate Fund Projects Toolkit* (2017) for mainstreaming gender across the project cycle, as a useful reference point for understanding how gender considerations can be integrated into projects.[42] This toolkit offers concrete, step-by-step direction for developing both project-level gender assessments and gender action plans. It outlines how to conduct evidence-based gender analyses, covering data-collection,

[39] B.11/10: Initial Monitoring and Accountability Framework for Accredited Entities, November 2015, https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/monitoring-and-accountability-framework-accredited-entities.
[40] Annex V to decision B.42/13: Updated Monitoring and Accountability Framework for Accredited Entities, July 2025, https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/decision/decision-b42-12-b42-a05.pdf.
[41] Green Climate Fund, "Gender Assessment and Project/Programme-level Action Plan," Annex 8 to the Funding Proposal (2019).
[42] Green Climate Fund, *Mainstreaming Gender in Green Climate Fund Projects* (2017), https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/guidelines-gcf-toolkit-mainstreaming-gender_0.pdf.

stakeholder engagement, and identification of gender-differentiated climate impacts, and then shows how to translate those findings into actionable gender action plans with clear activities, responsibilities, budgets, and indicators. Together, these sections provide a practical blueprint that links diagnostic assessment directly to implementation planning, ensuring gender considerations are embedded throughout the project cycle. However, some GCF Secretariat staff recognize the need to update the toolkit, which was developed prior to the 2019 update of the Gender Policy and therefore does not fully reflect the updated Gender Policy requirements.

61. The Secretariat has also developed project-level templates for gender assessments and gender action plans, which are available to AEs to guide them in the development of these documents. These templates appear to be practical, providing AEs with a foundational structure for meeting GCF gender requirements and strengthening the consistency of gender assessment and project-level gender action plan preparation. However, some interviewees in the project sample noted that the gender action plan template was perceived as relatively narrow and table-based, with limited guidance on developing meaningful indicators and ensuring alignment with the project logical framework, creating a risk that project gender action plans would function as standalone documents rather than integrated implementation tools.

62. The GCF's requirement for the gender assessment and project-level gender action plan is designed with the dual intention to first strengthen the overall quality of FPs by ensuring that gender considerations are analytically grounded and meaningfully integrated into project design, and second, to guide and track the implementation of gender priorities throughout the project cycle. During implementation, AEs are required to report on project gender action plan progress through the APRs and the mid-term and final evaluation processes. While ground-level verification is the responsibility of the AE as per the GCF's second-level due diligence model, APR reporting against project-level gender action plan progress allows the Secretariat and the IEU to monitor whether gender commitments are being delivered through document review.

63. GCF requirements for project-level gender assessments and gender action plans have significantly raised the standard for gender integration in design, serving as relevant entry points for ensuring systematic consideration of gender as part of FP development. This has been widely recognized by a range of stakeholders as a strong value-add and distinctive feature of the GCF approach that institutionalizes gender considerations.

64. However, in practice, these tools are frequently developed as parallel or stand-alone siloed deliverables, often by external consultants, resulting in weak integration with projects' core elements such as project objectives, theories of change, and budgets. Consequently, several stakeholders expressed that these tools are experienced as compliance-oriented, rather than fully leveraged to effectively strengthen gender mainstreaming across the entire project cycle. Weaknesses in project-level gender assessments and gender action plans were also documented going back to a 2021 analysis by the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) gender monitoring group of the 67 project gender action plans and the gender assessments of 68 GCF FPs with projects and programmes approved in the region, assessing the substance of gender action plans (and lack thereof) across five key areas. This analysis concluded that the majority of gender action plans did not meet the standard of adequacy, with most common weaknesses noted around setting targets and indicators, organization across activities, deeper gender analysis, budgeting and responsibilities.[43]

[43] Natalia Daza Niño, with contributions from the Latin America Regional Gender Monitoring Group for the activities of the Green Climate Fund. See Natalia Daza Niño, *A Feminist Overview of Gender Assessments and Gender Action Plans in Funding Proposals from Latin America and the Caribbean Presented to the Green Climate Fund* (Women's Environment and Development Organization, April 27, 2026), https://content.wedo.org/uploads/documents/Feminist-Overview-of-Gender-Assessments-and-GAPs-in-Latin-America-Presented-to-GCF_ENGLISH_2026_WEDO.pdf.

65. Document review of the gender assessments and gender action plans in the sample and interviews with project stakeholders further reaffirmed these analysis findings from 2021. While the design of these GCF requirements creates an important structural pathway for strengthening gender mainstreaming across the funded activity cycle, and encourages earlier integration of gender dimensions, their practical potential is not yet consistently realized – with the effectiveness of project gender assessments and gender action plans as tools for gender mainstreaming dependent on AE's capacities, institutional will, and implementation context.
66. For example, stakeholders reported that GCF Gender Policy requirements are difficult to translate into practice in some contexts, where ambitious targets for increased women's participation set out in the gender action plans do not align with local realities. Some noted that in Bangladesh, women's participation targets could not be met in certain rural areas, while a project in Amman was cancelled after companies resisted mandatory gender-reporting requirements. Within the project sample, challenges emerged in FP193, where participation targets set in the gender action plan (e.g. 40 per cent women-led businesses) were considered not realistic to be achieved given cultural norms, land-ownership patterns, and community dynamics, leading to repeated redesigns and uncertainty about achieving targets. These cases illustrate how country context shapes the feasibility of projects realizing gender action plan commitments and underscore the need for more context-sensitive approaches.
67. Key trends from the analysis of gender assessments and gender action plans from the 20 projects in the sample and across the deep dives for this evaluation include variability in the quality and relevance of project-level gender assessments and gender action plans during implementation, depending on project type and modality. While several gender assessments provide comprehensive country-level gender data, project teams noted that this information is often outdated or loses relevance by the time implementation begins – this is particularly the case in multi-country projects (e.g. FP163, FP194, FP128) containing more generic country information, equity programmes with sub-granting not yet defined at the time of FP development (e.g. FP128),[44] and in rapidly changing or fragile contexts (e.g. FP119). While some AEs explained that projects updated their gender action plans during implementation to address these shortcomings (e.g. FP126[45], FP194), it was reported that doing so then created a heavier reporting burden.
68. There is evidence of good practices from other climate funds to address some of the noted challenges and limitations with the gender assessments and gender action plans. While noting the differentiated scale and scope of comparable projects, insights from the benchmarking study[46] as part of the IEU Gender Synthesis highlighted that the AF's Gender Action Plan FY 2021–2023 introduced a gender scorecard as a portfolio-level tool to strengthen how gender integration is assessed beyond compliance and quantitative indicators[47,] The GCF does not yet have a comparable instrument for project level assessment and portfolio-level oversight.

[44] For example, equity programmes require a programme-level gender action plan and then sub-projects gender action plan.
[45] Notably, FP126 detailed the process of updating the GAP to adapt to the evolving context in Cuba, emphasizing this as critical to increase the relevance and impact of the project. Interviewees explained that the 2025 GAP (2020) focused mainly on participation targets and access, without addressing deeper structural barriers and underlying power relations limiting women's participation; updating the GAP five years later (2025) allowed the project to make key adjustments such as shifting from activity-based indicators to outcome-oriented indicators that focused on the use of knowledge and practices, leadership and decision-making.
[46] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Gender Synthesis: Benchmarking Exercise*, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/document/gendersynthesis-benchmarking%20study.
[47] Adaptation Fund, *Report on the Fund's Gender Scorecard Implementation for FY24*. The Gender Scorecard is an operational data-tracking tool developed under the AF's Gender Action Plan (FY2021–2023) to systematically evaluate and monitor how effectively adaptation projects integrate gender-responsive design throughout the project cycle.

D. SAFEGUARDS

GCF has established a comprehensive safeguards architecture that integrates gender-related risks within environmental and social risk management processes, supported by both preventive systems and accountability mechanisms such as the Independent Redress Mechanism (IRM). However, the effectiveness of this system remains uneven in practice, due to capacity gaps across AEs, inconsistent application and updating of safeguards measures during implementation, and limited accessibility and awareness of grievance mechanisms. In addition, the absence of systematic reporting on gender-specific dimensions of safeguards limits visibility over how gender-related risks are identified, managed, and addressed across the portfolio.

69. At the portfolio level, gender-related safeguards are embedded within the GCF Environmental and Social Policy, which requires AEs to identify, assess, and mitigate environmental and social risks throughout the project cycle. These requirements are operationalized through the GCF Environmental and Social Management System, including the integration of gender-related risks into social risk assessments and mitigation measures such as ESMPs and gender action plans.
70. The safeguards framework follows a risk-based approach and is guided by principles such as a mitigation hierarchy and inclusive stakeholder engagement. It requires attention to vulnerable and marginalized groups, including women, and promotes the identification and management of potential adverse impacts throughout implementation. While this provides a structured basis for managing gender-related risks, its effectiveness depends on consistent application and monitoring across AEs.
71. While the safeguards framework establishes a preventive system for managing risks, additional accountability is provided through the IRM, which allows affected stakeholders to submit complaints related to environmental, social, or gender risks, thereby triggering compliance handling processes (compliance reviews of problem solving) where safeguards may not have been adequately implemented.[48] Recent IRM reporting[49] shows a shift towards strengthening access to local level awareness and redress, particularly through engagement with CSOs.[50] These efforts aim to extend safeguards systems beyond formal structures and improve accessibility for local communities. Stakeholder interviews further indicate that CSO networks support grievance processes, community engagement, and investigations. In parallel, the 2025 IRM report notes that all newly accredited AEs are expected to have a functioning GRM by 2026, supported by IRM-led outreach, training, and capacity-building initiatives with AEs to strengthen the transparency and effectiveness of grievance handling.
72. At the project level, adherence to gender-related safeguards appears strongest at the design stage, where AEs are required to prepare environmental and social risk assessments, project-level gender assessments, gender action plans and GRMs. However, the extent to which grievance mechanisms are meaningfully gender-responsive at the design stage remains uneven, with features such as

[48] As a key accountability mechanism, the IRM maintains five core functions: (i) complaints and grievances, (ii) capacity building, (iii) outreach, (iv) advisory services, and (v) reconsideration requests.
[49] GCF/B.44/Inf.02: 2025 Annual Report of the Independent Redress Mechanism, March 4, 2026, https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/gcf-b44-inf02.
[50] The IRM has provided advocacy grants to CSOs in multiple countries (e.g. Burkina Faso, Cameroon, India, Philippines, Zimbabwe) to support awareness-raising, capacity-building and access to grievance mechanisms among affected communities; conducted regional outreach and webinars, including with IPs' networks, particularly in Asia; and supported CSOs to act as intermediaries in raising awareness of grievance mechanisms and access to redress.

women-specific reporting channels, female focal points, gender-based violence (GBV)/SEAH referral pathways, and confidentiality measures, only reflected in a subset of cases.

73. During implementation, AEs report on safeguards and risk management through APRs, which include standardized sections on ESS and grievance redress mechanisms.[51] A review of APRs for this evaluation suggests that safeguards systems and grievance mechanisms are generally in place and monitored throughout implementation, although the evidence reported may vary depending on project progress and implementation challenges.[52] However, APR reporting provides limited information on the gender-responsiveness of these mechanisms, making it difficult to systematically assess whether and the extent to which safeguards systems are accessible and responsive to the needs of women and other vulnerable groups.
74. In addition, a review of project documents suggests that gender-responsive grievance measures noted at design do not always carry through fully into implementation. In other words, some features, such as women-specific grievance channels or female focal points, are planned in gender action plans but subsequently are less frequently reported or emphasized in APRs, indicating an implementation gap.
75. Grievance data provides further insight into the functioning of safeguards systems. The Annual Portfolio Performance Report (APPR, 2024) reports a total of 287 grievances received across the portfolio, with 245 resolved within documented time frames.[53] In 2025, the IRM handled 11 cases,[54] most of which related to livelihoods or labour issues and one labour case (via compliance investigation) with specific relevance to GCF Gender Policy and SEAH Policy. The labour case concerns an allegation of non-renewal of a contract as a retaliatory measure following the complainant's notification to the executing entity (EE) of several reports of alleged sexual harassment and GBV.[55] However, reporting rarely included sex-disaggregated data on grievances[56], limiting visibility over whether women and men are accessing and benefiting from these mechanisms. At the project level, grievances typically concerned construction impacts, land access, employment disputes, environmental concerns, and social inclusion issues, among others. While many projects have established multi-channel grievance systems, their effectiveness appears uneven. In some cases, the absence of reported grievances may reflect limited awareness, accessibility, or underreporting rather than an absence of issues.
76. Additionally, relatively few completed project evaluations have examined how grievance mechanisms functioned or whether they were gender-responsive, reflecting the portfolio's early stage and leaving a knowledge gap in understanding longer-term effectiveness of the grievance mechanisms.

[51] As APRs include a standardized grievance redress section, some projects have reported on grievance mechanisms during implementation even where these were not prominently reflected in the design documents reviewed.
[52] For example, SAP018 reported limited safeguard-related activities during the reporting period due to delays in establishing the Project Implementation Unit and other startup challenges, with reporting focused largely on planned rather than completed activities.
[53] GCF/B.43/Inf.10/Add.01: Annual Portfolio Performance Report (2024), October 9, 2025, 41, https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/gcf-b43-inf10-add01.
[54] GCF/B.44/Inf.02: 2025 Annual Report of the Independent Redress Mechanism, March 4, 2026, https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/gcf-b44-inf02.
[55] Independent Redress Mechanism, "C0015 Colombia," accessed June 5, 2026, https://irm.greenclimate.fund/case/c0015-colombia.
[56] Some complainants have explicitly requested confidentiality, limiting the IRM's ability to disclose details, including gender-related information. In addition, IRM cases are demand-driven. The issues addressed are raised by complainants, consequently gender-specific detail emerges only where complainants themselves present it, depending on the nature of each grievance.

E. LIMITATIONS AND CHALLENGES IN SAFEGUARDS IMPLEMENTATION

77. Overall, despite a well-developed safeguards architecture at the portfolio level, evidence points to a set of systemic constraints that limit the effectiveness of gender-responsive safeguards implementation across the GCF portfolio.
78. First, **institutional capacity gaps** remain a central constraint, with uneven availability of safeguards expertise across AEs. Regional patterns indicate higher compliance rates among IAEs, suggesting that differences in institutional capacity directly affect the quality of safeguards implementation, including the integration of gender considerations.[57]
79. Second, **safeguards frameworks** are not consistently updated during implementation, creating disconnects between initial ESMPs and evolving project contexts, including emerging gender-related risks and vulnerabilities.
80. Third, **awareness and communication** around accountability mechanisms remain uneven. While grievance redress systems are widely established, APPRs note recurring challenges in informing stakeholders about the GCF IRM as an available grievance channel.[58] In addition, evidence remains limited regarding the accessibility of grievance mechanisms for women and other vulnerable groups.
81. Finally, **gender** within safeguards at the AE and project levels remains insufficiently captured and operationalized. Reporting systems do not systematically disaggregate safeguards data by sex or vulnerability. There is limited visibility on gender-related risks such as GBV, exclusion, or differential impacts.

[57] GCF/B.43/Inf.10/Add.01: Annual Portfolio Performance Report (2024), 42, https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/gcf-b43-inf10-add01.
[58] Ibid., 43.

Chapter 5. EFFICIENCY

A. GCF'S ORGANIZATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND RESOURCES

82. The efficiency analysis of this gender evaluation covers governance and management issues, the Secretariat and staffing related to gender, resources allocation, operational procedures and the efficiency of support programmes. It draws on insights from the IEU Progress Report on the Implementation of the GAP (2026) that was prepared and submitted as an annex to the IEU Activity Report to the Board (B.44) in February 2026.

1. GOVERNANCE

GCF has established a strong governance framework for gender mainstreaming, with a clear policy and gender-related compliance requirements for AEs through the accreditation process. Governance bodies include gender experts. Gender parity has been achieved across the Secretariat. However, while APPRs and COP reporting integrate gender considerations, there has been a lack of oversight regarding GAP implementation.

83. Priority Area 1 of the institutional GAP on governance was intended to establish the institutional foundations and accountability structures necessary to operationalize the GCF updated Gender Policy across the Fund's governance and operational architecture. It sought to strengthen oversight, leadership and institutional responsibility for gender mainstreaming by promoting gender parity in key decision-making bodies, clarifying the oversight role of the Board, and reinforcing accountability for implementation through audits, monitoring and annual reporting. Priority Area 1 also recognizes that NDAs can request readiness support to strengthen relevant policies, procedures and competencies, while AEs are expected, through the accreditation process, to demonstrate the policies, competencies and processes necessary to implement the updated Gender Policy.

84. GCF has made clear progress in establishing a formal architecture for gender mainstreaming, including having an approved policy framework with gender-related compliance and competency requirements for AEs through the accreditation process. The updated Gender Policy established a clear institutional commitment and mandate for gender-responsiveness. The Board approves and periodically reviews the Gender Policy, while the Secretariat periodically reports on the institutional GAP.[59] The institutional GAP 2020–2023 also states that "the Secretariat will undertake due diligence of the implementation of the Gender Policy and Gender Action Plan by internal gender audits, [which] should include performance against organizational, process-level indicators of the Gender Action Plan". However, the Secretariat has not reported on the implementation of the institutional GAP since 2020, which is a concern that was expressed in interviews by both Board members and CSO network observers.

[59] B.24/12, Updated Gender Policy and Action Plan 2020–2023, November 14, 2019, https://www.greenclimate.fund/decision/b24-12. Under this decision, the Board adopted the updated Gender Policy and the Gender Action Plan 2020–2023, and requested the Secretariat to implement the Gender Action Plan and its associated indicators. The Secretariat also reports on gender-related progress to the UNFCCC COP through its broader institutional reporting.

85. According to the IEU Gender Synthesis (2025), the GCF has sought to mainstream gender internally by promoting gender-sensitive institutional practices across the organization. Following COP26 guidance having encouraged greater gender balance across the Fund's structures, the GCF reports "close to a 50:50 balance between men and women", indicating that gender parity has been achieved across the Secretariat, including within the independent units.
86. Regarding gender competencies in governance bodies, the Independent Technical Advisory Panel has a gender expert as institutional GAP provisions. In addition, the Gender Synthesis confirms that the Accreditation Panel includes a gender and ESS Specialist, responsible for conducting gender compliance reviews at Stage 2 of the accreditation process.

2. Secretariat structure and organizational arrangements

The GCF Secretariat's ongoing reorganization and regionalization processes have yet to demonstrate clear efficiency gains for gender mainstreaming, with current arrangements characterized by unclear and evolving roles regarding gender, and unrealized potential for more context-responsive delivery.

87. Since 2024, the GCF Secretariat has undergone a profound reorganization and regionalization process, intent on the GCF becoming a more agile and efficient organization, better able to respond to country needs while mobilizing needed financial resources at scale. The reorganization continues to have implications for the way in which different divisions, departments, teams, and regions support gender mainstreaming across the organization.
88. Before the reorganization, the gender team was concentrated in the Office of Sustainability and Inclusion (OSI), addressing both policy and operational matters. In 2024, the Secretariat was reorganized into departments, including regional departments, which are located under offices that report to the Office of the Executive Director. The gender team was reorganized into two teams, located under the Office of the Chief Strategy and Impact Officer (OCSIO) – which oversees policy-related matters – and the Office of the Chief Investment Officer – which oversees the Fund's investments and operations. It is still early in the reorganization process to fully assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the split in terms of supporting gender mainstreaming across the organization. However, based on KIIs with GCF Secretariat staff, a few trade-offs are perceived with the split and re-distribution of responsibilities.
89. On the one hand, GCF Secretariat staff reported some early efficiency gains, as staff are more focused on either policies or operations. Secretariat staff also explained that, in the past, the OSI was heavily focused on operations with little time for reflection and learning. With the split, the OCSIO can not only focus on policy but also on learning emerging from the implementation of the GCF policy to close the knowledge and feedback loop. On the other hand, the split has generated some confusion among external partners regarding its operational implications and whom the appropriate points of contact for gender and safeguards within the Secretariat might be.
90. The Secretariat has been reorganized into four regional desks at headquarters (HQ), with regional desks operating from Songdo until their partial relocation into the regional offices expected in 2027. However, there is still lack of clarity among GCF Secretariat staff regarding roles and responsibilities for gender within this regional and regionally distributed structure. Secretariat KIIs indicate a concern that senior management in regional desks have insufficient understanding of the updated Gender Policy and of the Fund's approach to gender mainstreaming in general. With the regionalization process, the GCF has introduced the new position of national liaison officers, who

are locally based experts embedded within NDAs, advising them on GCF policies and procedures, strategic investments, among others. Of the 29 surveyed liaison officers, most reported only a limited to moderate level of familiarity with the GCF updated Gender Policy: 35 per cent (n = 10) indicated that they were slightly familiar and 41 per cent moderately familiar, with only 14 per cent reporting a high level of familiarity.[60] In regional desks, regional managers, country focal points, and readiness focal points also reported limited familiarity with the updated GCF Gender Policy. In addition, there are currently no clear strategic directions for the implementation of the updated Gender Policy at regional level. This constitutes a yet missed opportunity for the GCF to better understand and consider regional and country contexts in the implementation of the updated Gender Policy, to avoid a one-size-fits-all approach.

91. Overall, there is still lack of clarity regarding organizational and staffing arrangements for gender mainstreaming to follow the move of regional desks into regions. As noted above on staffing and resources, all responsibilities for gender mainstreaming at the GCF lie within the Operational Safeguards team at HQ. In interviews, GCF Secretariat staff expressed that it remained unclear at the current time if and if so, how gender expertise might be moved to the regions. As the GCF finalizes its regionalization process, the following issues will need to be clarified:

- The extent to which the Operational Safeguards team at HQ provides gender expertise / support in FP origination and APR reviews, considering the merging of ESS and gender expertise under one role, expected portfolio growth as well as the reformed accreditation process, which shifts some gender-related reviews from accreditation to proposal development.
- The extent to which gender and ESS experts will be distributed into regions, with associated growth of the Operational Safeguards team throughout and whether this team will retain a presence at headquarters, and how its role will relate to that of the gender team in OCSIO.
- The extent to which gender becomes ‘everybody’s business’, which would require extensive training of GCF staff on gender across the organization, with the Operational Safeguards team shifting to a guiding, support and backstopping role.

B. STAFFING, HUMAN RESOURCES AND CAPACITIES

At institutional level, gender capacity is concentrated in the Operational Safeguards team, with limited capacity among staff more broadly across the Secretariat. At project level, capacity varies across AEs and is often limited in sub-projects and with EEs.

1. SECRETARIAT EXPERIENCE AND PROJECT CAPACITY

92. At institutional level, capacity for gender at the GCF Secretariat has increased in the Operational Safeguards team but remains insufficient across the Secretariat. The Gender Synthesis (2025) reports that capacity constraints at the GCF Secretariat have hindered implementation of the updated Gender Policy and the integration of gender across the portfolio, with only one gender expert in OSI in 2019 and three in 2023.[61] GCF staff specialized in gender and environmental safeguarding support have grown substantially since then. As noted earlier on regionalization, the OSI team has

[60] Two respondents reported being “not at all familiar” with the GCF updated Gender Policy, while one respondent selected “don't know”.
[61] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Independent Synthesis of the GCF's Gender Approach* (September 2025), 16, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/ieu-gender-synthesis-2.pdf.

been split into two teams in 2024, one focused on policy and the other on operations. The policy team is composed of the Head of Sustainability and Inclusion and four specialists (i.e. gender, ESS, IPs, and transparency and engagement). In operations, the Operational Safeguards team is composed of the Operational Safeguards Lead supported by nine environment and social specialists, which have sub-specialities (e.g. gender, ESS, IPs). This growth in staff capacity demonstrates an increased commitment from the organization to support the effective implementation of the GCF updated Gender Policy.

93. Despite an increase in the number of environmental and social specialists, including with gender sub-specialities, GCF Secretariat staff expressed concerns in interviews that the Operational Safeguards team is understaffed and overworked, and has recently struggled to meet the growing demand for gender reviews across the project cycle. These pressures have intensified as the Fund's ambitions to expand its portfolio have grown, alongside institutional commitments to increase the number of FPs submitted to the Board and to reduce the time to nine months between the submission of a concept note to GCF Secretariat and the submission of the corresponding FP to the Independent Technical Advisory Panel. Interviewees noted that the Operational Safeguards team faces increased demands in prioritizing environment and social reviews ahead of FP submissions. This may have affected the timeliness of support in other phases of the project cycle, including the clearance of APRs, which also requires input from the team.
94. In addition, the evaluation found that technical capacity for gender outside the Operational Safeguards team and across the GCF Secretariat is weak. Interviews indicate that staff across the GCF Secretariat have limited knowledge of the updated Gender Policy, a situation exacerbated by high staff turnover, which reduces institutional continuity and retention of gender-related knowledge. There is currently no mandatory staff training or onboarding for new staff on the updated Gender Policy.
95. Survey results indicate that only about one-third of liaison officers (34 per cent) recalled receiving information about the GCF Gender Policy during their onboarding. Moreover, the vast majority (92 per cent) reported not having completed any GCF training or online course on gender. Among the two respondents who had completed such training, both indicated that it only slightly prepared them to mainstream gender into their work. This is consistent with consultations with readiness focal points in regions: none expressed receiving information on the Gender Policy during onboarding while only one of two who responded noted having received gender-related training subsequently.
96. GCF Secretariat staff often refer to gender being the "Operational Safeguards team's business", and roles and responsibilities of other staff regarding the implementation of the updated Gender Policy are unclear. Current job descriptions and staff key performance indicators (KPIs) do not systematically include gender considerations, which results in staff not prioritizing this in their work. This is reflected in the survey results, where a modest 62 per cent of liaison officers (n = 18) agreed or strongly agreed that their job description outlines roles and responsibilities related to integrating gender considerations in their work. Similarly, consulted readiness focal points in regional desks noted that their job descriptions do not include any explicit gender-related responsibilities.
97. Evidence from the benchmarking study conducted as a precursor to this evaluation presents interesting learning in this regard. The GEF only has one gender specialist but has progressively strengthened the capacity of staff across the Secretariat, making gender "everyone's business". This has resulted in technical teams embedding gender in their technical reviews of project proposals, which has ultimately led to a stronger integration of gender approaches across projects. By comparison, IFAD has an extensive gender architecture with dedicated staff and consultants housed

within a specialized gender and social inclusion function at HQ, reinforced by senior management leadership and a network of gender focal points across divisions and offices in regions/countries. This focal point network model can also provide useful learning for the GCF as it established its regional offices.

2. PROJECT-LEVEL CAPACITY

98. The Gender Synthesis found that project level capacity on gender remains modest and uneven across the GCF portfolio. Persistent capacity gaps were identified in gender analysis, planning, implementation, monitoring, limiting the quality and consistency of gender mainstreaming across the project cycle. This is consistent with GCF Secretariat staff interviews, which point to mixed capacities for gender depending on the type and size of the project.

99. Evidence suggests that gender expertise is present in a majority of GCF projects, although coverage remains uneven. A keyword search of APR narratives found that approximately 65 per cent of APRs between 2017 and 2024 reference a gender specialist or expert, with the proportion increasing overtime and reaching 76.4 per cent in 2024.[62] However, the availability of gender expertise varies considerably across implementing entities, with reference to gender specialists found in only 40 per cent of projects implemented by national DAEs and 50 per cent of private-sector entities, compared with 66 per cent of projects implemented by IAEs.

100. Evidence from the Gender Synthesis, AI-facilitated portfolio analysis, interviews with AEs and Secretariat staff all indicate that gender expertise is frequently provided through short-term external consultants, particularly during project preparation. Project-level gender assessments and gender action plans are often developed by consultants rather than by AE staff assigned to project teams. According to Secretariat staff, this can create challenges when revisions to project-level gender assessments and gender action plans are required during project review, as consultants are often no longer under contract and implementing entities may lack resources to secure additional support. Similar challenges can arise during implementation, when consultants who prepared gender action plans are no longer involved in the project. Secretariat staff noted that some AEs have established retainer arrangements with consultants who prepare gender assessments and gender action plans, allowing them to provide follow-up support during gender action plan finalization and implementation, as needed. Interviewees considered these arrangements to function more effectively, as they help maintain continuity between project design and implementation.

101. As well, capacity challenges were observed in projects that rely on multi-tier implementation arrangements, such as sub-granting mechanisms, financial intermediaries, or funds that channel financing to downstream organizations or companies. While some AEs and EEs may have dedicated gender expertise, ensuring that these capacities extend to all executing partners can be more difficult. Interviewees noted that companies receiving financing through intermediary funds often have ESS specialists, but not necessarily dedicated gender expertise (e.g. FP193, FP128).

102. By way of example, in Mexico, SAP023 used a sub-granting approach to channel financing to local CSOs and community organizations for the implementation of restoration and climate adaptation activities at watershed level. Both the AE (Fondo Mexicano), and the EEs (FGM and FONNOR),

[62] The indicator is derived from keyword/regex detection in APR text using Python, replicating the approach used in the 2025 Gender Synthesis. While standardized wording in the APR template was removed where feasible, residual template artefacts and repeated phrasing may still trigger matches. The indicator captures any mention of gender expertise, including references to planned or intended hiring, and therefore does not distinguish between anticipated and actual deployment. This is particularly relevant in early-stage or forward-looking reporting sections. Results reflect reported mentions rather than confirmed engagement or embeddedness and should be interpreted as indicative and likely overestimating prevalence. Further methodological detail is provided in Annex 4.B.2.

which are responsible for overseeing and supporting subprojects executed by local organizations, have dedicated gender specialists. However, capacity gaps for gender were observed at the level of the local organization mid-way into implementation. To address this gap, budget resources were used to hire a gender consultant, who provided accompaniment to strengthen capacities of the local organizations to mainstream gender. Such gender capacity gaps among EEs and/or local organizations were noted in multiple countries where data was collected, and it was not always the case that resources were similarly made available to address these lacunae.

C. RESOURCE ALLOCATION, BUDGETING AND ACCESSIBILITY

Progress on gender-responsive resource allocation remains limited. While the updated Gender Policy and institutional GAP emphasize the importance of dedicated financial resources, the limited evidence available suggests that gender-related investments are relatively low and not systematically tracked, both at the portfolio and project level, constraining visibility over whether resources are aligned with institutional ambitions and limiting effective implementation.

103. Progress in this area remains limited, particularly regarding the systematic tracking and transparency of financial resources allocated to gender. At the institutional level, there is no comprehensive system to track financial allocations for gender mainstreaming, which constrains the ability to assess whether resources are commensurate with the ambitions of the updated Gender Policy. The institutional GAP assessment estimates that approximately 0.36 per cent of the Secretariat's administrative budget is allocated to gender, further illustrating the relatively low-level of dedicated resources.[63] This gap reflects broader challenges in financial reporting and monitoring frameworks, and limits visibility over how resources are distributed and utilized across the portfolio.

104. At the project level, gender budgeting practices vary across project type. The project-level gender action plan template requires AEs to identify "approximate budgetary allocations" for each gender-responsive activity included in the project-level gender action plan, thereby requiring gender-related activities to be explicitly costed and budgeted within the project/programme. A review of sampled gender action plans indicates that most include some form of budgeting provision for gender-related activities, although the degree of specificity and integration varies considerably across projects and funding modalities. Several project-level gender action plans include relatively detailed budget allocations linked to specific gender-responsive activities or outputs. In contrast, others do not systematically cost individual gender activities. Instead, they indicate that gender-related activities will be financed through broader project, fund-level, technical assistance, or operational budgets. This approach appears more common among fund-based and multi-country investment vehicles, where detailed ex ante costing may be more difficult because downstream investments or portfolio projects are not yet fully identified at the approval stage.

105. Overall, however, available evidence at the project level indicates that financial allocations for gender remain modest and insufficiently tracked. In interviews, GCF Secretariat staff explained that budgeting for gender activities can sometimes prove challenging, as these activities can often be embedded in broader activities. These challenges are reflected in the IEU's Gender Synthesis (2025), which found "insufficient financial allocation for gender activities, with 'highly uneven' budget allocations for gender actions in project-level gender action plans".[64] In addition, while

60 Independent Evaluation Unit, *Progress Report on the Implementation of the Gender Action Plan* (2026), https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/progress-report-implementation-gap_4.pdf.
64 Ibid.

projects allocate budget for gender activities, some AEs and government stakeholders explained that it is sometimes difficult to move budget lines to finance unforeseen activities. For example, in both Brazil and Liberia, budget lines could not be moved to finance cell phones for women and local community groups involved in project activities. Similarly, in Nepal, AEs explained that although gender and inclusion policies and guidelines were in place, insufficient allocation of dedicated gender resources at the design stage created implementation challenges, as project teams later had to renegotiate funding for gender-related activities due to lack of budgetary flexibility. This also points to a widespread shortcoming of AEs to plan and allocate gender resources in project budgets. The benchmarking study conducted as part of this evaluation suggests that these challenges are not unique to the GCF, although several organizations have adopted more explicit gender budgeting requirements or institutional mechanisms. For example, the AF requires both administrative and project-level budgeting for gender activities, and projects lacking articulated gender considerations may be deemed ineligible for approval. Similarly, IFAD allocates a measurable share of staff costs to gender-related activities and has institutionalized gender functions within its staffing structure, although evidence still points to insufficient operational resources to sustain consistent implementation across the portfolio. Conversely, institutions such as the GEF and CIF also face challenges related to limited dedicated corporate gender budgets and variability in how gender-related activities are resourced across investments.

106. In terms of accessibility to financial resources, there is currently no gender-dedicated funding mechanism that earmarks funding for AEs to undertake gender-related activities. Rather, gender-related budgeting appears to remain project-specific and operationalized differently across projects and entities.

D. OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

GCF has established a comprehensive set of operational procedures and guidance for gender integration, with strong compliance at the design stage. However, the application of these guidelines remains uneven; there is a gap between well-defined procedural requirements and their consistent and effective implementation across the project cycle.

107. Progress on operational procedures is relatively stronger at the design and compliance stages, although their application remains uneven across different stages of the project cycle. The GCF has established a range of operational requirements and guidance to support gender integration throughout the project cycle, including mandatory project-level gender assessments and gender action plans, as well as guidance for AEs and NDAs and focal points. Consistent with findings from the IEU's Gender Synthesis (2025), gender considerations are systematically embedded in key project cycle requirements and due diligence processes. Project documentation available on the GCF website indicates that approximately 89 per cent of approved projects are recorded as having both project-level gender assessments and gender action plans.

108. Beyond these formal project cycle requirements, the GCF has also developed supporting resources, including a gender toolkit, iLearn modules and regional dialogue materials. However, evidence on their dissemination and uptake remains more limited. While guidance materials are available, there is little consolidated information on whether they are systematically communicated to AEs and NDAs, or on the frequency, quality and effectiveness of training provided. This mirrors a broader finding of the Gender Synthesis that the availability of gender-related guidance does not necessarily

translate into its uptake, which depends heavily on institutional capacity.[65] Interview evidence further suggests that the usefulness of available resources may be constrained where guidance and training are not sufficiently tailored to local contexts or language needs.

109. Available evidence suggests that application of these guidelines is strongest at the project preparation and design stage. Beyond gender assessments and gender action plans, 73 per cent of projects included strategies and budgets to leverage co-benefits between gender equality and climate action, and about half of the projects documented gender-balanced stakeholder consultations. However, the evaluation found limited evidence of systematic mechanisms to assess the quality of project-level gender action plans or the extent of gender integration along the gender continuum at the design stage. Evidence is weakest at the monitoring and adaptive management stage, with no projects meeting the strict criteria for having undertaken gender audits and implemented course corrections to improve gender mainstreaming.

110. In addition, at the implementation stage, accountability mechanisms to ensure that reporting remains aligned with planned gender commitments and actions also appear limited (as highlighted in Chapter 6).

E. EFFICIENCY OF SUPPORT PROGRAMMES

Support from the Secretariat's Operational Safeguards team, the RPSP and the PPF have strengthened the integration of gender-responsive approaches across the project cycle. However, consulted AEs report that substantial feedback from the Secretariat is sometimes provided late in the FP development and implementation process, limiting opportunities to strengthen project design beyond compliance requirements.

111. The Operational Safeguards team is responsible for supporting the integration of gender along the entire project cycle. As per organizational procedures[66], it engages from project origination onwards, providing feedback to AEs on the integration of gender in concept note and FP development, and once projects are approved and implemented, and it is also responsible for reviewing APRs.

112. Overall, KIIs point to AEs having observed an improvement in the type and quality of comments provided by the GCF Secretariat over time, which has supported the development of improving project-level gender action plans. However, both consulted AE and Secretariat staff indicated that constructive feedback sometimes comes late in the process, sometimes in the months or even weeks before a project is presented to the Board, leaving little time to make meaningful changes. There are many examples to draw on from Latin America, Asia and elsewhere. Relatedly, while AEs in general believe that the FP and gender action plan templates provide sufficient instructions to guide the development of gender action plans, some noted that more practical guidance could be provided for the integration of gender-responsive approaches across different sectors and themes.

113. The RPSP plays a central role in supporting the integration of gender at the project level, despite some gaps. Evaluations and interviews suggest that this support has contributed to operationalizing the GCF updated Gender Policy across countries, particularly by strengthening institutional capacity

[65] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Independent Synthesis of the GCF's Gender Approach* (September 2025), 46, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/ieu-gender-synthesis-2.pdf.
[66] Green Climate Fund, *ESS Standard Operating Procedures*, internal document provided by the Operations team.

and coordination mechanisms.[67] However, evaluations highlight mixed results in strengthening institutional capacity. The 2023 RPSP evaluation identified continued constraints related to limited gender expertise, institutional capacity, and financial resources, which affected the effectiveness of support. It also points to an over-reliance on external consultants among AEs, with approximately half of projects depending heavily on external expertise rather than building internal capacity.[68] It also bears noting that Secretariat gender expertise is engaged in readiness only when gender is an explicit objective of a readiness grant. When gender is mainstreamed across readiness programming, responsibility falls to regional teams, who do not always possess the necessary gender expertise and must manage competing country demands and ownership considerations.

114. Analysis of the RPSP database provides direct evidence on the extent to which gender competencies and capacity are being built through readiness support.[69] Overall, around 60 per cent of RPSP projects include dedicated gender activities and budget, consistent with GCF policy requirements. This rate has improved over the review period, rising from approximately 51 per cent in 2021 to 69 per cent in 2024, suggesting that institutional capacity for gender integration is strengthening over time.

115. The evaluation found that PPF has been widely used to support the integration of gender in project preparation. Among the 100 PPF projects with available data (out of 116 approved grants), 83 per cent included dedicated gender activities such as gender studies, gender analysis, gender baseline assessment, or project-level gender action plan development. However, the financial scale of this support cannot be tracked systematically, as gender-related allocations are not separately tagged within PPF budgets. Based on indicative estimates, approximately USD 4.7 million may have been used by PPF for gender-related analytical work.[70]

116. Overall, interview data indicates that AEs view positively the use of the PPF to strengthen the integration of gender-responsive measures in project preparation (e.g. FP166, FP160, FP193, SAP061, etc.). For example, for SAP061 in Brazil, interviewees noted that gaps identified through the gender analysis supported by the PPF contributed to the integration in project design of support for women's participation in cacao value chains through small-scale chocolate production initiatives and agroforestry-based cacao systems.

[67] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Independent Evaluation of the GCF's Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme* (2023), chapter 9.B.
[68] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Independent Synthesis of the GCF's Gender Approach* (September 2025), 36, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/ieu-gender-synthesis-2.pdf.
[69] Analysis covered 632 projects (2019–2025), subject to AI-assisted gender tagging with human validation.
[70] These estimates should be interpreted with caution, given that 22 PPFs lack activity-level data and the gender spending ratio is derived from a limited sample.

Chapter 6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The GCF's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) architecture as it relates to gender is fragmented and misaligned. The updated Gender Policy (2019) and institutional GAP are not yet fully embedded in the GCF's overall results architecture. The IRMF provides limited operational guidance on gender. Gender-related co-benefits have not been standardized, thereby limiting the possibility of consistent measurement and aggregation of gender-related outcomes. Systems are not yet in place to ensure that projects consistently provide rigorous quantitative and qualitative insights on gender as well as on other dimensions of intersectionality through their reporting and evaluations. The Readiness Strategy (2024–2027) and its revised RRMF, as well as efforts of the Department of Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning all point to a growing institutional commitment to elevating gender-related M&E requirements and practices.

A. RESULTS SYSTEMS, FRAMEWORKS AND MEASUREMENT

117. The Integrated Results Management Framework (IRMF) serves as the GCF's overarching monitoring framework, including for gender-related results. Gender is primarily captured through gender co-benefits and sex-disaggregation across indicators, particularly Core Indicator 2 on beneficiaries. Beyond minimum disaggregation requirements, the IRMF provides limited operational guidance on integrating gender into theories of change, monitoring frameworks, and outcome measurement. In addition, gender-related co-benefits are not yet standardized at the GCF, limiting consistent measurement, aggregation, and reporting of gender-related outcomes.

118. The updated Gender Policy and institutional GAP are not yet fully embedded within the GCF's overall results architecture. Although the policy identifies monitoring and reporting on institutional GAP implementation as part of GCF oversight responsibilities, institutional GAP indicators are not systematically tracked through a centralized system with clear baselines, targets, and data ownership. Existing indicators also remain predominantly process-oriented, limiting the ability to assess institutional and portfolio-level gender outcomes.

119. The institutional GAP does include three outcome-oriented indicators under Priority Area 4,[71] related to improvements in quality of life, reduced vulnerability, and increased adaptive capacity for women and men. However, these indicators have not been systematically monitored or reported on. This appears partly linked to the absence of sufficiently clear operational definitions and measurable parameters for concepts such as "quality of life", "reduced vulnerability", or "adaptive capacity". More importantly, these indicators were never integrated into GCF's main monitoring framework, namely the IRMF, further constraining institutional visibility, accountability, and systematic tracking of gender-related results across the GCF system.

120. Compared to the IRMF, the updated Readiness Strategy (2024–2027) and its revised Results Management Framework reflect a stronger and more explicit commitment to gender. To begin with, it provides explicit definitions of what is meant by gender-sensitive, gender-responsive, and gender-

[71] (1) number of projects where women and men report improvements in their quality of life; (2) number of projects that demonstrate the reduced vulnerability of both women and men; and (3) number of projects that demonstrate increased adaptive capacity of women and men to respond to the impacts of climate change.

transformative.[72] More specifically, the RRMF provides guidance on key areas of readiness and GCF-related activities at national (and regional) level, as in the case of RRMF Outcome 1.1.[73]

121. This outcome requires that stakeholder engagement and capacity-building include gender-balanced participation, with an explicit gender quota as part of Indicator 1.3.1.1, setting out expectations for sex-disaggregation across multiple outputs to ensure gender is systematically tracked in readiness activities. This demonstrates a clearer expectation that readiness support should contribute to gender mainstreaming in national systems. Finally, the RRMF also provides additional guidance for the gender-responsive and inclusive development of nationally determined contributions (NDCs), national adaptation plans (NAPs) and long-term strategies (LTSs).

122. The RPSP Guidebook provides practical guidance on integrating gender into readiness proposals and explicitly requires proposals to be gender-responsive and aligned with the updated Gender Policy. It encourages the use of sex-disaggregated data and gender-responsive budgeting but provides limited operational guidance on designing gender-responsive activities, indicators, and reporting approaches. As a result, significant interpretation is left to NDAs and delivery partners (DPs). Nonetheless, a comparison of the Readiness Results Handbooks for 2020–2023 and 2024–2027 indicates a clear strengthening in the integration of gender in the revised framework, reflecting improved alignment with the GCF updated Gender Policy.[74]

123. Of note, recent efforts have aimed to strengthen this results management architecture overall under the leadership of the recently created (in 2024) Department of Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (DMEL), which is responsible for developing comprehensive M&E-related frameworks, definitions, and methodologies, in addition to overseeing portfolio-level data analysis and reporting. DMEL now plays a central role in managing M&E functions.[75]

B. Monitoring

1. Portfolio

124. Portfolio-level monitoring is conducted through the APPR, which relies on project APR data, evaluation reports, and financial reporting submitted by AEs, and is complemented by Secretariat monitoring and adaptive management. This report is prepared and submitted annually to the Board by the Secretariat and provides details on project implementation and performance. For example, the

[72] "Gender-sensitive" refers to the support provided to create an enabling environment for gender equality among GCF stakeholders – to build on existing policy commitments, environmental and social standards, and to establish a redress mechanism that ensures climate interventions do not exacerbate existing gender inequalities. "Gender-responsive" refers to going beyond existing policy, standards and mechanisms to actively address the specific needs, roles and vulnerabilities of women and men throughout the project cycle. "Gender-transformative" refers to changes that address the structures and institutions reinforcing gender discrimination and inequality.
[73] "Relevant country stakeholders (which may include executing entities, civil society organisations and private sector) have established adequate capacity, systems and networks to support the planning, programming and implementation of GCF funded activities."
[74] In the earlier RRMF (2020–2023), gender is primarily embedded as a cross-cutting consideration within broader notions of stakeholder engagement and capacity-building, with limited explicit guidance on how gender should be operationalized in results frameworks or programming. By contrast, the revised RRMF (2024–2027) integrates gender more systematically into the results structure, providing NDAs, AEs, and delivery partners with clearer guidance on how readiness support can and should advance gender-responsive programming. Gender is explicitly embedded within the concept of "inclusive" outcomes and outputs, which are consistently defined to include the active participation of women and men and adherence to the GCF updated Gender Policy. This is operationalized through multiple entry points across the results chain.
[75] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Synthesis Note on Monitoring and Evaluation* (March 2026), 21, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/me-synthesis-2026-ii-0_1.pdf.

most recent APPR (2024) reported on women cumulatively reached in 2024 (109 million[76]) and the number of gender-related co-benefits reported across projects.[77] The report also includes a specific section on ESS, gender and IPs, drawing on project-level reporting in this area. However, available evidence suggests limited systematic verification of project-level reporting across the portfolio, with validation processes beyond certain technical areas such as greenhouse gas emissions reductions remaining uneven and often ad hoc. The IEU's M&E Synthesis (2026) also highlights challenges related to fragmented data systems, delays in logframe revisions, and inconsistencies in APR review and feedback processes, affecting data quality and usability for adaptive management.

125. In terms of capacity, monitoring performance is also affected by constraints within both the Secretariat and implementing entities. Evidence from the M&E Synthesis highlights that limited human resources and the consolidation of multiple technical functions under task managers[78], despite varying expertise across areas, can affect monitoring quality, including indicator validation and results reporting. Overlaps and lack of clarity between central and regional functions further contribute to inconsistencies in data review and quality assurance, while resource constraints limit the systematic verification of AE-reported results across the portfolio.

126. At the project design stage, project-level gender action plans are meant to provide the primary monitoring framework for gender-related interventions. However, project-level gender action plans are not always fully integrated into core project logframes and results frameworks, which can create disconnects between gender commitments and broader project monitoring systems, including the tracking of gender-related outcomes during implementation. Due to a lack of oversight and capacity, some projects do not include clearly defined gender indicators with baselines and targets, limiting the ability to track progress in a structured manner over time.

127. This issue is not limited to project gender action plans and reflects broader variability in project logframe design quality. The IEU's M&E Synthesis (2026) found that approximately 70 per cent of projects did not plan to collect baseline data, and that less than two-thirds of reviewed projects had indicators aligned with their intended result areas.[79] In contrast, some projects, often supported by stronger M&E and gender expertise, seem to demonstrate more robust gender-related M&E frameworks. For example, FP160 includes gender-related indicators, monitoring plans, and tracking of different social groups, supported by dedicated gender oversight.

128. Additionally, project-level gender action plans rely heavily on quantitative participation indicators. Projects commonly track the number of women participating in activities or gender-disaggregated beneficiaries, while qualitative outcomes such as empowerment, decision-making, or behavioural change are less consistently captured. This aligns with findings from a feminist review of gender action plans in LAC, which found that over half of reviewed proposals relied primarily or exclusively on quantitative indicators, with limited emphasis on qualitative monitoring, meaningful data-collection, or transformational gender outcomes.[80] The benchmarking study for this evaluation further indicates that across comparator climate funds, gender-related evidence remains concentrated

[76] Green Climate Fund, *Integrated Results Management Framework*, Annex I to decision B.29/01, July 2021, Core Indicator 2, https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/integrated-results-management-framework.
[77] GCF/B.43/Inf.10/Add.01: Annual Portfolio Performance Report (2024), 30, https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/gcf-b43-inf10-add01.
[78] Regional-team staff responsible for managing a country's or sub-region's funded activities, readiness and PPF.
[79] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Synthesis on Monitoring and Evaluation* (March 2026), 21, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/me-synthesis-2026-ii-0_1.pdf.
[80] Natalia Daza Niño, with contributions from the Latin America Regional Gender Monitoring Group for the Activities of the Green Climate Fund, see Natalia Daza Niño, *A Feminist Overview of Gender Assessments and Gender Action Plans in Funding Proposals from Latin America and the Caribbean Presented to the Green Climate Fund* (Women's Environment and Development Organization, April 27, 2026), https://content.wedo.org/uploads/documents/Feminist-Overview-of-Gender-Assessments-and-GAPs-in-Latin-America-Presented-to-GCF_ENGLISH_2026_WEDO.pdf.

in participation, access, and sex-disaggregated outputs, while deeper gender-transformative outcomes related to empowerment, leadership, and structural change are less consistently monitored and reported.[81]

129. Accordingly, while 80 per cent[82] of projects track sex-disaggregated beneficiaries' data, there is a great deal of variability in monitoring across dimensions discussed above, as made evident from looking at deep dive country project monitoring practices. Some projects report against their gender action plans. For example, FP160 in Liberia tracks and reports on progress in its APRs for each gender action plan indicator. By comparison, SAP005 in Benin provides narrative reporting without clear quantitative progress against its gender action plan. The quality and consistency of monitoring systems are often influenced by the availability of dedicated gender and M&E expertise within project teams, as well as institutional arrangements for data-collection and reporting. For example, in Lao PDR, as part of SAP009, sex-disaggregated data were tracked through monthly tools and annual reporting, but monitoring quality weakened following the departure of dedicated gender and M&E staff and the merging of gender, ESS, and M&E functions into a single role.

130. Finally, while project-level gender action plans focus primarily on women, there is limited differentiation by age, Indigenous identity or disability in reporting. Evidence from the African States portfolio reflects these patterns, highlighting broader limitations in the selection of intersectional indicators and methods, both quantitative and qualitative. In particular, challenges persist in measuring/tracking the engagement of youth and IPs throughout the project cycle.[83] As the GCF lacks portfolio-level commitments focusing on IPs, its monitoring and results measurement systems do not track or monitor specific IPs-related indicators, making it impossible to assess Fund-wide results regarding IPs.[84] These findings point to gaps in the ability of current systems to capture differentiated experiences and outcomes across multiple dimensions of vulnerability. These differences in terms of intersectionality at the design stage are largely reflected during implementation[85], as are the challenges and limitations of monitoring.

2. Limitations in monitoring

131. A key limitation relates to the limited involvement of GCF M&E functions in the review and validation of project gender action plans at approval stage. Project-level gender action plans are primarily assessed through gender and safeguards processes, without systematic engagement of M&E expertise to ensure the quality of indicators, the feasibility of measurement, and alignment with existing results frameworks. This can result in gaps in indicator clarity, baseline definition, and overall monitorability of gender commitments.

132. A second challenge concerns the limited verification and validation of reported data during implementation. Monitoring systems rely heavily on self-reported information through APRs, with limited use of spot checks, independent verification, or systematic triangulation mechanisms. This

[81] Independent Evaluation Unit, *GCF Gender Synthesis: Benchmarking Exercise* (2026).
[82] Projects with reported beneficiary data.
[83] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Independent Evaluation of the Relevance and Effectiveness of the GCF's Investments in the African States*, Evaluation Report No. 16 (February 2023), 78, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/evaluation/AFR2022.
[84] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Independent Evaluation of the Green Climate Fund's Approach to Indigenous Peoples* (2025), 49, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/evaluation/IP2024.
[85] During implementation, monitoring is primarily conducted by AEs through project APRs, which remain the main mechanism for tracking implementation progress. This reporting obligation is defined within the MAF, which establishes the broader structure for monitoring AE performance and compliance with GCF policies, including ESS requirements, while also recognizing project beneficiaries, affected communities, and local stakeholders, including CSOs, as part of the monitoring and accountability ecosystem. Evidence from interviews suggests that, in practice, monitoring systems rely on a combination of periodic reporting, data collection tools and surveys, field visits and supervision missions, and internal monitoring processes within project management units.

constrains the ability to ensure the reliability and accuracy of reported results, including gender-disaggregated data. A targeted review of the 45 sampled projects through the IEU's M&E Synthesis (2026) found that the Secretariat faced challenges assessing the reliability of the data reported by AEs, as the APR template does not require reporting of methodologies, data sources, or whether results are ex-ante or ex-post.[86]

133. A related limitation is the weak enforcement of alignment between planned and reported gender results. While project gender action plans define expected actions and indicators, there are limited accountability mechanisms to ensure that reporting remains consistently aligned with these initial commitments.[87]

134. In addition, monitoring of gender outcomes is still weakly linked to evaluation and learning processes. There is limited evidence that monitoring data feeds into structured reflection, evaluation findings, or iterative improvements in gender practice. This reduces the potential for monitoring systems to support continuous learning and strengthen the quality of gender integration over time.

135. Finally, the operationalization of inclusive monitoring remains uneven, particularly with respect to accessibility and participation in data-collection processes. There is limited evidence that monitoring systems are systematically designed to capture inputs from all stakeholder groups, including vulnerable populations, which may affect the representativeness and depth of the data collected.

C. EVALUATION

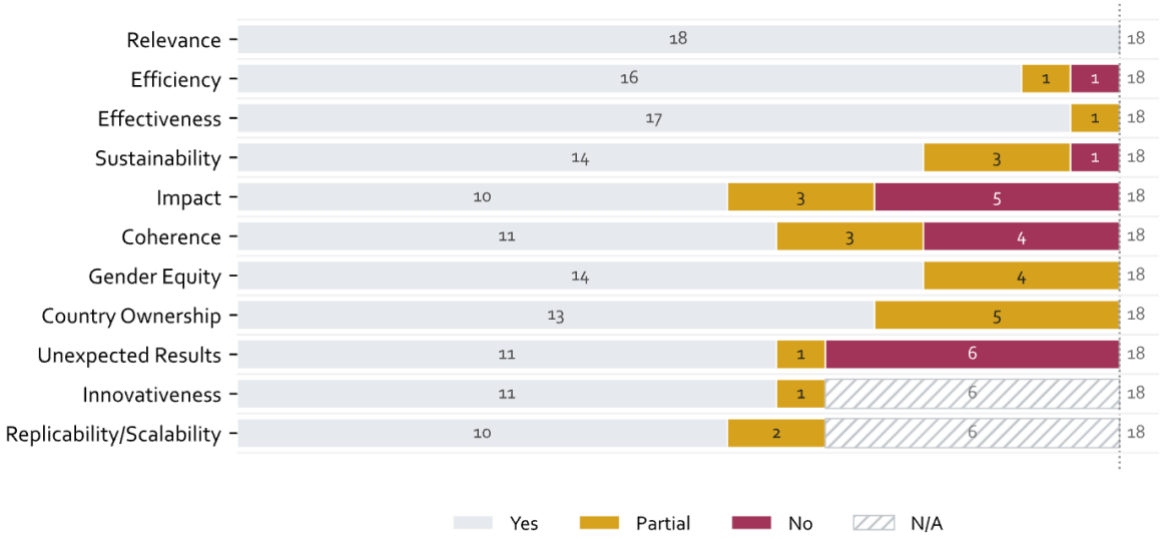
136. Gender is increasingly integrated into GCF evaluations through policy requirements, evaluation criteria, and project-level evaluation practices. However, gender integration in evaluations appears more systematic as a required evaluation topic than as a consistently deep evaluative practice, though this varies depending on which body is managing and leading them.

137. At the portfolio level, the GCF's M&E architecture provides several entry points for gender integration. The Evaluation Policy recognizes that evaluation evidence should inform GCF investments, policies, processes, and strategies, which creates space for gender-related findings to inform institutional learning and future programming. The GCF Evaluation Standards reinforce this by recognizing gender equality, human rights, and environmental considerations as part of evaluation quality expectations. GCF established gender equity as a core evaluation criterion.

138. Evidence from the IEU's Gender Synthesis indicates that the presence of dedicated gender chapters or sections focused on gender dimensions has increased over time.[88] AE-led evaluations generally include gender equity among the core themes assessed, with nearly 78 per cent of them doing so.[89] The IEU quality assessment of AE-led project evaluations found that gender equity, among others, were consistently covered (see Figure 5).

[86] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Synthesis on Monitoring and Evaluation* (March 2026), 30, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/me-synthesis-2026-ii-0_1.pdf.
[87] Interview evidence reinforces this challenge. While stakeholders reported receiving support from the GCF on gender integration and gender action plans development during project design, some noted limited feedback on gender-related reporting during implementation, suggesting that mechanisms to systematically follow up on and validate progress against initial gender commitments remain uneven across the project cycle.
[88] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Independent Synthesis of the GCF's Gender Approach* (September 2025), 45, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/ieu-gender-synthesis-2.pdf.
[89] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Highlights Report: Evaluation Quality Assessment of AE-led Project Evaluations* (September 2025), 13, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/highlights-report-eqa_1.pdf.

Figure 5. Coverage of GCF evaluation criteria in18 evaluation reports



Source: Independent Evaluation Unit, *Highlights Report: Evaluation Quality Assessment of AE-led-Project Evaluations* (2025).
Note: The evaluation quality assessment was completed in August 2025. The assessment is based on 18 final project evaluations led by AEs. The selection of projects was based on the availability of final project evaluation reports completed at the end of the project implementation.

139. For example, FP017 final project evaluation includes a dedicated gender section in its evaluation structure,[90] and FP126 interim project evaluation provides gender-related recommendations on top of gender being an evaluation criterion.[91] Some evaluations also apply gender-sensitive methods. The SAP005 interim evaluation, for example, used separate focus group discussions with women and men, targeted sampling of marginalized groups, and sex-disaggregated data-collection to ensure that women's perspectives were represented.[92] This suggests that, in some cases, gender is integrated not only as a reporting theme but also into the evaluation methodology.

LIMITATIONS IN AE-LED EVALUATIONS

140. The main limitation in AE-led evaluations is that gender is often covered, but not always deeply analysed. Evaluations commonly report women's participation, access to services, or sex-disaggregated beneficiary figures, but less consistently examine whether projects changed women's agency, decision-making power, control over resources, social norms, or institutional practices.

141. A second limitation is that evaluation quality depends heavily on the underlying monitoring data. Where project gender action plans lack strong indicators, baselines, or outcome-level measures, which consequently affect APRs reporting, evaluations have limited evidence to assess gender results beyond activities and outputs.

[90] Corporación Andina de Fomento, *Final Evaluation Report for FP017: Climate Action and Solar Energy Development Programme in the Tarapacá Region in Chile* (2022), 30–31, https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/fp017-final-evaluation-report-pub.pdf.
[91] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *Interim Evaluation Report for FP126: Increased Climate Resilience of Rural Households and Communities through the Scaling-Up of Climate-Resilient Agricultural Practices* (2023), https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/fp126-interim-evaluation-report-pub.pdf.
[92] United Nations Environment Programme, *Interim Evaluation Report for SAP005: Enhanced Climate Resilience of Rural Communities in Central and North Benin through the Implementation of Ecosystem-Based Adaptation (EbA) in Forest and Agricultural Landscapes* (2025), 41, https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/interim-evaluation-report-sap005-enhanced-climate-resilience-rural-communities-central-and.

142. A third limitation is that intersectionality remains uneven, reflecting gaps already observed in project design and implementation, and limiting the ability of evaluations to capture differentiated outcomes across groups.

Chapter 7. COUNTRY OWNERSHIP

A. INTEGRATION OF GENDER INTO COUNTRY OWNERSHIP

The GCF defines its approach to country ownership primarily through NDA leadership, country-driven programming, and multi-stakeholder engagement. However, GCF does not provide explicit guidance for integrating gender as part of country ownership, nor does it require or incentivize the participation of women's ministries, gender-focused institutions, or CSOs in coordination or decision-making roles. As a result, gender is weakly embedded in country ownership practices. However, the RPSP continues to serve effectively as the main mechanism for supporting gender consideration in climate coordination and planning at the country level.

143. The GCF's approach to country ownership is anchored in Board decision B.04/05 which affirms country ownership as a core principle of the Fund and sets out responsibilities of NDAs/focal points, followed by decision B.10/10, which strengthens the role of NDAs/focal points in establishing country ownership. [93] These describe country ownership as a "country-driven approach" whereby countries determine priorities, and national institutions lead planning and coordination. The approach to country ownership is further defined by a set of best practice guidelines, with the most recent Board guidance stemming from B.17/21, which provides direction for enhanced country ownership and country-drivenness, outlining the role of country programmes, structured dialogues, and the positioning of country ownership in the Fund's operating modalities. These emphasize the central role and gatekeeping authority of NDAs with the no-objection letter procedure, country programmes, and multi-stakeholder engagement processes to manage effective involvement of relevant institutions and key actors.

144. Across country ownership guidelines and best practices available, there is no explicit requirement or guidance to integrate gender considerations, engage civil society or women's organizations, nor does GCF require gender quotas in project governance structures or the inclusion of gender institutions in coordination mechanisms. Moreover, gender is not a defined principle of country ownership, nor is it operationalized in NDA roles or no-objection letter procedures. Instead, the implicit entry point for gender in the stated country ownership approach is through broad-based language that calls for "multi-stakeholder engagement" and the involvement of "relevant institutions and stakeholders", which do not explicitly specify or suggest the inclusion of women's ministries, gender institutions, or women's CSOs.

145. Across several evaluations,[94] gender is consistently flagged as an underdeveloped dimension of country ownership.[95] The IEU's 2025 Synthesis on the GCF's Country Ownership Approach (COA) found that country ownership remains narrow because the social dimension of ownership, inclusive

[93] Green Climate Fund, "Policies: Country Ownership," accessed May 7, 2026, https://www.greenclimate.fund/about/policies/country-ownership.
[94] Such as the Independent Evaluation of the GCF's Investments in African States, Independent Evaluation of the Relevance and Effectiveness of the GCF's Investments in the LDCs", Independent Synthesis of Direct Access in the Green Climate Fund, and the GCF Second Performance Review. See Independent Evaluation Unit, "Evaluations", https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/evaluations.
[95] Independent Evaluation Unit, *A Synthesis of Evaluative Findings on the GCF's Country Ownership Approach* (February 2025), https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/coa2025/synthesis.

participation, trust and recognition of diverse voices, has not been fully embedded in GCF practice. Without a whole-of-society approach and engagement, ownership risks being reduced to formal procedures rather than meaningful engagement with actors cutting across society.

146. However, GCF's RPSP continues to be an important contributing and strengthening factor to both country ownership and gender mainstreaming. As highlighted in the M&E discussion in Chapter 6, the notion of country ownership is further developed in the revised Readiness Strategy and its RRMF, which contain a relatively strong emphasis on gender, providing support for gender-balanced stakeholder engagement and capacity-building (i.e. under Outcome 1.3). The RRMF provides clear expectations and additional guidance on mainstreaming gender in national systems and gender-responsiveness in the development of inclusive NAPs and other LTSs. The notion of country ownership as inclusive of gender mainstreaming, in contextually relevant ways, is found within guidance and templates of the readiness programme.

B. READINESS SUPPORT FOR MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN COUNTRY PROGRAMMES, STRATEGIES AND PLANS

147. GCF supports the realization of country ownership and the integration of gender in country programming through three main channels: (1) meeting the requirements of the 2019 updated Gender Policy (see 0 on Coherence, specifically section C on the Gender Policy requirements for project-level gender assessments and gender action plans); (2) influencing the pipeline to embed gender into sector priorities and investment design through country programmes and platforms; and (3) readiness support for integrating gender in NAP, NDC and other LTS processes, and building institutional capacities (including for gender). Points 2 and 3 are further discussed below.

148. For much of the GCF and until very recently, country programmes have represented primary and valuable, country-driven strategic planning tools, with opportunities for the integration of gender in the GCF pipeline and aligning GCF investments with national priorities and strategies. The newly introduced but not as yet widespread country platforms also serve as country-led coordination frameworks for stakeholder alignment and investment scaling, to translate national priorities into programmatic investment strategies.

149. Readiness support has served as a primary vehicle for increasing the integration of gender into such national climate planning processes. Of the 632 RPSP grants between 2019 and 2025, 377 projects were identified as containing at least one gender activity and associated budget. Also, a total of 87.5 per cent of readiness DPs, 49 of 56 partners with two projects or more has accessed at least one RPSP grant that includes gender-specific components.

150. Readiness is used for integrating gender to varying degrees across RPSP modalities, with adaptation planning representing the highest gender integration rate of any RPSP activity type. Figure 6 provides a breakdown of activity types. Filtering RPSP grants that included at least one gender activity and associated budget by activity type points to the following:

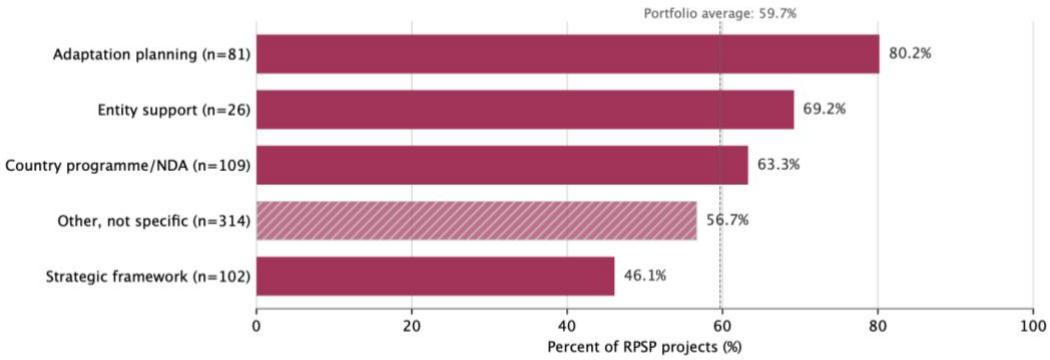
- Sixty-five have used RPSP to integrate gender in their NAP and related adaptation planning processes[96] (four in five, or 80.2 per cent of all adaptation planning projects) in 60 unique countries.

[96] Of note, not all Adaptation Planning RPSP grants produce a full NAP, with some supporting other adaptation planning components.

- Sixty-nine included activities that integrated gender in country programming/NDA strengthening (nearly two in three, or 63.3 per cent of country programme/NDA RPSP projects) in 69 unique countries.[97]

151. Together, these have reached 97 countries, representing a substantial share of GCF's developing country partners.[98]

Figure 6. Comparison of gender integration rates across RPSP activity types



Source: IEU evaluation team, AI-facilitated analysis of RPSP curated proposal list. Cut-off: December 31, 2025.
Notes: Sample size: 632 RPSP projects (2019–2025). Analysis based on activities stated in readiness proposals; AI-assisted and human-reviewed. Gender rate = % of projects with ≥1 gender-relevant activity and associated budget.

152. The dedicated readiness funding window for NAP formulation and adaptation planning is one of the clearest pieces of the readiness portfolio where gender is explicitly required and systematically embedded. The design of the NAP window contains strong gender provisions – with guidelines for NAP readiness proposals requiring countries to conduct gender-responsive climate vulnerability assessments, integrate sex-disaggregated data, and ensure that adaptation priorities reflect the needs of women and marginalized groups.[99] The GCF further requires that NAP outputs, such as adaptation strategies, sectoral plans, and investment frameworks, explicitly identify gender-differentiated vulnerabilities and propose measures to address them.[100] A benchmarking study conducted as part of the IEU-led 2025 GCF Gender Synthesis indicates that the AF, GEF, and GCF all mandate gender assessments and gender-responsive approaches in adaptation planning, which influences how countries structure their NAP processes.

153. Regional analysis reveals that gender integration in these activities is highest in Eastern Europe, closely followed by LAC, with moderate rates found in Africa and below average rates in Asia-

[97] Of the 69 countries, standout examples include Chile, Ethiopia, Fiji, Lebanon, Nepal, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Cameroon, Somalia, Eritrea, Egypt, Uzbekistan – all of which had a gender integration rate of 80 per cent or higher in their RPSP portfolios. Countries that had below average gender integration rates (i.e. 25 per cent or lower) included Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Brazil, Botswana, Ghana and Zimbabwe.
[98] However, these are considered conservative estimates, with actual reach likely higher than reported, as some NAP or country programme projects may also fall in the "not specified" category, with some challenges discerning country attribution in multi-country projects (however, 93.7 per cent of projects are single-country projects, thereby limiting this risk).
[99] Green Climate Fund, *Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme: Revised Work Programme for 2018* (2018).
[100] A substantial body of literature finds that NAPs and adaptation-planning processes tend to integrate gender considerations more consistently than other climate-planning instruments, considering that adaptation relies on participatory processes that more readily create structured entry points for women's organizations, gender ministries, and local women's groups, in contrast to mitigation-focused planning. See United Nations Environment Programme, *Adaptation Gap Report 2023: Underfinanced, Underprepared* (2023), https://www.unep.org/resources/adaptation-gap-report-2023.

Pacific. The IEU's 2025 GCF Gender Synthesis further helps to interpret regional patterns, reporting that countries with stronger gender-equality institutions and legal mandates tend to integrate gender more systematically, which aligns with the more established gender governance frameworks found in Eastern Europe and many LAC countries.[101] The Gender Synthesis also highlights that gender integration improves when women's organizations and gender-focused civil society groups are actively engaged in readiness and project preparation processes, which is more common in Eastern Europe and LAC, where civic space and women's movements are comparatively strong, and less consistent in parts of Asia-Pacific.

154. Interviews and document review highlight good examples of utilizing readiness to integrate gender in country programming and national planning processes, such as "Strengthening of the Collegiate Body on Climate Finance and Enhancement of the Country Programming Process in Colombia" (COL-RS-006) and "Enhancing the governance of gender-responsive climate change adaptation and mitigation planning and financing in key sectors and territories in Uruguay" (URY-RS-008) by UN Women.

155. In Colombia, COL-RS-006 supported the update of the country programme (2021–2023) through a broad consultative process and produced practical pipeline tools—including a gender self-assessment instrument to help entities integrate gender considerations into climate project design in line with GCF gender guidance, that was informed by a GCF regional gender review and input from various stakeholders (e.g. AEs, relevant national gender focal points)—that were disseminated through dedicated workshops.[102]

156. In Uruguay, URY-RS-008 is supporting the integration of gender-responsive approaches into national climate planning by training sectoral and territorial institutions on gender-responsive climate planning, developing tools and guidelines for integrating gender into adaptation and mitigation decision-making, and supporting the incorporation of gender analysis and sex-disaggregated data into key national instruments such as the NAP, NDC updates, and country programme.[103]

157. Across the 20 projects sampled for the current evaluation, several illustrative examples emerged. Stakeholders highlighted the value of readiness support in integrating gender considerations and addressing gender inequalities. For instance, it has helped strengthen NDA capacities for sustainable human capital development, integrate gender analysis into national planning processes, build a strategic advisory community, and enhance the integration of gender-sensitive human capital and climate finance approaches into project implementation.

158. The use of readiness support for integrating gender in country programming and national planning processes has also increased over time. AI-enabled analysis of RPSP projects demonstrates that 59.7 per cent of RPSP projects analysed included gender-relevant activities or budget, with gender integration trending upward over time, rising from 51.4 per cent in 2021 to 68.7 per cent in 2024. Triangulating this trend, findings from a NAP Global Network Synthesis from 2019–2020 on advancing gender-responsive climate action through NAP processes reported significant progress in the use of readiness for gender integration in NAPs since the first synthesis report (i.e. NAP Global

[101] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Independent Synthesis of the GCF's Gender Approach* (September 2025), https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/2025-ieu-gender-synthesis-4.pdf.
[102] Green Climate Fund, *COL-RS-006 Completion Report* (2023), Executive Summary, Outcome 2, Activity 2.4.1, section 5 (Procurement).
[103] Green Climate Fund, *Readiness Proposal: URY-RS-008 — Enhancing the Governance of Gender-Responsive Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Planning and Financing in Key Sectors and Territories in Uruguay* (ongoing).

Network Synthesis Report, 2017–2018).[104] While the 2017–2018 synthesis initially found limited evidence that context-specific gender analyses were used in NAP processes, the 2019–2020 synthesis reported that more than half of GCF NAP readiness proposals included activities related to the use of gender analysis and/or sex-disaggregated data to inform adaptation planning.[105] This is a trend that has carried through 2025.

159. Triangulating with the Secretariat-led Evaluation of Outcomes and Impact-Level Results of the RPSP (2024), gender is less systematically integrated into strategic frameworks through readiness support. [106] As well, gender considerations are not systematically linked to sectoral policies, financing strategies and institutional systems. This then has follow-on repercussions for pipeline development and programming. For example, the 2025 IEU-led COA synthesis found that country programmes often fail to articulate gender-specific investment pathways, even in countries with strong national gender policies, resulting in weak alignment between national gender frameworks and GCF programming. This challenge is consistent with broader findings from the 2023 *Independent Evaluation of the GCF's Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme*,[107] which reported structural limitations with RPSP as a tool for translating readiness outputs into investment pipelines and implementation.

C. PARTICIPATION OF GENDER-FOCUSED INSTITUTIONS IN CLIMATE GOVERNANCE

There is limited evidence of meaningful participation of gender-specific ministries or women's organizations in projects' decision-making roles, acting as an EE, sub-grantee, or as part of national coordination mechanisms. Instead, these gender actors are overwhelmingly engaged as consulted stakeholders or beneficiaries only. Additionally, the GCF's Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Enhancing Direct Access Pilot Programme (EDA) 2016[108] has minimally enhanced country ownership for women's organizations and gender actors.

160. The implicit entry point for gender in the stated COA is through broad-based language that calls for "multi-stakeholder engagement" and the involvement of "relevant institutions and stakeholders" – which could in principle include gender-focused institutions but does not explicitly specify or suggest the inclusion of women's ministries, gender institutions, or women's CSOs.

161. At the highest level, the 2025 IEU COA synthesis highlights that gender and women's participation remain weakly integrated into country-ownership processes, with limited evidence that NDAs or AEs systematically ensure gender-responsive engagement or decision-making. The 2025 synthesis

[104] International Institute for Sustainable Development, *Building Resilience to Global Risks: NAP Global Network Progress Report 2019–2020* (2021), https://napglobalnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/napgn-en-progress-report-2019-2020.pdf.
[105] Angie Dazé, Advancing Gender-Responsive Climate Action Through National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Processes: NAP Global Network Synthesis Report 2019–2020 (International Institute for Sustainable Development, 2020), vi, https://napglobalnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/napgn-en-2020-gender-responsive-nap-processes-synthesis-report-2019-2020.pdf.
[106] Green Climate Fund, *Evaluation of the Outcomes and Impact-Level Results of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme* (2024).
[107] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Independent Evaluation of the GCF's Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme* (2023), https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/evaluation/RPSP2023.
[108] Green Climate Fund, *Request for Proposals: Enhancing Direct Access Pilot Programme* (2016), https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/page/2016-eda-rfp.pdf.

notes that multi-stakeholder consultations often lack meaningful participation of women's groups and gender-focused institutions.[109]

162. Analysis of the types of roles women's organizations play in projects reveals that when these actors are engaged, it is overwhelmingly as consulted stakeholders or beneficiaries, at around 79 per cent, with less than 4 per cent involved in any role that manages or channels funds, such as sub-grantee,[110] implementing partner[111] or EE,[112] as detailed in Table 1. This is reaffirmed by findings from an IEU's 2025 synthesis on the country ownership, which highlight limited engagement of these groups that is often characterized as consultative rather than meaningful participation.[113] Interviews have raised concerns that national climate planning processes do not sufficiently include meaningful participation of women, IPs, and civil society across all stages, particularly beyond consultation to inform design, but also as part of planning, implementation and evaluation, as key drivers of climate action.[114]

Table 1. Roles of women's organizations in GCF-funded projects

ROLE	% OF WOMEN-ORGANIZATIONS MENTIONED
Consulted stakeholder	44.8%
Beneficiary group	34.4%
Government partner	15.8%
Sub-grantee	2.3%
Implementing partner	0.9%
Executing entity	0.5%

Source: IEU evaluation team, based on IEU analysis of GCF project documentation.

163. As well, a review of the gender action plan activities of the 128 IPs-related projects by the IEU through the IEU-led *Independent Evaluation of the Green Climate Fund's Approach to Indigenous Peoples* (2025) found that most activities involving women (not just Indigenous women) focused on

[109] On a related note, stakeholder interviews explain there is sometimes tension between GCF objectives that compete for limited resources. While on the one hand there is the objective for the GCF to act as a catalyst that enables climate finance to trickle down to civil society and community groups, on the other hand the Fund aims to scale up climate finance. Stakeholders contend that there are a number of other existing organizations that are better positioned to provide dedicated windows for smaller community organizations, and instead, the GCF is best positioned to programme at scale, with country platforms as potential new tools for enhanced country ownership.
[110] These include Mwangaza Light Kenya (FP005), Ixpiyakok Women's Organization and Majawil Q'ij (FP087), Hanka Construction (FP061, the only female contractor in Antigua), Tikonel (FP087), Tungteiya Women Association (FP137), women-led cooperatives in Namibia under SAP006, women-led construction contractors in Timor-Leste (FP109) and Woman Nature Network (SAP023).
[111] These include UN Women/UNWOMEN (FP012, FP067, FP112's WUTMI partner); PARES Initiative (Colombia, FP056); Marie Esther Foundation (Côte d'Ivoire, SAP015).
[112] These include Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (Bangladesh, FP069), Ministry of Women (Ethiopia, FP058) and Ministry of Women Community and Social Development (Samoa, FP037).
[113] Independent Evaluation Unit, *A Synthesis of Evaluative Findings on the GCF's Country Ownership Approach* (February 2025), https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/2025-country-ownership-synthesis-report-30-may.pdf.
[114] GCF Watch, GCF Observer Network of Civil Society, Indigenous Peoples, and Local Communities, *Intervention on Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme: Revised Strategy 2024–2027*, October 2023, https://www.gcfwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/GCFWatch_B37_Readiness-Revised.

capacity-building and training, at 54 per cent. In comparison, only 22 per cent were involved in decision-making processes.[115]

164. Across the evaluation's 20-project sample, consultation with gender actors is inconsistent and often superficial, with most FPs presenting women as a target group of beneficiaries without demonstrating meaningful engagement with them during project design. Only a small number of project, most notably FP114 (African Development Bank [AfDB]/IAE), which named specific women's organizations (Ghana Association of Women Entrepreneurs, Women's World Bank) and explicitly involved the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection; and FP155 (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations [FAO]/IAE), which held separate consultations with women and engaged gender-oriented CSOs (UN Women, Jordan River Foundation, JOHUD); demonstrate robust, named consultation practices.

165. The majority of FPs reference women in general terms, describing them as a vulnerable group or target beneficiary without disaggregating who was consulted, how, or in what numbers; Ministries of Gender or Women are almost entirely absent from consultation records across all AE types. Comparing by AE type, IAEs show the widest variation: a few (particularly FAO- and AfDB-managed projects) demonstrate stronger practice, while others show minimal or no evidence of gender-specific consultation; the three national DAEs (FP179, FP193, FP245) and the one regional DAE (FP102/BOAD) all fall on the weaker end, with no named women's organizations or gender ministries cited as consulted stakeholders, suggesting that DAEs (both national and regional) may be in greater need of support in structuring inclusive consultation processes. Engagement with women seems also largely dependent on the thematic area of the project, with the AfDB project FP114, explicitly oriented towards women.

166. Document review of country programmes across the six deep dives and interviews with key stakeholders further confirmed that women's organizations and gender-focused institutions are more frequently involved in a consultative role, with less representation and active involvement in decision-making roles and project implementation processes compared to other types of partners and male counterparts. Nonetheless, as a good example, some efforts are noted in Brazil, whereby the regional DAE for SAP031 Fundación Avina is working to engage with financial institutions (e.g. International Institute for Environment and Development, a non-profit think tank) to support climate finance flow through communities – however, stakeholders noted procedural challenges hindering the flow of resources to the local level (e.g. presenting proofs of expenditure, bank account, legal jurisdiction). Additionally, the project has supported processes aimed at strengthening the participation and advocacy capacities of women leaders from traditional Marajó communities in climate-related spaces. According to the APR and validated by consultations with beneficiaries, project-related partnerships are supporting dialogues on gender, climate, and care to enhance advocacy, participation, and knowledge related to climate risks and socio-environmental justice ahead of COP30.

167. Analysis of coordination mechanisms across the six deep dive countries reveals some involvement of gender-focused institutions in national-level coordination mechanisms. Of the six deep dive countries, Nepal and Brazil are the two cases where a dedicated gender or women-related ministry – specifically the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens in Nepal and the Ministry of Women in Brazil – is clearly linked to climate coordination mechanisms. Across the other four deep dive countries, national gender institutions such as INMUJERES in Mexico, MoGCSP in Liberia

[115] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Independent Evaluation of the Green Climate Fund's Approach to Indigenous Peoples* (2025), 54, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/evaluation/IP2024.

and the Lao Women's Union in Lao PDR exist but are not formally embedded in coordination mechanisms or NDA-led governance structures.

168. Evidence across the deep dive countries is further supported by the 2025 COA Synthesis which reported that NDAs' coordination mechanisms seldom include gender ministries, gender focal points, or women's CSOs, despite their relevance for national climate planning. As a result, this limits the ability of country programmes and project pipelines to reflect gender-responsive priorities.

169. Outside of formal coordination mechanism, interviews revealed variable levels of collaboration with gender-focused ministries and gender focal points at the project level. For example, in Benin (SAP005), there is collaboration with gender focal points in the agricultural sector to validate gender strategies.

170. Discussion of the limited roles of gender entities is further informed by broader findings from the GCF Second Performance Review (SPR), which explores the comparative advantages of CSOs and their potential roles across the GCF cycle. The SPR suggests that CSOs are particularly well positioned to provide community mobilization, last-mile delivery, and community-level monitoring. This is further reaffirmed by stakeholders consulted for this evaluation, who also emphasized that the GCF has not sufficiently leveraged these strengths and the potential role of CSOs; for example, in third-party monitoring for independent verification of results to enhance transparency, inclusivity, credibility and accountability mechanisms. The absence of a clear institutional pathway, resourcing or incentives to formalize these roles represents a critical gap, resulting in a system where CSO participation remains underutilized and largely informal despite its strategic value.

171. Concerningly, only one woman's organization, the Bangladesh Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, is captured in the GCF's AE and EE database. However, using AI to analyse APR uncovers the involvement of 598 women's organizations in 133 projects, representing 58 per cent of all projects with organizational data across the portfolio. Therefore, the GCF's systems are not adequately designed to capture the extent to which women's organizations are actively engaged with the GCF. Additionally, while portfolio-level evidence sheds light on notable increases in the engagement of CSOs over time, the specific involvement of women's organizations appears to be declining over time – with the proportion of women's organizations' mentions as a share of all organizational mentions in APRs peaking in 2017 (20.8 per cent of all organizations) then dropping to 10.7 per cent in 2024.

D. Enhancing direct access window

172. The GCF's Enhancing Direct Access (EDA) window piloted through the locally led adaptation-oriented EDA RFP was designed as a way to devolve decision-making to the national and subnational level and strengthen local multi-stakeholder engagement, moving beyond single projects towards programmatic, stakeholder-driven approaches. Funding decisions on sub-projects were meant to be taken by in-country bodies, based on pre-agreed criteria, with the promise of "stronger involvement of local organizations and other stakeholders"[116] – in principle this includes embedding stakeholders such as gender ministries, women's CSOs and local women's groups in the governance of EDA facilities and in the selection of sub-projects.[117] Findings indicate that EDA has minimally enhanced country ownership for women's organizations and gender actors. While its design creates

[116] Green Climate Fund, "Enhancing Direct Access," accessed June 7, 2026, https://www.greenclimate.fund/eda.
[117] However, there are no explicit objectives for gender or women's participation in the RFP itself. The EDA RFP terms of reference focus on devolution and multi-stakeholder engagement but do not set specific expectations for the participation of gender ministries or women's CSOs in decision-making bodies.

space for national-level decision-making and small-grant facilities that can, in principle, reach women and local CSOs, in practice, the pilot has been too small, too complex, and too DAE-centric to systematically enable the meaningful participation of gender-focused institutions in national climate coordination and decision-making.

173. The Rapid Assessment of the GCF's Request for Proposals (2021) found that the EDA RFP pilot did not deliver on its transformative promise, with only seven EDA projects approved,[118] and the modality failing to address structural barriers in the GCF business model – such as high transaction costs, complex processes, and limited incentives for new or less-resourced actors.[119] This has been further corroborated by the IEU's Independent Synthesis of Direct Access (2023), which concluded that the modality continued to be limited in its uptake, and generally has not helped to improve access for CSOs and other actors with less resources.[120]

174. Moreover, the IEU-led evaluation of the GCF's approach to IPs (2025) concluded that EDA has not been an adequate modality to enhance access for IPs or other structurally marginalized groups, due to the fact that, similar to many women's CSOs, IPs organizations are small, under-resourced and politically marginalized with power asymmetries vis-a-vis national ministries and DAEs. Put differently, the modality relies on state-controlled intermediaries, imposes complex GCF fiduciary requirements, and lacks mechanisms to guarantee meaningful participation or decision-making power for marginalized groups. As such, a modality that devolves decisions to national intermediaries without explicit safeguards, power-sharing provisions or quotas for gender-focused institutions is not a sufficient structural fix for historically excluded groups, and risks reproducing existing exclusion patterns rather than correcting them.[121]

[118] As one of a few of this evaluation's 20-project sample, FP193 established a facility that channels grants and concessional loans to public entities, CSOs and vulnerable households, with explicit language about "leaving no one behind" and small grants to CSOs. However, it did not include a mandated role for gender institutions.
[119] See the EDA Chapter of the following: Independent Evaluation Unit, *Rapid Assessment of the Green Climate Fund's Request for Proposals Modality* (2021).
[120] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Rapid Assessment of the Green Climate Fund's Request for Proposals Modality* (June 2021), https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/document/rapid-assessment-green-climate-fund-s-request-proposals-modality.
[121] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Independent Synthesis of Direct Access in the Green Climate Fund* (2023), https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/230331-da-final-report-top-web-isbn_0.pdf.

Chapter 8. EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPACT

Overall, the portfolio is predominantly characterized by a gender-responsive approach, albeit with important variations across sectors, modalities and AE types; most transformational projects are implemented by United Nations Development Programme and a number of IAEs, as well as a handful of DAEs. GCF projects most consistently demonstrate progress related to capacity-building, access, and livelihoods, while deeper changes in behaviour, resilience, leadership, remain comparatively limited. Although unintended gender-related effects are unevenly reported, available evidence points predominantly to positive spillover effects. While a gap remains between gender compliance and documented gender outcomes, the 2019 updated Gender Policy appears to have strengthened compliance, gender integration at the design stage, and, increasingly, downstream gender results. Progress is supported by institutional procedures and participatory approaches, but continues to be constrained by sociocultural barriers, uneven capacities, monitoring limitations, and additional implementation challenges affecting private-sector and multi-country modalities.

A. GENDER OUTCOMES

1. REPORTED BENEFICIARY REACH AND GENDER COMPOSITION

175. GCF-supported projects reported reaching approximately 276 million beneficiaries, at around 109 million women and 167 million men.[122] Of the 150 projects reporting beneficiary data, 121 (81 per cent) provided sex-disaggregated information, allowing an assessment of women's and men's reach across the portfolio. Although women account for approximately 38 per cent of reported beneficiaries at the portfolio level, the median project reports a 50 per cent share of women beneficiaries, indicating considerable variation across projects and the influence of a small number of large projects.[123]

176. Against aggregated project targets, reported achievement rates are higher for women (20.5 per cent) than for men (~12 per cent), and women represent a larger share of reported beneficiaries than originally anticipated in project targets. This suggests that, overall, projects have been relatively successful in reaching women and, in some cases, have exceeded planned levels of coverage.[124]

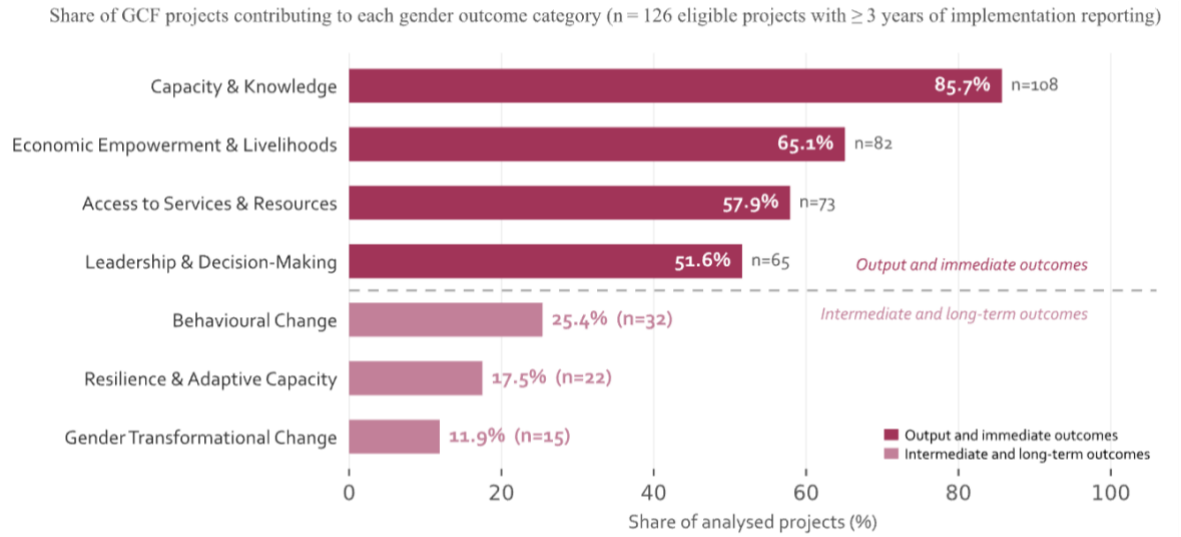
2. PROFILE OF REPORTED GENDER OUTCOMES ACROSS THE PORTFOLIO

177. Beyond overall reach, the evaluation examined the types of gender-related outcomes that projects report contributing to during implementation, and the extent to which available evidence captures progress along the gender-results chain.

[122] This is based on APR-reported results.
[123] Women account for approximately 38–40 per cent of reported beneficiaries, depending on the method used to aggregate project-level data. Portfolio-level shares are sensitive to whether estimates are calculated as the share of total beneficiaries or as the unweighted average of project-level shares. The median project-level share of women beneficiaries is 50 per cent, indicating that many projects report relatively balanced reach, although a small number of large projects influence portfolio aggregates.
[124] The GCF Strategic Plan for the Green Climate Fund 2024–2027 does not establish portfolio-level targets for women beneficiaries, with aggregated project-level targets providing a relevant basis for reported delivery. Comparisons with DMEL-cleaned beneficiary figures (approximately 249 million) show differences in absolute totals attributable to data cleaning; however, the available cross-checks indicate that gender ratios remain broadly consistent across datasets, supporting the robustness of observed patterns.

178. To characterize the types of gender outcomes being generated at portfolio scale, an AI-assisted classification was applied to 407 documents (337 APRs and 72 evaluation reports) from 126 projects with at least three years of implementation reporting. Evidence was mapped against a seven-category typology constructed inductively from outcomes most frequently reported in final evaluations and LORTA impact evaluations.[125] The analysis identifies the presence of contributing evidence per category per project; it does not assess performance against predefined gender targets.

Figure 7. Distribution of gender outcome categories across analysed projects[126]



Source: IEU Evaluation team's analysis based on AI-assisted coding of GCF APRs (337) up to the 2024 report cycle and evaluation reports (72) up to B.44 (2026).
Notes: A project may contribute to more than one outcome category.

179. Close to 9 in 10 projects (86 per cent) document that women received training, technical knowledge, or skills development; two-thirds (65 per cent) report improvements in women's economic situation; approximately three in five report women's improved access to services and resources (58 per cent) and women in leadership or decision-making roles (52 per cent). By contrast, fewer than three in 10 (25 per cent) document evidence that women changed practices or behaviours; fewer than two in 10 (18 per cent) report improvements in women's resilience to shocks; and approximately one in nine (12 per cent) demonstrate structural or transformational change in gender relations.

180. Evidence from LORTA assessments further illustrates these patterns across different outcome areas. Across projects, evaluations documented improvements in women's access to livelihood opportunities, food security, income-generation, climate-resilient practices, and participation in local planning and decision-making processes. However, LORTA findings also suggest that progress in these areas does not necessarily translate into deeper changes in gender relations or decision-making

[125] Evidence was also assessed using a "female marker" criterion that restricts qualifying evidence to outcomes explicitly experienced by women or girls.
[126] Gender outcome categories: (1) **capacity and knowledge**: women gain knowledge, skills, or awareness, (2) **economic empowerment and livelihoods**: improved economic agency (income, livelihoods, employment, asset control), (3) **access to services and resources**: improved ability to reach and use services and resources, (4) **leadership and decision-making**: meaningful participation and influence in policy, and household and community decisions, (5) **behavioural change**: application of knowledge through adoption of new practices and behaviours, (6) **resilience and adaptive capacity**: stronger capacity to anticipate, cope with, and recover from shocks, and (7) **gender transformational change**: deeper, longer-term changes in gender relations, norms, and structures.

power within typical project implementation periods. In Bangladesh (FP069),[127] for example, significant gains were observed in women's economic participation and household welfare, yet no measurable changes were found in women's involvement in household decision-making. This finding is consistent with the limited incidence of higher-level gender outcomes observed across the portfolio.

181. The gap between capacity and knowledge (86 per cent) and behavioural change (25 per cent) is the most salient feature of this distribution. It reflects in part the inherent time lag between knowledge inputs and practice-level change, with intermediate and long-term outcomes typically unfolding over periods that extend beyond project reporting cycles. It also reflects a well-documented structural limitation in monitoring: APRs capture activities, participation, and outputs more consistently than outcome-level change. Key informants confirmed this, noting that "reporting often lists activities without deeper analysis of outcomes for women."[128]

182. Capacity and knowledge outcomes are more prevalent in adaptation compared to mitigation, as adaptation projects are typically more community-based and people-centred, creating more direct opportunities for engagement, training, and capacity-building. They are also relatively more frequent in result areas such as forest and land-use, health, food and water security, and ecosystems, where interventions naturally involve local communities and livelihoods, compared to more infrastructure- or technology-driven areas (FP056, FP069, FP016, FP094).

183. Economic empowerment and livelihood outcomes are also common, particularly in adaptation and community-based projects where women received livelihood support, productive assets, income-generating opportunities, or support to strengthen small businesses. They are also more prevalent in regions such as Africa and LAC, where many projects explicitly target vulnerable populations and rural communities. In terms of result areas, these outcomes are primarily observed under Livelihoods of People and Communities, which is expected where interventions directly support income-generation, productive assets, and local economic activities (FP023, SAP007, SAP011, FP002).

184. Access outcomes are particularly visible in health, food, water security, and livelihood-related projects, where project benefits are often delivered through community infrastructure, water systems, agricultural inputs, climate services, or financial products (FP002, FP072, FP125, FP127).

185. Leadership-related outcomes appear most strongly in adaptation-focused projects and within the Infrastructure and Built Environment result area. These outcomes mainly involved strengthening women's participation and leadership through women-led committees and cooperatives, community leadership roles, technical and extension positions, advocacy and leadership trainings, and participation in local climate governance and decision-making structures (FP013, SAP008, FP107, FP061).

186. The least frequent outcome categories, particularly behavioural change, resilience and adaptive capacity, and transformational gender change, remain limited across sectors, regions, and themes, largely due to the overall low number of projects reporting these types of longer-term outcomes. More specific analysis of the transformative results revealed that transformational gender change

[127] Independent Evaluation Unit, *LORTA Impact Evaluation Report for FP069: Enhancing Adaptive Capacities of Coastal Communities, Especially Women, to Cope with Climate Change Induced Salinity in Bangladesh* (March 2024), https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/240314-lorta-bangladesh-impact-eval-report-top-web_0.pdf.

[128] This interpretation is supported by the evaluation-only sub-analysis, in which all category rates decline substantially when estimated from independent evaluation reports rather than APRs: by 23 percentage points for leadership and decision-making and approximately 20 points for capacity and knowledge and access. APR-based rates should accordingly be read as upper-bound estimates, with evaluation findings providing a more conservative and independently validated benchmark.

remains concentrated within a relatively small group of AEs. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) accounts for nearly half of all identified cases (7 of 15 projects), making it by far the most represented entity among projects demonstrating transformational outcomes. The remaining cases are distributed across a limited number of AEs, including other IAEs such as the World Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), Inter-American Development Bank, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, as well as a small number of DAEs, notably Agency for Agricultural Development of Morocco and the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre.[129] This concentration suggests that the ability to design, implement, and document transformational gender outcomes may currently be stronger among a subset of entities with comparatively greater experience, institutional capacity, or established approaches to gender mainstreaming.

187. The identified cases are geographically dispersed across Africa, Asia, LAC, and the Middle East and North Africa, with no single country appearing more than once. This suggests that transformational outcomes can be achieved across a wide range of contexts. However, despite this geographic spread, the incidence of transformational outcomes appears somewhat stronger in LACs (Colombia, Costa Rica, Paraguay and Argentina) than in other regions. Transformational outcomes are observed almost exclusively in public sector projects and are more frequently associated with the health, food and water security and forest and land-use result areas.

188. Nearly all identified cases are associated with single country projects, while evidence remains more limited for multi-country programmes, potentially reflecting the greater complexity of operationalizing and documenting transformational processes across broader delivery structures.

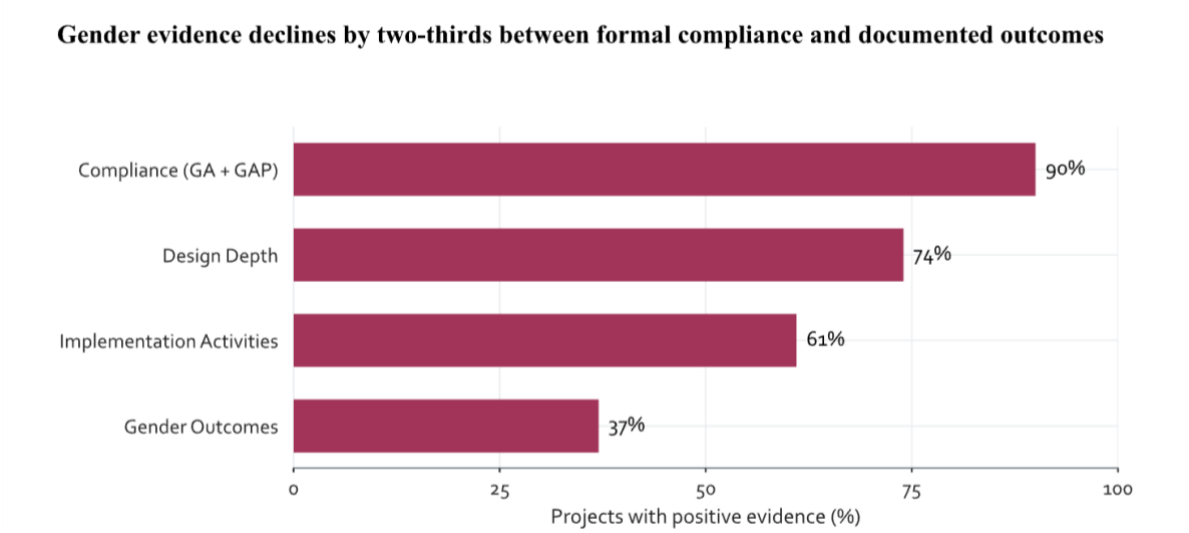
B. From compliance to outcomes: Gaps in gender follow through

189. Gender mainstreaming within the GCF is substantially stronger at the level of compliance and project design than in the consistent demonstration of documented gender outcomes. Among mature projects, 90 per cent meet the minimum gender compliance requirement through the inclusion of both a gender assessment and a gender action plan, while 74 per cent demonstrate substantive gender mainstreaming depth at the design stage across FPs, gender assessments, gender action plans, and stakeholder consultations. However, reported implementation-level evidence declines to 61 per cent of projects, and only 37 per cent report documented gender outcomes, representing a 53-percentage-point gap between formal compliance and outcome-level evidence. While this pattern may suggest a progressive decline in documented gender results across the project cycle, it also reflects differences in project maturity, evaluation availability, monitoring systems, and implementation challenges that affect the ability of projects to generate and document outcome-level evidence.

[129] The concentration of transformational cases among a small number of entities may partly reflect differences in institutional maturity and experience with climate finance. UNDP, which accounts for nearly half of the identified cases, is also one of the largest and longest-standing GCF partners, with a substantial portfolio of projects across regions and sectors. Similarly, the two DAEs represented among the transformational cases are relatively mature climate institutions. CCCCC was among the first entities accredited by the GCF in 2015 and has subsequently developed dedicated gender and social policy frameworks. ADA Morocco, accredited in 2016 as Morocco's first GCF-accredited entity, has over a decade of experience mobilizing climate finance and implementing climate-resilient agricultural and rural development programmes. While the small number of cases does not allow firm conclusions, these examples suggest that institutional maturity and accumulated experience with climate finance may facilitate the generation and documentation of transformational gender outcomes.

190. As shown in Figure 8, the pattern suggests that projects are considerably more likely to report immediate implementation activities and participation-related outputs, such as trainings, consultations, access to services, and women reached through activities, than longer-term changes in agency, resilience, institutional practices, or gender relations. At the same time, the predominance of outcomes related to capacity and knowledge, economic empowerment and livelihoods, access to services and resources, and leadership and decision-making is broadly consistent with the types of changes typically expected from gender-responsive interventions, which seek to reduce gender inequalities by improving women's access to resources, opportunities, participation, and benefits.

Figure 8. Gender evidence across the project cycle: from compliance to documented outcomes



Source: IEU evaluation team.
Notes: Sample = 158 mature projects (≥3 APRs or final/interim evaluation). Cut-off: B.44 (2026) for FPs, gender assessments, gender action plans, stakeholder consultations, interim/final evaluations; 2024 APR report cycle for APRs.

191. Findings from the Gender Synthesis further support this interpretation, with approximately 69 per cent of reviewed projects demonstrating gender-responsive approaches.[130] In contrast, outcomes related to behavioural change, resilience and adaptive capacity, and particularly transformational gender change, are generally associated with deeper shifts in gender relations, social norms, and power structures. The relatively limited incidence of transformational gender outcomes was identified in only approximately 11 per cent of projects.[131]

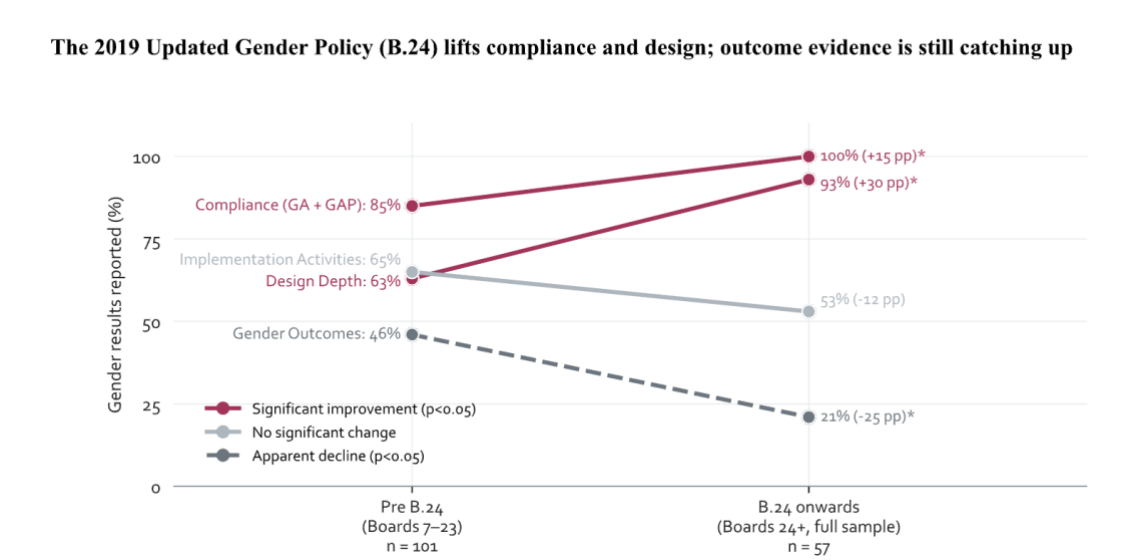
192. Collectively, these findings suggest that while gender-responsive measures are increasingly integrated across the portfolio and are generating tangible results for women in terms of knowledge, livelihoods, access, and participation, approaches explicitly seeking to challenge underlying gender norms and power relations remain comparatively uncommon. Overall, the evidence suggests that the GCF portfolio is predominantly characterized by gender-responsive approaches, with a smaller subset of projects going beyond gender-responsiveness to pursue more explicitly gender-transformative objectives and outcomes.

[130] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Independent Synthesis of the GCF's Gender Approach* (September 2025), 9, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/2025-ieu-gender-synthesis-4.pdf.
[131] Ibid., 10.

193. Adaptation and public sector projects perform comparatively better both in terms of gender design depth and documented gender outcomes (see Annex 5.B of the evaluation report), In contrast, mitigation and private-sector projects show more moderate levels of gender design integration (respectively 61 per cent and 42 per cent) alongside substantially lower gender outcome reporting (respectively 14 per cent and 10 per cent). Beyond the broader M&E challenges affecting the portfolio, these differences likely reflect the technical orientation of many mitigation and private-sector operations, where core indicators often focus on outputs such as megawatts installed, tonnes of CO_2 reduced, hectares restored, or investment volumes mobilized, which are less conducive to capturing gender-differentiated outcomes. A similar pattern is observed across AE types, with IAEs generally demonstrating stronger design depth than DAEs, although differences in gender outcome reporting between the two are comparatively limited.

194. The cohort comparison further suggests that the 2019 updated Gender Policy, adopted at B.24 (March 2019), contributed to strengthening both compliance and gender integration at the design stage. Figure 9 indicates that the updated Gender Policy has successfully driven compliance and improved design quality, but this has not translated into better gender outcomes, which are declining. Among mature projects approved before B.24, compliance stood at 85 per cent and design depth at 63 per cent, compared with 100 per cent and 93 per cent, respectively, for projects approved at or after B.24.

Figure 9. Performance snapshot of post-B.24 gender policy shift



Source: IEU evaluation team.
Notes: Mature projects only (≥3 APRs or evaluation). Cohorts split at B.24 (March 2019), the adoption of the updated Gender Policy that made the Gender Assessment and Gender Action Plan mandatory for approval. Compliance (gender assessment and gender action plan) is therefore reported at 100 per cent for the B.24+ cohort by policy design; the value reflects the regulatory floor. The B.24+ cohort covers all approvals from B.24 to the most recent Board in the sample. p-values from Fisher exact tests. Cut-off: B.44, 2026.

195. Additional analysis controlling for differences in portfolio characteristics confirms that these improvements cannot be explained solely by changes in the composition of the portfolio over

time.[132] The design depth finding represents one of the strongest policy-related effects identified in the evaluation.[133] Overall, the updated Gender Policy has had a clearer and more demonstrable influence on project design and procedural integration.

C. UNINTENDED OUTCOMES

196. GCF projects are often framed as co-benefits rather than primary objectives, the analysis of unintended outcomes focuses specifically on results that exceeded expectations or emerged in ways not anticipated by project stakeholders. These outcomes may relate to similar thematic areas as those discussed above but are distinguished by the fact that they were not explicitly targeted, planned at scale, or expected to materialize to the extent observed during implementation. As such, this subsection highlights stakeholder-reported changes that go beyond initial project assumptions.

197. Across the reviewed interim and final evaluation reports, unintended or unexpected outcomes are commonly documented, with the majority of projects reporting at least one such effect. However, explicit gender-related unintended outcomes are less frequently identified and analysed. A review of the available evidence suggests that only a subset of reports[134] (approximately one-third of those reviewed) provide clear examples of gender-specific unexpected effects, with most of them being positive. Where identified, including in interview evidence, these outcomes tend to reflect spillover effects beyond the original scope of project gender action plans, particularly in relation to changes in participation dynamics, social norms, and the application of skills beyond project boundaries. At the same time, the limited systematic identification of such outcomes suggests that gender dimensions are not consistently analysed when documenting unexpected results.

1. POSITIVE UNINTENDED GENDER-RELATED OUTCOMES

198. Positive unintended gender-related outcomes primarily relate to changes in social norms, diffusion of benefits beyond targeted groups, and the extension of women's roles in practice. First, some evidence points to unexpected shifts in gender relations, particularly through increased acceptance of women's participation. Interview evidence from Benin (SAP030) indicates that sensitization activities aimed at supporting women's participation also led to greater engagement and support from men. In several cases, men became more receptive to women's involvement in economic and group activities, allowing and even encouraging their participation. These changes were not explicitly targeted at the design stage but emerged progressively during implementation. Similarly, in FP160 (Liberia), community-level volunteer groups evolved into informal advocacy networks, contributing to local accountability dynamics. While not explicitly framed as gender outcomes, such developments suggest the emergence of spaces that may support women's voice and collective agency within community processes.

199. In parallel, several cases illustrate spillover effects, where gender-related benefits extend beyond direct beneficiaries. In FP187 (Benin), implementation led to demand significantly exceeding initial targets, with savings groups expanding beyond planned numbers and mixed-gender groups forming

[132] The analysis compared projects approved before and after the adoption of the 2019 Gender Policy while controlling for differences in portfolio characteristics, including theme, sector, AE type, and evaluation availability. Results were estimated using adjusted logistic regression and inverse-probability weighting on a covariate-balanced sample. The estimated policy effect corresponds to an increase of approximately 15 percentage points in compliance and approximately tenfold higher odds of substantive gender integration at design stage.
[133] As explained in the Annex 4, adjusted OR = 10.1, 95% CI 2.9–34.8; corroborated by an IPTW estimate of +29 percentage points.
[134] Ten final evaluation reports and two interim evaluation reports.

spontaneously and continuing without project support. These developments were not anticipated at the design stage and reflect a level of ownership and social inclusion that have gone beyond expectations. Likewise, in FP119 (State of Palestine), women displaced by conflict continued applying agricultural techniques learned through the project in new locations. These examples suggest that gender-responsive practices can diffuse socially and persist beyond project boundaries when they are perceived as relevant and beneficial.

200. Finally, some unintended outcomes reflect the extension of women's roles and recognition beyond initial expectations, particularly in economic and institutional contexts. In FP019 (Ecuador),[135] evaluation evidence highlights increased recognition and appreciation of women's work within sustainable production systems, alongside strengthened participation in local organizations and governance processes. While gender inclusion was an intended objective, the scale and institutional embedding of these changes, particularly through inter-ministerial collaboration, suggest effects that extend beyond initial design assumptions.

2. Negative unintended gender-related outcomes

201. At the same time, unintended outcomes, although limited, may also reinforce existing gender inequalities or create unintended social pressures where underlying power relations and local dynamics are not adequately addressed.

202. In FP160 (Liberia),[136] the interim evaluation finds that while women took part actively in project activities, their roles remained largely confined to unpaid or operational functions, with limited access to strategic decision-making spaces such as budget allocation or project design. The absence of institutional mechanisms, such as leadership pathways or quotas meant that participation did not translate into empowerment, inadvertently reinforcing gendered divisions of labour.

203. Similarly, LORTA evidence from FP002 (Malawi)[137] suggests that gender-responsive interventions may generate unintended social pressures when local norms and implementation risks are not sufficiently considered. Women serving as lead farmers reported experiencing criticism and mockery when climate information proved inaccurate, highlighting how increased visibility and leadership roles may also expose women to added scrutiny within their communities.

D. Enabling and hindering factors of gender-related and intersectional outcome achievement

1. Enabling factors

204. A key enabling factor, where present, is the availability of gender expertise and institutional anchoring mechanisms within projects and national systems. In some country contexts visited, such as Liberia and Lao PDR, existing national gender strategies and broader commitments to gender

[135] United Nations Development Programme, *Final Evaluation Report: FP019 Priming Financial and Land Use Planning Instruments to Reduce Emissions from Deforestation (Ecuador)* (2023), https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/final-evaluation-report-fp019-priming-financial-and-land-use-planning-instruments-reduce.
[136] United Nations Development Programme, *Interim Evaluation Report for FP160: Monrovia Metropolitan Coastal Resilient Project* (2025), https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/interim-evaluation-report-fp160-monrovia-metropolitan-climate-resilience-project.
[137] Independent Evaluation Unit, *LORTA Impact Evaluation Report for FP002: Scaling Up the Use of Modernized Climate Information and Early Warning Systems in Malawi* (April 2022), https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/document/impact-evaluation-report-fp002.

equality have supported the integration of gender considerations and strengthened women's participation in project activities.[138]

205. At the project level, the mandatory inclusion of gender assessments and gender action plans plays a critical enabling role. These instruments provide a structured framework for integrating gender considerations and aligning stakeholders around gender-related objectives. Evidence from countries, including Lao PDR, also highlights that the presence of established institutional structures at multiple administrative levels (e.g. Lao Women's Union) facilitated the operational integration of gender activities within project implementation. Participatory approaches further contribute to enabling outcomes.

206. Engagement with local authorities, community leaders, and women's groups has helped improve acceptance of women's participation and strengthened ownership of gender-related activities. LORTA evidence from Madagascar (FP026)[139] further highlights the role of women's associations as enabling mechanisms, helping women overcome some structural barriers through collective action, resource sharing, and mutual support.

2. HINDERING FACTORS

207. Despite these enabling conditions, several factors continue to constrain the achievement of gender-related and intersectional outcomes.

208. Sociocultural norms and structural barriers continue to limit women's participation and access to resources, particularly in male-dominated sectors such as forestry and water management, often compounded by literacy and language barriers affecting more marginalized groups. LORTA evidence from Madagascar (FP026) suggests that female-headed households may face additional challenges sustaining labour-intensive climate-smart agriculture practices due to structural constraints related to labour, time, and access to support.

209. Institutional and capacity constraints also remain important, with uneven gender expertise and implementation capacity across AEs, DAEs, and NDAs affecting the operationalization of gender requirements, particularly in SIDS and smaller national entities.

210. Operational challenges, including delays in disbursement, administrative and modality complexity, staff turnover, and resource trade-offs affecting gender-related activities, further constrain implementation and institutional learning.

211. Some of these challenges appear particularly pronounced in multi-country programmes, where coordination across multiple entities, countries, and reporting systems can affect the consistency of implementation and reporting of gender-related activities and outcomes.

212. Evidence from private-sector APRs further suggests that highly technical projects often treat gender outcomes as peripheral to core reporting frameworks. Across some projects in the sample, such as FP017, FP128, FP163, FP164, and FP179, indicators primarily focus on technical and financial outputs, including megawatts installed, tonnes of CO_2 reduced, hectares planted, adaptation credits issued, and investment volumes mobilized. This aligns with broader portfolio findings showing

[138] Another example of this institutional anchoring is found in Uganda, where the NDA utilizes a formalized gender equity checklist to evaluate and score project proposals across specific tiers (ranging from "gender-aware" to "transformative"). Furthermore, quality assurance at the design stage is strengthened by the direct participation of the Ministry of Gender in the country's interministerial review committee.

[139] Independent Evaluation Unit, *LORTA Impact Evaluation Endline Report for FP026: Sustainable Landscapes in Eastern Madagascar* (2026), https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/lorta-madagascar-endline-report-2026_0.pdf.

stronger gender outcome reporting in adaptation projects than in mitigation projects, while most private-sector projects fall within non-adaptation modalities.

213. Weak monitoring systems and unrealistic planning assumptions also constrain results, particularly where gender-related targets are not aligned with sector realities or where systems remain insufficient to track gender outcomes effectively.

214. Finally, intersectional approaches remain limited, with stronger differentiation around poverty and economic vulnerability than around dimensions such as age, disability, Indigenous identity, displacement, or other intersecting vulnerabilities, reducing the ability of projects to capture differentiated outcomes.

E. SPOTLIGHT ON PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES

1. INTERSECTIONALITY AND THE RECOGNITION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS IN THE GCF POLICY FRAMEWORK

215. The consideration of intersectionality has progressively emerged across the GCF policy framework, although with varying levels of explicitness. A broad range of GCF policies, frameworks, and operational guidance documents explicitly recognize vulnerable populations and groups facing different forms of exclusion (see Annex 5.B of the evaluation report). Women, IPs, youth, persons with disabilities, marginalized communities, local communities, and other vulnerable populations are referenced across key instruments, including the GI, IPP, RESP, IF, IRMF, RRMF, and project-level guidance documents.

216. At the same time, the extent of recognition varies considerably across groups. Women and IPs receive the most comprehensive coverage, benefiting from dedicated policy frameworks and repeated references across multiple GCF instruments. By contrast, other groups, including youth, persons with disabilities, older persons, and children, tend to be referenced more selectively and are often embedded within broader categories of vulnerable or marginalized populations rather than being systematically addressed through dedicated policy provisions.

217. The concept of intersectionality itself was articulated most explicitly in the 2018 Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Policy,[140] which defined intersectionality as the interaction between gender and other sociocultural dimensions such as ethnicity, age, disability, class, religion, sexual orientation, and social exclusion. While more recent frameworks have generally shifted towards broader references to vulnerability and inclusion, the underlying recognition that climate vulnerability is multidimensional remains present across the GCF policy architecture. Against this backdrop, the evaluation examined participatory approaches through an intersectional lens, assessing the extent to which projects engaged not only women, but also diverse groups facing overlapping forms of marginalization.

2. DESIGN STAGE: WHAT THE PORTFOLIO DOCUMENTS ABOUT CONSULTATION

218. Participatory approaches are widely implemented across the portfolio, demonstrating strong reach. An analysis of FPs shows that 88 per cent of them explicitly include stakeholder engagement during design/preparation (pre-Board approval), covering a broad range of actors including governments, local communities, civil society, and subnational institutions. This is consistent with findings from

[140] GCF/B.19/25: Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Policy and Action Plan 2018–2020 (2018), https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/gcf-b19-25.

the IEU-led African States Evaluation, which indicates that 79 per cent of African FPs include stakeholder engagement at design. However, women's consultation is documented very unevenly across project document types.[141]

219. Across projects, documentation of women being consulted at design is found in 30 per cent of projects in the FP stakeholder section (106 projects), 59 per cent in gender assessments (207 projects), 16 per cent in gender action plans (56 projects), and, where stakeholder consultation (SC) reports are available, SC reports provide an additional independent record of consultation. Considering evidence from any of the four sources, 249 projects (71 per cent) contain documented evidence that women were consulted at design. However, SC reports often contained more detailed evidence of women's participation than FP stakeholder sections, suggesting that consultation processes may be more extensive than what is systematically reflected in core project documentation.

220. Stakeholder interviews suggest that an intersectional lens beyond gender remains relatively limited at the design stage, particularly with respect to age and disability dimensions. This is broadly consistent with portfolio-level analysis of 350 projects across FPs, project-level gender assessments and gender action plans, which shows that while 88.3 per cent of projects included specific design commitments related to women in poverty or women-headed households, coverage was substantially lower for age-related dimensions (48.9 per cent), Indigenous and ethnic minority women (28 per cent), women with disabilities (21.1 per cent). Evidence further suggests that many projects mention vulnerable groups in contextual analyses without consistently translating these into concrete activities, targets, indicators, or budgeted commitments, pointing to important limitations in the operationalization of intersectionality at the design stage.

221. At the implementation-level, qualitative evidence from APPR (2024) indicates that participatory approaches contribute to meaningful engagement. The report notes that approximately 1,845 consultation events were conducted across approved FPs, with gender-disaggregated data indicating around 50 per cent of female participation in engagement activities.[142] Consultation methods include community meetings, awareness campaigns, technical demonstrations, and information-sharing sessions. However, as highlighted in the IEU-led African States Evaluation, stakeholder engagement is stronger at the design stage where it is required by policy and tends to decline during implementation. In addition, participation remains largely consultative, with more limited evidence of stakeholders being engaged in co-implementation or governance roles.[143]

222. As also noted by the APPR (2024), the majority of projects reported challenges in achieving effective vulnerable group participation, particularly for Indigenous communities and persons with disabilities.

[141] To test whether FP narratives understate women's consultation, the same question, "Were women consulted at the project design/preparation phase?", was coded across four document types (where available): the FP, gender assessment, project level gender action plan and the SC report. The design-stage document corpus comprised 970 documents across ~350 projects (FPs, gender assessments, and gender action plans), with 965 successfully extracted and 1,696 validated design commitments inventoried.
[142] GCF/B.43/Inf.10/Add.01: Annual Portfolio Performance Report (2024), 41, https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/gcf-b43-inf10-add01.
[143] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Independent Evaluation of the Relevance and Effectiveness of the GCF's Investments in the African States*, Evaluation Report No. 16, February 2023, 78, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/evaluation/AFR2022.

3. Implementation stage: Intersectional participation and follow through

223. Beyond gender, the extent to which participatory approaches capture multiple and intersecting vulnerabilities remains more limited. Most projects reported challenges in achieving effective vulnerable group participation.[144] For example, in Mexico (SAP023), despite efforts to promote youth participation, engagement remains limited, as activities in agriculture and restoration are often perceived as unattractive by younger populations, who tend to migrate towards other sectors offering greater economic opportunities. This highlights broader structural constraints affecting the inclusion of certain groups, particularly youth, in project implementation. Portfolio analysis shows that only 72 out of 186 projects[145] (38.7 per cent) demonstrate intersectional participation, referring to engagement that includes women in combination with other dimensions such as IPs, age, disability, or displacement (see Annex 5.B).

224. Among these relatively few projects (72), 88 per cent of them show alignment between both design and implementation, meaning that targeted groups are effectively included during implementation. However, follow through varies significantly across dimensions: participation is strongest for economically vulnerable women, around 89.5 per cent follow through from design to implementation; moderate for rural and Indigenous populations, around 58 per cent; and substantially lower for youth and elderly women, around 38 per cent; persons with disabilities around 24 per cent; and displaced populations around 8 per cent. Economically vulnerable women and women-headed households represent the most common intersectional group overall, particularly in Asia and Africa, while Indigenous women are more prominently represented in Latin America. This distribution suggests that intersectional targeting tends to reflect existing country contexts and enabling national frameworks, rather than a systematic approach to addressing multiple and overlapping forms of vulnerability across the portfolio.

[144] GCF/B.43/Inf.10/Add.01: Annual Portfolio Performance Report (2024), 41, https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/gcf-b43-inf10-add01.
[145] The denominator 186 refers to projects that have at least one in-scope implementation document in the corpus we analysed, specifically APRs and evaluation reports published since 2019. In total, the implementation corpus comprised 553 documents, mapping to 186 projects with reportable implementation documentation; from these, 72 projects (38.7 per cent) contained ≥1 validated intersectional action after the extraction + six-gate validation pipeline. Importantly, this is a reporting-coverage denominator, not a portfolio-wide performance denominator.

Chapter 9. SUSTAINABILITY

A. PARTNERSHIP DIMENSION

GCF investments and support have made some efforts to strengthen the gender-related capacities of partners, particularly through accreditation requirements and Readiness-supported institutional reforms. Having produced reasonably sustainable institutional strengthening results, the GCF's support has largely focused on compliance with gender-responsive standards. Although foundational capacity has been established, limited integration of gender actors into project governance, financing, and implementation roles constrains the depth of institutionalization and reduces the likelihood that gender-related capacities will be consistently maintained and applied after GCF support ends.

1. INSTITUTIONALIZATION

225. Assessing the partnership dimension of sustainability requires examining the extent to which gender-related capacities have been institutionalized across the ecosystem of partners, including AEs and NDAs primarily, but also of others. This is a determining factor of whether and the extent to which gender competencies (e.g. formal gender policies, coordination roles with gender-focused actors, standard operating procedures, guidance for integrating gender) are sufficiently embedded to be maintained and applied after GCF support ends.

226. The accreditation process helps to illustrate whether gender-related capacities are put in place within AEs, with accreditation documentation indicating whether an AE has formal gender policies and gender competencies in place to meet the minimum standards required to access GCF funds. As discussed earlier in the report (see 0 on coherence), using the absence of competency-related gender condition at accreditation as a proxy for meeting minimum gender competency requirements, 88 per cent of AEs from the 2019–2025 cohort (91 out of 104) were assessed as meeting the standard at accreditation (i.e. without gender competency-related conditions). Of the remaining 13 AEs with gender competency-related conditions, eight have since been fulfilled and closed their competency conditions[146], while five remain in progress as of the most recent extract.[147] Overall, GCF has contributed to the institutional strengthening of its AE partners, even if primarily to meet compliance-related standards and somewhat unevenly.

227. NDA gender capacity plays an important role in ensuring that FPs integrate gender-responsive measures consistent with the GCF updated Gender Policy and national gender priorities, and in providing strategic oversight and direction throughout the project cycle. Overall, evidence suggests that NDA capacity remains mixed. The IEU's Gender Synthesis identified, and the evaluation reaffirmed, limited gender expertise within many NDAs as a major impediment to effective gender mainstreaming, constraining their ability to oversee gender analysis, planning, implementation and monitoring. While the GCF has provided training, technical guidance and other support to strengthen partner capacities, evidence suggests that readiness resources have been used more

[146] Three of these eight were fulfilled specifically through re-accreditation.
[147] On February 5, 2026.

extensively to strengthen the institutional capacities of AEs than those of NDAs (see section on readiness below).

228. The evidence also points to some good practice cases of NDAs with strong gender capacity and the difference this makes in practice. In Uganda, the NDA has a dedicated gender expert and applies a screening tool aligned with the gender policies of the GCF, GEF and the AF to assess FPs along the gender continuum, review gender-responsive budgeting and indicators, and identify areas for improvement. This process is further strengthened through coordination with the Ministry of Gender, which participates in the review of FPs to ensure alignment with Uganda's National Climate Gender Action Plan. This suggests that strong pre-existing gender expertise and institutional coordination mechanisms within the national system can facilitate the integration of gender considerations into GCF programming.

229. Sustaining gender-related capacities is also shaped by the inclusion of gender ministries, women's organizations, and gender-focused CSOs in country coordination mechanisms, yet these actors remain largely confined to consultation roles rather than participating in project management, programming, oversight, or decision-making, as discussed in Chapter 7 on country ownership. This limited integration constrains the institutionalization of gender capacities, reducing the likelihood that these capacities will be maintained or applied once GCF support ends.

2. Readiness for sustainability

230. Readiness support is a valuable vehicle for strengthening gender-related capacities across its partner ecosystem. Of the total RPSP grants, 26 were categorized as "entity support [ES] or direct access", used as a proxy for institutional capacity strengthening, and 69.2 per cent of these included gender components. When disaggregated by AE types, including IAEs, DAEs, and unclassified entities, no significant difference was found between IAEs and DAEs, as illustrated in Table 2. The ES RPSP activity is designed to help entities build the institutional systems, competencies and foundational standards required for accreditation to access GCF funding, and for the delivery of gender-responsive climate programming. For example, ES readiness support is used for the development of gender policies, the establishment of ESS and GRMs, staff training, or the creation of dedicated units, tools or protocols.

Table 2. AEs accessing RPSP support for gender capacity strengthening

AE type	Total RPSP grants	Gender-inclusive	Rate
International	380	238	62.6%
Direct access	179	107	59.8%
Unknown / Unclassified	73	32	43.8%
Overall	632	377	

Source: IEU evaluation team, analysis of RPSP grants.

231. Among the deep dive countries, several examples illustrate how readiness support can contribute to the institutionalization of gender-related capacities in ways that enhance sustainability. In Mexico, national development banks used readiness funding to strengthen their ESS systems, upgrading accountability mechanisms, delivering staff-wide ESS training, institutionalizing complaint mechanisms, and creating a permanent position responsible for ESS screening across all projects. These changes represent a shift from ad hoc, "do-no-harm" approaches towards more structured and

gender-responsive institutional practices, increasing the likelihood that gender capacities will be maintained beyond GCF support. In Nepal, tools developed to meet GCF funding criteria, including gender-related standards, proved valuable to other development partners, enabling the government to leverage these tools for additional funding and reinforcing their use within national systems. Similarly, in Brazil, readiness-supported tools for country programming are now applied across the NDA, indicating uptake that extends beyond a single project cycle. In Benin, readiness support contributed to bolstering gender considerations in the National Gender Policy, providing a reference point for future projects and strengthening national frameworks.

232. Beyond the deep dive sample, a commercial bank in Mongolia used readiness support to establish a dedicated ESS department with gender integration functions. This institutional structure continues to generate benefits independent of any single GCF project. An additional positive example includes the e-mobility readiness grant in Papua New Guinea (PNG-RS-005) commissioned a gender-sensitive national electric vehicle communication strategy and action plan that explicitly addressed women's mobility needs and promoted inclusive access to emerging e-mobility technologies. The grant also convened a multi-stakeholder validation workshop with a 50 per cent women-participation target that emphasized the importance of women, youth, and marginalized groups actively engaging in the country's electric vehicle transition, positioning inclusive communication and coordinated stakeholder action as core elements of PNG's emerging e-mobility ecosystem.[148]

233. Collectively, these good examples illustrate how readiness can help embed gender capacities into organizational systems and processes, increasing the likelihood that institutions will retain and apply these capacities after GCF support ends. However, examination of results of RPSP support beyond the sample of this evaluation, based on the IEU-led Independent Evaluation of the RPSP (2023) and the Secretariat-led self-evaluation of Outcomes and Impact-Level Results of the RPSP (2024), cautions that while gender considerations are more strongly embedded in the readiness framework, gender-related capacities are at times uneven.[149] For example, the 2024 RPSP Evaluation notes that some NDAs and DAEs have strengthened gender capacities, but this is not consistent across countries, with many NDAs still lacking gender expertise, and DAEs varying widely in gender capacities.[150]

B. PROGRAMMATIC DIMENSION

Gender-related results are most likely to be sustained when embedded in institutions, policies, and financing structures rather than delivered as isolated project activities. To date, GCF financing has only partially put in place the enabling conditions that increase the likelihood of sustaining gender-related results, and moderately addressed the risks identified as undermining sustainability.

[148] Global Green Growth Institute, "Papua New Guinea Powers Ahead on E-Mobility" (2025), https://gggi.org/papua-new-guinea-powers-ahead-on-e-mobility/.
[149] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Independent Evaluation of the GCF's Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme* (2023), https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/evaluation/RPSP2023; Green Climate Fund, *Evaluation of the Outcomes and Impact-Level Results of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme* (March 2025), https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/evaluation-outcomes-and-impact-level-results-readiness-and-preparatory-support-programme.
[150] Green Climate Fund, *Evaluation of the Outcomes and Impact-Level Results of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme* (March 2025), https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/evaluation-outcomes-and-impact-level-results-readiness-and-preparatory-support-programme.

234. Given the early state of GCF results reporting, particularly on gender specifically, it is nearly impossible to directly assess the sustainability of results.[151] Thus, this analysis focuses on enabling and hindering factors shaping the likelihood of the sustainability of emerging gender-related results from GCF investments. Literature on gender-responsive climate finance and on the GCF specifically converges on the following core idea: gender results are most likely to be sustained when they are embedded in institutions, systems, and financing structures, rather than delivered as project-level activities or remaining tied to individual actors.[152]

1. Enabling factors

235. As enabling factors, gender-responsive climate finance is more likely to generate lasting outcomes when national institutions and AEs adopt formal gender policies, safeguards, and operational procedures that continue beyond the life of a single intervention, combined with alignment with national gender policies, climate strategies, and budget processes that support governments to maintain these efforts after project closure.[153]

236. Sustained gender results are also associated with the presence of established gender expertise and staff-wide capacity, which enables organizations to internalize gender-responsive practices rather than relying on short-term consultants whose knowledge departs with them (see Chapter 5 on efficiency).[154] Meaningful participation and leadership of women's organizations and gender machineries further strengthen long-term outcomes by building local ownership and accountability.[155] Interviews across the deep dives suggests stronger prospects for sustainability where gender outcomes are closely tied to institutional and policy dimensions, with a few illustrative examples below:

- In Lao PDR, in projects such as SAP030, the integration of gender and broader inclusion considerations into national policies, strategies, and systems (including health policies, information systems, and infrastructure management functions) showed stronger signs of the likelihood of gender-related results being sustained.
- In Benin, interviews with the NDA and AEs highlighted the importance of drawing on local structures and establishing strong partnerships characterized by close collaboration with gender focal points embedded in national administrative structures (e.g. gender focal points in the agricultural sector to validate gender strategies and identify beneficiaries), thereby increasing the likelihood that project activities will continue to be carried out following GCF financing.

237. IEU-led and AE-led evaluations (as in the Energy Sector evaluation, FP040 Tajikistan, FP024 Namibia, and FP046 Mongolia) report that projects integrating gender into governance structures and training regimes tended to describe gender outcomes as more likely to endure beyond project closure. On the social and community dimension, evaluations frequently point to women's

[151] IEU evaluations include Africa Evaluation (2022); Direct Access Evaluation (2022); Least Developed Countries Evaluation (2022); Results Management Framework Evaluation (2018); Second Performance Review (2023); Latin America and Caribbean Evaluation (2024).
[152] German Agency for International Cooperation, *Gender and Access to Climate Finance: Why It Matters, the Barriers and Emerging Recommendations for Inclusive Climate Action* (2024), https://www.adaptationcommunity.net/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Gender_Access_Climate_Finance.pdf.
[153] Shruti Patel et al., "Gender, Climate Finance and Inclusive Low-Carbon Transitions," *International Institute for Environment and Development*, September 2023, https://pubs.iied.org/g04337.
[154] environmentgenderindex.org, "Analyzing Gendered Access to Climate Finance and Resources," April 22, 2025, https://environmentgenderindex.org/analyzing-gendered-access-to-climate-finance-and-resources/.
[155] International Finance Corporation, *Gender-Responsive Climate Governance and the Role of Women Leaders* (June 2024), https://www.ifc.org/en/insights-reports/2024/gender-responsive-climate-governance-role-of-women-leaders.

participation in committees, savings groups, water user associations, and cooperatives as evidence of community ownership that help to increase the likelihood of gender results outlasting the project.

238. In terms of the enabling factor related to budget processes, few project evaluations describe concrete mechanisms ensuring continued resourcing of gender activities post-project, and several explicitly identify this as a gap. Country-level interviews with key stakeholders highlighted the risk that, in the absence of explicit exit strategies and secured financing, women's leadership roles established through GCF-funded projects may not be sustained. For example, in one Latin American country, project beneficiaries reported that there is no clear strategy for women to continue their established roles managing tree nurseries once the project ends.

2. INHIBITING FACTORS

239. Conversely, literature highlights key inhibiting factors such as project-bound, compliance-driven approaches, reliance on external consultants, weak coordination between climate and gender institutions, and limited domestic financing, which see gender gains dissipating once funding ends.[156] Analysis of existing evaluation evidence sheds light on a consistent set of risks limiting the likelihood of sustaining gender-related results across the portfolio – namely, the absence of dedicated gender budgets, over-reliance on a single gender focal point or consultant, gender indicators that are overly numerical or "tick-box" in nature, limited sex-disaggregated monitoring data, and deeply entrenched social and cultural norms that constrain women's participation despite project efforts.

240. Additionally, deep-rooted gender norms and power imbalances can also erode progress unless projects deliberately address structural barriers.[157] Several IEU-led evaluations (e.g. CIEWS2025,[158] SPR2023) and project evaluations (e.g. FP084, FP160, SAP007) flag that inclusion alone, such as participation in training workshops, does not translate into sustained results for gender equality and women's empowerment where structural barriers remain unaddressed. In Mexico, for example, women received one-off trainings (e.g. to produce crafts or cosmetic products using forest raw materials), but these were not accompanied by complementary measures or strategies to support continuity. Consequently, the sustainability and practical use of these skills remain uncertain. This highlights the importance of pursuing opportunities to ensure linkages with broader economic empowerment projects, such as linking skills to small-scale enterprises, developing market access, or integrating into value chains.

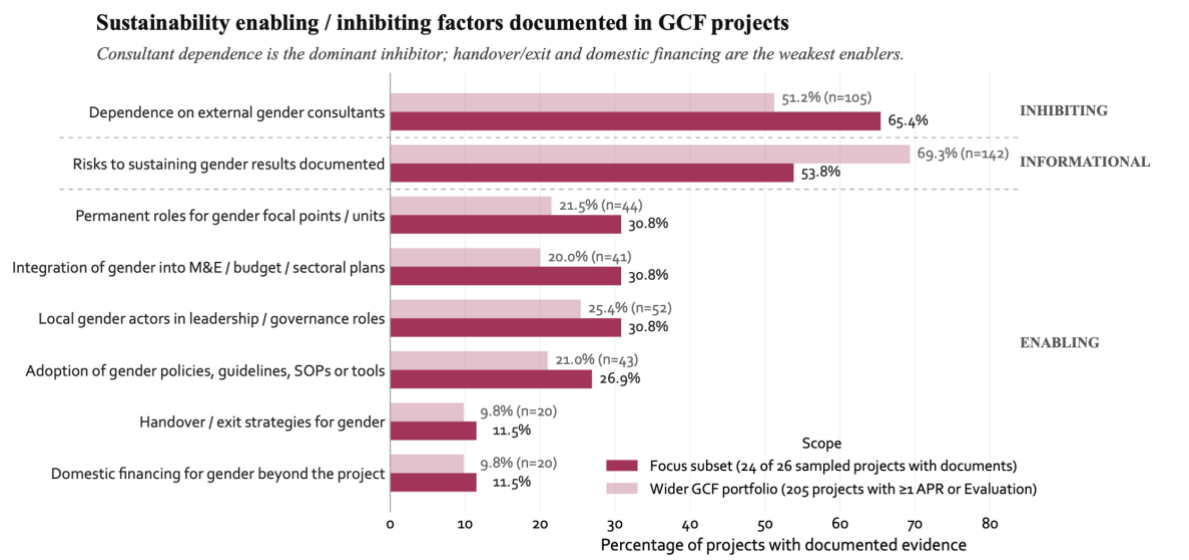
241. Analysis of these enabling and inhibiting factors across the portfolio[159] and the focused subset (i.e. deep dive projects and 20 projects in the sample) revealed that dependence on external or short-term consultants **is the single most prevalent inhibitor** to sustainability, documented in roughly half of the entire GCF portfolio and in two-thirds of the focus subset. Gender work is, by and large, contracted out without an in-house succession plan (examples from the focus subset include FP100 Brazil, SAP005 Benin, SAP003 Bahrain, FP199 Cambodia, FP155 Jordan and FP160 Liberia). The two factors that matter most for post-closure sustainability, handover or exit strategies and domestic financing for gender activities, are also among the weakest, at roughly one project in 10 across both

[156] German Corporation for International Cooperation, *Gender and Access to Climate Finance* (2024), https://www.adaptationcommunity.net/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Gender_Access_Climate_Finance.pdf.
[157] environmentgenderindex.org, "Analyzing Gendered Access to Climate Finance and Resources," April 22, 2025, https://environmentgenderindex.org/analyzing-gendered-access-to-climate-finance-and-resources/#what-are-the-implications-of-unequal-access-for-climate-action.
[158] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Independent evaluation of the GCF's approach to and Portfolio of Climate Information and Early Warning System Interventions* (2026).
[159] Analysis of the portfolio examined 205 projects with at least one APR or evaluation.

scopes. Where they do appear, they tend to be planned commitments rather than executed arrangements (e.g. FP193 Peru: Ministry of Environment's Climate Fund for Indigenous women; FP119 State of Palestine: Palestinian Water Authority and FAO Gender Action Plan).

242. Enabling factors that are present sit at roughly 21–25 per cent portfolio-wide and 27–31 per cent across the focus subset,[160] with the focus subset exhibiting more enabling factor evidence than the portfolio average across the board (with the exception of documented risks to sustaining gender-related results), given that these projects are more mature and better documented (as criteria for their selection, particularly the deep dives). Figure 10 presents an overview of the prevalence of factors enabling or hindering the likelihood of sustaining gender-related results.

Figure 10. Enabling and inhibiting factors influencing sustainability of gender-related results



Source: IEU evaluation team, analysis of GCF APRs (2024 reporting cycle) and evaluation reports (publications up to B.44, 2026).
Notes: 26 focus projects sampled (24 with available documents in the database); 205 portfolio projects with at least one APR or evaluation. Percentages reflect the share of projects in which at least one verbatim-validated quote was extracted for the factor.

[160] The strongest examples include the following. Permanent institutional roles: Lao Women's Union (FP117), Ghana Ministry gender desks (FP114), Cuba Gender Committees (FP126), Bahrain Supreme Council for Women (SAP003). Gender embedded in regular planning systems: FP163 sectoral energy gender action plans, FP118 Nepal provincial disaster risk reduction plans, FP100 Brazil REDD+ Manual of Procedures. Local gender actors with governance seats (not just consultation): FP100 Brazil all-women project Board, FP119 Palestine three of nine Water Use Association seats won by women, FP117 Lao PDR LWU on Steering Committee, FP160 Liberia Community Stewardship Council (six women, four men). Formally adopted gender policies and tools: FP164 India (eversource gender policy), FP017 Chile (non-discrimination policy), FP126 Cuba (Ministry of Agriculture Gender Strategy), FP167 Rwanda (signed memorandum of understanding with gender inclusivity provisions).

Chapter 10. REPLICATION AND SCALABILITY

A. ORGANIZATION-WIDE KNOWLEDGE SHARING

There is clear interest and demand among AEs and NDAs for peer learning on gender-responsive approaches. However, existing organization-wide knowledge sharing is characterized by one-off or periodic events that do not systematically include gender dimensions, with limited follow-up mechanisms to capture, systematize, or share lessons across the portfolio to enable replication and scaling. While gender-responsive good practices and lessons are being generated at the project level, these are not sufficiently aggregated and weakly connected to institutional learning systems, structured knowledge platforms, or feedback loops to effectively translate into replicable models or scaled practices across different contexts, countries, and portfolios.

243. At the institutional level, GCF recognizes knowledge generation, learning, and dissemination of good practices as critical enablers of replication and scaling. This stems from the foundational GCF GI and the USP-2, supported by provisions in the MAF that all emphasize lesson learning and knowledge sharing across the portfolio. However, while the general value is recognized, there is minimal linkage with gender to enable effective synthesis of gender-related insights into institutional knowledge platforms to support replication and scaling of gender-responsive practices.[161]

244. While the SPR highlights broader gaps in systematic learning and fragmented feedback loops, provisions for the generation, exchange, and dissemination of gender-specific knowledge are even more limited and largely absent at the institutional level**.** This gap is particularly significant for gender, which often demands iterative learning, context-specific adaptation, and sustained dialogue for effective implementation and to avoid being sidelined within broader climate programming.

245. Efforts to share knowledge on gender mainstreaming date back to the development of the 2019 updated Gender Policy, including workshops for AEs, country stakeholders, and GCF staff to strengthen understanding of gender requirements and practices.[162] More recently, evidence indicates that the Secretariat has been working towards strengthening knowledge generation and use. Interview findings highlight efforts to systematize and synthesize evaluation outputs, including those related to gender to a certain extent, and to produce lessons learned and thematic analyses. These are increasingly shared across different forums, including with external stakeholders such as Indigenous organizations. In parallel, the Secretariat is moving towards a more demand-driven knowledge management approach, aimed at extracting insights from accumulated project data and making them accessible to AEs and broader networks. However, despite these efforts, knowledge

[161] There is minimal connection between learning and gender in USP-2. In the institutional priorities set out for 'results, knowledge and learning', it calls for "establishing more structured forums for stakeholder engagement and expert feedback, learning loops and advice, adopting participatory approaches that draw on insights of affected communities, Indigenous Peoples, civil society, women, youth and academia". See Green Climate Fund, *Strategic Plan for the Green Climate Fund 2024–2027* (July 2023), 14, section 5.2(c)(iii), https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/strategic-plan-green-climate-fund-2024-2027.

[162] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Independent Synthesis of the GCF's Gender Approach* (September 2025), 45, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/ieu-gender-synthesis-2.pdf.

generation remains insufficiently institutionalized from a learning perspective, certainly on the specific matter of gender.

246. At the institutional level, there is no evidence of dedicated platforms or communities of practice focused on gender, limited synthesis of gender lessons compiled into structured knowledge products, nor systematic knowledge-transfer processes focused on gender or efforts to facilitate peer learning among AEs on gender-responsive approaches. However, there have been several one-off learning events focused on gender that target various audiences, and the GCF has generated a growing body of gender-related knowledge products and communication materials, including evaluation reports, case studies, and learning outputs.[163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168]

247. Interviews with a range of stakeholder groups identify few, but limited, existing mechanisms, such as regional dialogues, IEU learning events, GCF workshops, and project-level knowledge products, that provide valuable but fragmented entry points for sharing lessons on gender-responsive approaches. Stakeholders consulted across the project sample explained that GCF workshops have over time increasingly discussed gender and social issues and included sessions specifically involving women.

248. Regional dialogues are a primary platform for peer learning and knowledge exchange, that include presentations on gender, ESS and IPs, typically followed by discussion or other activities. For example, a regional dialogue in Latin America (July 2023) convened NDAs, AEs, DPs, and civil society to exchange lessons from readiness and project implementation. This included a dedicated session on ESS, whereby participants emphasized early integration of gender considerations and the importance of transversal assessments that encompass gender and social inclusion. While such events are recognized as valuable exchange sites, they are considered one-off or periodic events that do not systematically include of highlight gender dimensions, with limited follow-up mechanisms to capture, systematize, or share lessons across the portfolio.

249. In addition to regional dialogues, stakeholders highlighted the value of IEU-led webinars that include AEs, CSOs and private sector organizations, which tend to more consistently incorporate gender dimensions. These have included the presentation of evaluation findings, which systematically include explicit focus on gender and social inclusion dimensions in their evaluation frameworks.

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[163] *GCF and Gender 101* is a foundational knowledge webinar that introduces the GCF gender architecture, such as the Gender Policy. See https://www.gcfwatch.org/gcfnews/recording-grabacion-green-climate-fund-gender-101-%F0%9F%8C%8E-intro-a-genero-en-el-fondo-verde.

[164] The IEU virtual talk on gender in climate change that includes perspectives from the Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management on mainstreaming gender in climate projects and the measure of women's empowerment impacts. See https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/event/ieu-virtual-talk-gender-climate-change-perspectives-wocan-and-gcf.

[165] *Accelerating Inclusive Gender-Responsive Climate Finance for Effective NDCs: The Role of National Climate Funds* that explains how to integrate gender in National Climate Funds and NDC implementation. See https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/event/accelerating-inclusive-gender-responsive-climate-finance-effective-ndcs-role-national-climate.

[166] A GCF Watch civil society webinar series on *Gender, Indigenous Peoples and REDD+* that includes civil society analysis of gender outcomes and gaps in GCF operations. See https://www.gcfwatch.org/gcfnews/session-2-of-the-gcf-watch-international-webinar-series-gender-indigenous-peoples-and-redd-within-the-gcf.

[167] A *Guide to Strengthening Gender Integration in Climate Finance Projects*, which provides practical guidance for integrating gender into project design, implementation and monitoring for GCF and other climate funds (e.g., AF, CIF). See https://wrd.unwomen.org/practice/resources/guide-strengthening-gender-integration-climate-finance-projects.

[168] A Global Gender and Climate Alliance webinar series on *Gender in Climate Finance Mechanisms* that includes comparative analysis of gender approaches across climate funds (e.g., GCF, GEF, CIF) including progress in gender mainstreaming and challenges in implementation. See https://wedo.org/ggca-webinar-series-gender-responsive-climate-finance-mechanisms/.

250. Interviews with AE and NDA stakeholders in both the project sample and deep dives demonstrate clear demand for peer learning among partners, identifying these as effective vehicles for sharing and potentially scaling success stories and gender-responsive practices. For example, AEs in Mexico expressed a desire for peer learning on what works in gender-responsive programming. Stakeholders in Lao PDR repeatedly stressed the need to move beyond annual reporting with stronger institutional learning on gender, explicitly calling for more GCF training, clearer digital platforms, and better ways to share lessons across projects and DPs. They also expressed an interest for structured communities of practice or documented replication of gender-responsive approaches within the country. In Liberia, stakeholders highlighted the value of lessons learned workshops and exchanges with international experts and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) under SAP018. Approaches adopted in Benin, as part of the *champs écoles producteurs* were of interest to other NGOs for replication, with requests for specific training and knowledge dissemination.

251. Stakeholders consulted across the project sample emphasized that currently orientations or guidance does not exist to support AEs in scaling benefits for vulnerable groups such as women and IPs, highlighting the value of communities of practice, exchange mechanisms, or good practice guides for AEs to generate and accelerate more direct benefits. Interviewees identified FAO's establishment of a "GCF community of practice" that used to meet to exchange experiences and learning across GCF-funded projects as good practice to be repeated.

252. Evidence from the IEU Gender Synthesis indicates that the GCF lacks a robust knowledge management system to systematically capture and consolidate lessons learned, particularly from project-level innovations in gender integration.[169] At the project and programme level, the documentation of potential best practices primarily occurs through regular reporting through APRs. While APRs have the potential to be valuable instruments for learning, interviews confirmed that APRs are under-utilized for this purpose due to the fact there is no institutionalized learning mechanism for capturing and aggregating lessons or best practices in APRs for wider replication and scaling.

253. The GCF-10 Impact Report notes that all projects are expected to include gender assessments, gender action plans, and sex-disaggregated indicators, and notes efforts to document best practices and incorporate gender-responsive design features such as gender audits, women-led community groups, and targeted resource allocation, but falls short of presenting cases of gender as a strategic or transformative dimension of climate action.[170] The report further reaffirms that there is limited evidence of institutional systems to systematically capture, synthesize, and disseminate these gender lessons across projects, countries, or AEs. Additionally, portfolio-wide AI analysis found that independent project-level interim and final evaluations tend to be consistently more reflective and critical about gender gaps when compared to self-reported APRs.

254. Indeed, despite the existence of the above learning resources, there is no evidence of organization-wide mechanisms for systematically capturing gender-related knowledge generated across the portfolio that can be leveraged to support replication and scaling. As a result, valuable experience, especially on gender-transformational approaches, is not consistently fed back into institutional learning or policy development. This limitation is further reinforced by insights from the M&E Synthesis, which shows that while the GCF stores extensive data from APRs, evaluations, and other reports, this information is rarely used for portfolio-wide learning or investment decision-making, which continue to rely primarily on standardized results reporting rather than deeper analytical

[169]Independent Evaluation Unit, *Independent Synthesis of the GCF's Gender Approach* (September 2025), 19, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/ieu-gender-synthesis-2.pdf.
[170] Ibid.

insights.[171] Ultimately, this constrains the GCF's ability to build cumulative learning to inform strategic decision-making or feedback loops, in order to advance more consistent, high-quality gender integration across its operations.

255. Moreover, a review of RPSP and PPF learning resources and knowledge events reveals some integration of gender; for example, unpacking PPF and RPSP support specifically for DAEs explains that (1) eligible activities and funding available through PPF includes gender studies (e.g. gender assessments and gender action plans), and (2) supporting DAEs in developing proposals and programmes to contribute to national climate strategies by ensuring skills to promote positive outcomes including gender and social inclusion of diverse groups (e.g. IPs) as part of the DAE window for enhancing programming capacity.[172]

256. A review of latest APPR reporting for 2024 and 2023 illustrates that references to knowledge generation, knowledge exchange, or learning specific to gender are limited and weakly developed. While the reports consistently highlight near-universal compliance with gender requirements (e.g. project-level gender assessments and gender action plans), they provide minimal qualitative analysis of lessons learned or good practices in gender integration, and do not systematically document or disseminate gender-related knowledge across the portfolio. For example, the 2023 APPR notes that reporting on gender has been largely confined to high level summaries of activities and compliance, with no disaggregated analysis of what works, under what conditions, or how gender approaches differ across projects or AEs. Similarly, the 2024 APPR references select lessons learned from completed projects, including the importance of gender-responsive approaches, but notes these have not been translated into structured knowledge products, guidance, or cross-portfolio learning mechanisms.

B. INSTITUTIONAL ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

GCF provides a weak and fragmented institutional enabling environment for the replication and scaling of gender-responsive approaches. While policies and tools support gender integration at the project level, there are significant gaps with few mechanisms to systematically capture, share, and transfer gender lessons across projects, countries, sectors, or AEs, resulting in very low cross-portfolio uptake. Consequently, gender-responsive practices remain largely siloed and not institutionally scaled, with replication occurring only on an ad hoc basis rather than through deliberate design.

257. Across the GCF, the incentive scheme for replication and scaling remains weak, and though embedded in design and appraisal criteria, there is limited evidence that FP requirements are driving systematic uptake of lessons or models from prior GCF projects – or projects from other climate funds. GCF formally integrates requirements for scaling and replication in its FP system (FPs and simplified approval process [SAPs]). Indeed, both FP and SAP templates contain dedicated sections on scalability and replicability; however, these fields are framed broadly. In the FP template, specifically, this appears in section B.6 ("Vulnerability and Adaptation Needs") and section E ("Expected Performance Against Investment Criteria") of the FP template, where proponents are

[171] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Synthesis Note on Monitoring and Evaluation* (March 2026), 36, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/me-synthesis-2026-ii-0_1.pdf.
[172] Green Climate Fund, "Information Session 7: PPF and Readiness Operational Modalities (2024–2027 Strategy) for DAEs," information session, April 15, 2025, https://www.greenclimate.fund/event/information-session-7-dedicated-direct-access-entities-readiness-operational-modalities-and.

asked to *describe potential for scaling-up and replication*, with a similar field in the SAP template under section E.2 ("Scalability and Replicability") asking proponents to outline how the project could be expanded or reproduced.

258. However, these do not explicitly require evidence of prior piloting, demonstration results, or learning from earlier GCF-funded interventions or links to other climate-finance mechanisms, nor do they request justification for how proposals build on or scale approaches from other climate funds. IEU reviews and assessments indicate that these sections are often completed in a generic or aspirational manner, with little concrete evidence of replication pathways or links to prior investments.[173] IEU evaluations repeatedly note that replication claims are rarely substantiated and that scaling strategies are underdeveloped or absent in most proposals. Evidence from independent evaluations and SAP assessments suggests a gap between formal requirements and their effective implementation, with the concept of ready for scaling up frequently loosely defined and inconsistently applied, and consequently many SAP projects do not clearly represent true scale up or replication interventions in practice.[174]

259. Evidence from portfolio-wide AI-facilitated analysis reveals critically low rates of cross-portfolio uptake, with only 5 per cent (or 36 of 679 documents reviewed) exhibiting evidence of gender-related approaches being transferred or replicated across projects. Analysis indicates that while the GCF has a relatively broad set of institutional provisions that support gender integration at the project level, the institutional enabling environment for replication and scaling of gender-responsive approaches across projects, countries, sectors, and AEs remains weak.

260. Where limited cross-portfolio uptake does exist, it is largely organic and relationship-based rather than structurally enabled, often relying on informal linkages between AEs rather than any formal learning architecture within the GCF. In many cases, good practices are documented without a clearly identifiable receiving project, meaning the receiving project is *null* and the cross-portfolio uptake has no documented recipient, reinforcing the absence of a structured diffusion pathway.

C. External synergies with climate finance institutions for replication and scaling

The GCF collaborates with other climate funds on gender under the shared Complementarity and Coherence Framework, with progress concentrated in capacity-building and awareness-raising. However, there has been limited synergies at the operational level and collaboration processes are not yet fully institutionalized.

261. While major climate finance institutions, such as GCF, GEF, CIF, and the AF, all emphasize scaling and replication in their mandates, there is limited evidence of systematic, structured scaling pathways between them.[175] As noted above, GCF proposal templates do not explicitly require links

[173] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Forward-Looking Performance Review of the Green Climate Fund* (June 2019), https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/evaluation/fpr2019; Independent Evaluation Unit, *Annual Report 2023* (2024), https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/document/annual-report-2023.
[174] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Independent Assessment of the GCF's Simplified Approval Process Pilot Scheme* (2020), https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/evaluation/sap2020.
[175] Scott Chaplowe, "The Approach to Transformational Change in Multilateral Climate Funds: AF, CIF, GEF and GCF," *Joint Multilateral Climate Funds Series* (Adaptation Fund, Climate Investment Funds, Global Environment Facility and Green Climate Fund, May 2025), https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/MCFs-Transformational-Change_220525_3.pdf.

to other climate finance mechanism to demonstrate how they might scale proven models from the AF or GEF, despite GCF's mandate to operate at scale.

262. A portfolio-wide review of all 352 FPs examined whether GCF projects explicitly build on, replicate, scale up or complement gender-related climate finance approaches and pilots from other funders. These include the GEF, AF, CIF, MDBs, bilateral donors, and United Nations agencies.[176] The analysis shows that 22 per cent of FPs demonstrate at least one gender-focused linkage with another funder. However, these tend to focus more on alignment, with the GCF complementing other funders' gender-focused work rather than committing to taking pilots to scale. Only four FPs explicitly scaled up or replicated a gender-focused pilot, as detailed in Table 3 below and Annex 5.C of the evaluation report. Linkages are strongest with the GEF at 12 instances, the World Bank at 9 and UN Women at 7, followed equally by IFAD and the AF at 6 each. Regionally, linkages are greatest in Asia and the Pacific and in Africa, and weakest in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East.

Table 3. Funding proposal linkages to other funders' gender-focused work

LINKAGE TYPE	STRICT LINKAGES	SHARE
Complements	59	75%
Builds on	16	20%
Scales up	3	4%
Replicates	1	1%

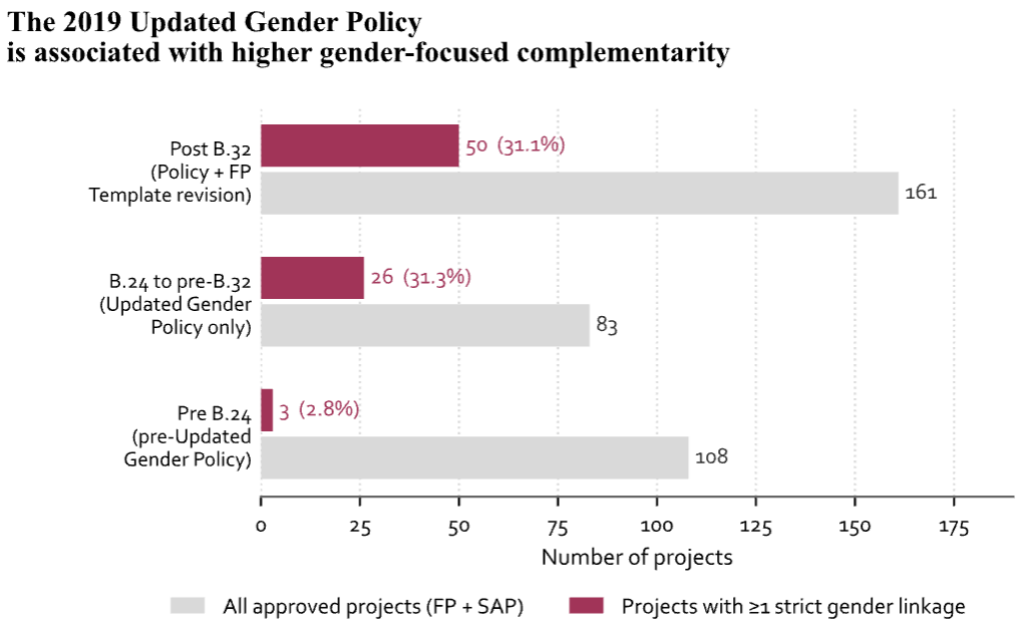
Source: IEU evaluation team.

263. Looking at FPs from B.21–B.27 and adjusting for differences in size and region, Figure 11 shows a roughly 23-percentage-point rise in strong gender-focused complementarity statements following the updated Gender Policy at B.24, a change that remains statistically robust across multiple comparison windows, notably rising from 2.8 per cent pre-B.24 to around 31 per cent in both subsequent periods. This suggests the policy drove the shift rather than the later template revision alone.[177] While the Fund most often aligns with rather than scales gender pilots from other funders, the updated Gender Policy has meaningfully supported the articulation of complementarity with other funders at the design stage.

[176] This finding draws on a systematic portfolio-wide review of all 352 approved FPs. Evidence of external complementarity and coherence was extracted using a three-stage approach: post-B.32 structured template review, pre-B.32 section B narrative scan and gender-focused re-extraction, with explicit exclusion of co-financiers, the proposal's own AE or EE, generic donor presence, and government counterpart funding. As FP templates changed over time, results are interpreted as documented articulation of complementarity, not necessarily the full universe of coordination activity. Detailed AI procedures, such as prompts, schemas, quote verification and funder-normalization, as well as the policy-period robustness tests centred on B.24 are reported in the Annex 4.

[177] Using local comparisons in a ±3 Board-meeting window (B.21–B.27) and adjusting for observable composition (size × region), the standardized increase in strict gender-focused complementarity articulation is approximately +23 percentage points, with a bootstrap 95 per cent confidence interval fully above zero and results stable across ±2 to ±4 windows.

Figure 11. Influence of updated Gender Policy (2019) on gender-focused complementarity



Source: IEU evaluation team, coherence and complementarity analysis of FPs. Cut-off: B.44 (2026).
Notes: Universe = 352 approved projects (FPs = 285, SAPs = 67). The updated Gender Policy was adopted at B.24 (March 2019); the FP template revision introducing section A.19 is associated with B.32. The three bins isolate the combined and incremental effects of policy and template.

264. Scaling across funds appears to occur on an ad hoc and context-specific basis, rather than through deliberate institutionalized pipelines, and is largely dependent on enabling national policies, institutional capacity, and co-financing conditions rather than coordinated fund-to-fund design. This suggests that, despite expectations that the GCF would act as a vehicle to scale proven interventions from other climate funds, cross-institutional replication remains uneven and not yet systematized in practice.

265. Collaboration on gender across specifically the multilateral climate funds (MCFs) has strengthened in recent years, particularly at the upstream and coordination levels, as both GCF reporting documents and KIIs have articulated. Collaborative areas particularly involve joint awareness-raising, capacity-building activities, and exchanges on policy approaches and measurement challenges. GCF reporting to the UNFCCC notes that the gender focal points of the four climate funds – the GCF, AF, CIF and GEF – have initiated consultations focused on "profiles, policies and processes; capacity-building and programming; and knowledge exchange and communication," and have jointly organized events and capacity-development initiatives, including at COP29.[178]

266. Evidence from comparator organizations supports these views. Interviewees from the AF described regular joint gender events at COPs and climate weeks, often organized together with the UNFCCC, aimed at raising awareness on gender-responsive climate finance and familiarizing national gender focal points and NDAs with the different climate funds and their approaches. Interviewees characterized collaboration as solid but not yet institutionalized across the organizations, emphasizing that cooperation still relies heavily on exchanges among gender focal points rather than on formalized institutional mechanisms involving a broader range of staff and operational functions.

[178] GCF/B.42/09: Fourteenth Report of the Green Climate Fund to the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, June 9, 2025, https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/gcf-b42-09.

267. At the same time, both comparator and GCF Secretariat KIIs interviews indicated that collaboration on gender-responsive approaches remains much more limited at the strategic investment and operational levels. Interviewees with comparator climate funds noted that while collaboration exists around events, policy discussions, and exchanges on indicators, there is little collaboration among climate funds in relation to investment programming or operational alignment to support replication or scaling. More broadly, the evaluation found limited evidence of strategic discussions or coordination mechanisms aimed at promoting replication and scaling across the gender-related investments of the different climate funds, such as identifying opportunities for one fund to scale, replicate, or build upon gender-related approaches or innovations supported by another.

268. MCFs have made initial progress in establishing platforms to support synergies and knowledge exchange, including through the establishment of the Climate Funds Collaboration Platform Working Group on Results.[179] The Working Group's Joint Results Report notes that the funds have undertaken a joint indicator mapping exercise and established technical working groups to develop "further methodological guidance and joint standards" for common climate results indicators. It acknowledges some harmonization efforts related to sex-disaggregated reporting, noting that all MCFs "strive to report a sex-disaggregated breakdown of adaptation results."[180] KIIs with the MCF and GCF Secretariat staff suggest that measuring gender outcomes remains a shared challenge across the climate funds and an emerging area of collaboration. Interviewees referred to ongoing discussions around the development of more harmonized gender indicators, common taxonomies for gender outcomes, and approaches that move beyond participation-focused metrics towards a more meaningful assessment of gender results. However, the Joint Results Report itself contains limited evidence of concrete progress specifically on harmonized gender-results measurement beyond sex-disaggregated beneficiary reporting, suggesting that collaboration on gender-results measurement remains at an early stage.

[179] Adaptation Fund, Climate Investment Funds, Global Environment Facility and Green Climate Fund, *Multilateral Climate Funds Joint Results Report* (November 18, 2025), 6, https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/multilateral-climate-funds-joint-results-report.
[180] Ibid.

Chapter 11. INNOVATION

A. FOSTERING INNOVATIVE APPROACHES

The updated Gender Policy sets the stage for the development of innovations along the gender continuum, but it lacks a definition of what gender innovations means, more specifically than what has broadly been included in USP-2 on innovation. In addition, while innovations exist, they are not being systematically identified and shared across the portfolio.

269. This section examines the extent to which GCF policies, strategies, and frameworks provide clear incentives to encourage and track innovation across the gender continuum. It also looks at the extent to which innovative gender approaches have been adopted across the GCF portfolio, including the key enabling and hindering factors influencing their adoption.

270. USP-2 positions innovation as a cross-cutting principle for advancing climate action, particularly in relation to adaptation, inclusion, and locally led approaches. It highlights support for "innovative and inclusive approaches" grounded in "traditional, local and Indigenous knowledge and practices". It emphasizes stakeholder engagement to identify and scale locally led solutions. Innovation is also linked to adaptation programming, including through support for "catalysing innovation in climate adaptation" as well as expanded access to finance for locally led adaptation action. At the same time, USP-2 does not articulate a specific vision or dedicated incentives for innovation in the implementation of gender-responsive approaches.[181]

271. The updated Gender Policy (2019) makes a limited but explicit reference to innovation, stating that it aims "to support climate change interventions and innovations through a comprehensive gender approach". However, it does not define what constitutes "gender innovation" or provide a framework for identifying, incentivizing, or tracking innovative approaches along the gender continuum. The institutional GAP does not make reference to innovation.

272. While the updated Gender Policy does not explicitly refer to gender-transformative approaches, it also does not prevent AEs from going beyond the GCF's baseline requirement of gender-responsiveness. Indeed, the gender literature review and benchmarking study conducted as part of this evaluation indicate that some AEs have institutional gender policies that explicitly promote gender-transformative programming. For example, IFAD and FAO commit to 35 per cent and 10 per cent of their projects adopting gender-transformative approaches, respectively. In such cases, AEs are expected to comply with both GCF requirements and their own organizational gender policies, which may, and indeed has resulted in the application of more transformative approaches within GCF-financed activities, as discussed below.

273. The Gender Synthesis further notes that a small portion of APRs report on gender-transformative actions, indicating that a subset of projects is contributing to deeper structural change.[182] This is consistent with data from GCF Secretariat KIIs, acknowledging that while some AEs implement and report on innovative gender-transformative actions, the learning emerging from these experiences is not systematically captured or shared. There is no systematic GCF-level mechanism for tracking or

[181] Green Climate Fund, *Strategic Plan for the Green Climate Fund 2024–2027* (July 2023), https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/strategic-plan-green-climate-fund-2024-2027.
[182] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Independent Synthesis of the GCF's Gender Approach* (September 2025), 10, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/ieu-gender-synthesis-2.pdf.

facilitating gender innovation transfer and it is therefore not possible to conduct a systematic analysis of the extent of gender innovations at the GCF.

274. However, the IEU conducted an AI-led analysis of APRs, interim and final evaluations and identified 15 projects that used innovations related to gender.[183] These are classified across five innovation types, as further detailed in Table 4. Innovations were identified across three regions: Asia and the Pacific (seven projects), Africa (four projects), Latin America and the Caribbean (four projects), and LDCs/SIDS (eight of fifteen projects). Thirteen of fifteen projects are either small or medium projects with only two large projects. Similarly, the majority – 12 of 15 projects – are implemented by IAEs, with only three implemented by DAEs. Similarly, the majority of projects, 12 of 15 or 80 per cent, are public sector with three private-sector projects. This is broadly consistent with the overall composition of the GCF portfolio, where private-sector projects account for 23 per cent. This suggests that the presence of gender innovations is not concentrated in either public or private operations. Finally, projects with gender innovations show a strong balance between adaptation and mitigation themes.

Table 4. Innovative gender approaches across 15 GCF projects

INNOVATION TYPE	# PROJECTS	EXAMPLES
Methodology (novel assessment/monitoring methods)	9	Participatory gender assessments, gender-responsive vulnerability indices and scoring tools
Gender-transformative (beyond mainstreaming)	2	Women-led adaptation groups, gender-transformative livelihood approaches
Benefit-sharing	2	Preferential financing for women-led small- and medium-sized enterprises, payments for environmental services, gender incentives
Community monitoring (community-led gender tracking)	1	Community-managed monitoring committees, participatory water governance systems
Intersectional (gender + other dimensions)	1	Socioeconomic vulnerability scoring, intersectional beneficiary targeting systems

Source: IEU evaluation team, analysis of APRs, interim and final evaluations.

275. The portfolio review identified methodological innovation as the most common type of gender innovation across the sample, present in nine of the fifteen projects reviewed. Methodological innovations primarily involved the development of new tools, analytical approaches, institutional procedures, incentive systems or operational methodologies intended to embed gender considerations more systematically into project implementation, monitoring, governance or financing mechanisms.

- In Ecuador, the REDD+ programme (FP110) developed a gender module within its "training of trainers" methodology to enable technical teams to independently conduct gender workshops

[183] The IEU analysed GCF project documents (FPs, APRs and evaluations) from the GCF database. Documents were pre-filtered for gender-relevant content and processed in chunks using a structured large language model approach (GPT-4o-mini) to identify gender innovations, defined as actions going beyond standard gender mainstreaming to address structural inequalities. Innovations were classified into five categories, with project metadata sourced from the GCF Projects API. Following deduplication and quality checks, 15 projects were identified with at least one gender innovation. The analysis is descriptive, highlighting where innovations are documented rather than their overall prevalence.

without relying on dedicated gender specialists, while also integrating participatory gender indicators and sex-disaggregated monitoring systems into programme management.

- In Timor-Leste, the project (FP109) combined Local Vulnerability and Risk Assessment methodology with GIS-based socioeconomic risk and vulnerability modelling integrating gender data to inform climate vulnerability analysis and climate-resilient infrastructure planning.
- In Bangladesh, the clean cooking programme (FP070) introduced gender-responsive performance awards and incentive mechanisms for partner organizations, alongside structured peer learning processes on women's participation and empowerment.
- In Mongolia, in a private-sector project, XacBank's micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises programme (FP028) integrated gender considerations into green finance delivery systems by introducing preferential financing conditions for women-led MSMEs, supported by gender-disaggregated monitoring and targeted outreach initiatives.

276. AI-Review of the 15 projects identified two projects with gender-transformative innovations, namely adaptation projects focused on women's leadership and collective action.

- In the Gambia, the ecosystem-based adaptation project (FP011) combined women-led beekeeping enterprises with the Gender Action Learning System methodology, gender-sensitive protocols, and dedicated gender governance structures to support women's participation in ecosystem-based adaptation activities and women-led extension services.
- In Bangladesh, the ECCCP-Flood project (SAP008) established women-led Climate Change Adaptation Groups, with women representing approximately 80 per cent of group members, alongside reported increases in women's knowledge of climate change adaptation practices.

277. In the broader review of 20 sampled projects, FP119 in Palestine stood out as an example of gender-transformative innovation through its use of male engagement approaches, which involved working with men and community leaders to support women's participation in agricultural activities. Stakeholders reported that this contributed to greater acceptance of women's participation and strengthened women's role in agricultural decision-making.

278. The portfolio review identified two examples of innovation related to benefit-sharing mechanisms. These focused primarily on modifying financial incentives, eligibility criteria and institutional arrangements to increase women's access to climate-related economic benefits.

- In Argentina, the Inter-American Development Bank-supported project (FP064) worked through the national development bank Banco de Inversión y Comercio Exterior (BICE) to relaunch the "Female Business Leaders" credit line, offering preferential financing conditions for women-led small- and medium-sized enterprises while also institutionalizing gender-responsive procedures within the bank, including sex-disaggregated data systems and dedicated gender governance structures.
- In Costa Rica, the REDD+ Results-Based Payments project (FP144) introduced gender incentives into the national payment for environmental services programme by assigning additional points to forest applications owned or co-owned by women, while also strengthening inter-institutional coordination with national women's institutions to support women's access to land and participation in forest-related benefit-sharing mechanisms.

279. The portfolio review also identified one example of innovation related to community monitoring and one on intersectional approaches.

- In Sri Lanka, the project (FP016) established participatory monitoring committees and community-managed water governance systems with minimum participation targets for women and youth, while also integrating gender, disability and socioeconomic vulnerabilities into flood risk assessments and community planning processes.
- In Nepal, the clean cooking project (FP172) developed a beneficiary selection and prioritization scoring system based on socioeconomic vulnerability indicators, with real-time monitoring systems and awareness initiatives emphasizing women's participation.

280. Additionally, the Brazil country visit identified SAP031 (Marajó Resiliente) as a good practice in community-led project management. The project established local advisory committees comprising implementing partners, local authorities and beneficiary representatives, which meet regularly to oversee implementation, identify challenges and support adaptive management.

281. In addition to the innovation types mentioned above, stakeholders interviewed suggest that locally led adaptation remains an area with significant untapped potential for innovation in relation to supporting women and vulnerable local communities within the GCF portfolio. Interviewees argued that the GCF's comparative advantage lies not simply in financing local adaptation activities, but in using its broader partnership network, concessional finance, and range of financial instruments to support more systemic and institutionalized approaches to vulnerability and adaptation. This could include working through governments, MDBs, national development banks, microfinance institutions, and private-sector actors to channel climate finance towards vulnerable communities, while embedding adaptation considerations into broader systems such as livelihoods, social protection, and local finance.

282. In particular, one GCF Secretariat staff highlighted emerging examples of adaptation programmes linked to social protection and climate-risk-informed livelihood systems as promising areas where the GCF could play a stronger innovation and thought leadership role. This is consistent with *Unlocking climate finance for social protection: an analysis of the Green Climate Fund,*[184] published in 2024, which identified 10 GCF projects integrating social protection dimensions. The study found that, while climate finance overall remains limited in its integration of social protection approaches, the GCF performs comparatively well within this space by supporting efforts to adapt and strengthen social protection systems, particularly through climate services, local institutional capacity-building, and shock-responsive approaches. According to the study, the GCF is particularly well positioned to catalyse innovation, institutional learning and coordination across fragmented financing systems, including in fragile, conflict-affected and violent contexts where climate vulnerability, livelihoods and social protection challenges increasingly overlap. The study found that 90 per cent of the projects were implemented by IAEs, with the World Food Programme implementing the largest share, most notably through micro-scale adaptation projects promoting productive safety net approaches, while the Asian Development Bank implemented the two largest projects focused on social housing and climate risk-informed social protection systems.

[184] Mariya Aleksandrova, Laura Kuhl, Daniele Malerba, "Unlocking climate finance for social protection: an analysis of the Green Climate Fund," *Climate Policy* 24, issue 7 (2024).

B. BEST PRACTICES RELATED TO GENDER

The benchmarking analysis highlights a set of actionable practices that can help strengthen the consistency, depth, and institutionalization of gender integration across the GCF, particularly in relation to capacity, results measurement, transformative ambition, and knowledge use. GCF's opportunity lies in reinforcing and connecting its existing foundations to align more closely with comparator institutions and learning from best practices.

283. Drawing on benchmarking evidence, several areas of learning emerge where existing approaches could be further reinforced through practices applied by comparator organizations, as discussed below.

284. **Strengthening institutional capacity and clarifying roles for gender integration:** The GCF has faced challenges related to limited gender expertise beyond the Operational Safeguards team, unclear roles and responsibilities, and the absence of systematic staff training or incentives. Comparator experience points to approaches that support staff capacity-development and embedded gender structures across the organization. For example, IFAD has established an extensive and formalized gender architecture, with a dedicated gender and social inclusion function (covering gender, targeting, and disability), supported by senior management and a network of focal points across divisions and country offices. Gender staff are embedded in project design and supervision processes, supporting integration across the project cycle. Similarly, the GEF strengthens internal capacity by having its only gender specialist strengthen the capacity of GEF technical specialists on gender, intent to make gender 'everyone's business across the Secretariat. This has contributed to project teams providing more constructing feedback during their technical reviews, which has strengthened the integration of gender in project design.

285. **Strengthening the measurement of gender outcomes in M&E systems:** While the GCF has established an M&E architecture and reporting processes with increasing integration of gender considerations, limitations remain in capturing gender-related and inclusive outcomes, particularly beyond participation and output-level results. The benchmarking study notes that the AF has introduced a gender scorecard that systematically reviews qualitative evidence from annual project reports to identify gender-responsive and gender-transformative results, explicitly addressing the limits of purely quantitative or tagging-based systems. Furthermore, the GEF is moving towards the introduction of portfolio-level indicators on socioeconomic co-benefits, including sex-disaggregated livelihood outcomes and women's economic empowerment, with the aim of strengthening outcome-level reporting.

286. **Strengthening the ambition and operationalization of gender-transformative results:** GCF projects consistently deliver gender-responsive support but less frequently demonstrate deeper changes in behaviour, resilience, and gender relations. Comparator experience highlights ways to more explicitly anchor transformative ambition. Notably, IFAD has institutionalized a clear commitment to gender transformation, including a corporate target that at least 35 per cent of its investments be gender-transformative, supported by dedicated action plans addressing underlying drivers of inequality. Similarly, the CIF has progressively strengthened its ambition across successive gender action plans, with an explicit focus on transformative outcomes. While the GCF updated Gender Policy (2019) is anchored in a gender-responsive approach, it also allows for gender-transformative approaches to be pursued.

287. **Strengthening knowledge management and peer learning on gender:** The GCF has developed a growing body of gender-related knowledge and communication outputs, but the absence of a robust knowledge management system and limited mechanisms for aggregation and learning constrain the translation of lessons into practice and scale. Comparator experience points to more structured approaches to partnership-wide learning. For example, the GEF has established a GEF Gender Partnership that facilitates the exchange of guidance, tools, and good practices across its agencies, supporting a shared understanding of requirements and more systematic peer learning.

Chapter 12. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. CONCLUSIONS

1. GENDER POLICY ARCHITECTURE AND PRACTICE

288. **The updated Gender Policy's foundation is in place and strong but remains strategically unanchored and operationally disconnected, with persistent gaps between the updated Policy and its application in practice.**

289. The GCF has established strong policy foundations for gender mainstreaming, underpinned by the 2019 updated Gender Policy and its alignment with international commitments including CEDAW, the Paris Agreement and successive UNFCCC decisions. The updated Policy, which marks a shift from a gender-sensitive to a gender-responsive approach, also reflects the evolution of the global gender-climate agenda and expectations set by the enhanced Lima Work Programme on Gender.

290. However, beyond the updated Policy, gender is not sufficiently embedded in the Fund's strategic planning architecture. Specifically, it remains positioned in USP-2 primarily as an implementation modality rather than being integrated in the Fund's programming priorities and institutional targets.

291. The GCF's Investment Framework provides insufficient incentives for the prioritization of gender-responsive outcomes in investment decision-making. While the IPP (2018) and the RESP (2021) broadly aligned with, and to a certain extent advancing the priorities of the updated Gender Policy, residual ambiguity in their conceptual focus on gender-responsiveness underscores the need for greater definitional clarity across these instruments.

292. Externally, the policy framework positions the GCF as a key contributor of gender-responsive climate action globally, but it remains unclear how GCF instruments, modalities, and partnerships will contribute to operationalizing the B-GAP's priority areas. Clarifying the Fund's comparative advantage in relation to other climate funds is essential for maximizing strategic coherence.

293. The GCF's gender architecture operates primarily as a compliance-driven system, rooted in the procedural requirements set under the 2019 updated Gender Policy, most notably the mandatory project-level gender assessments and gender action plans. The compliance-driven system applies a standard for gender-responsiveness, while still allowing flexibility for AEs with stronger institutional gender commitments to apply gender transformative approaches. This flexible and permissive compliance-based model can be considered appropriate given the diversity of AEs in the GCF partnership network. However, while the procedural nature of requirements applied to the accreditation process, concept note and FP development has resulted in strong compliance at-entry and supporting progress to some extent, it has not consistently translated into the integration of high-quality gender-responsive approaches in project implementation and reporting. As a result, there is a persistent policy-practice gap between the stated ambition of the updated Gender Policy and what is delivered in practice.

2. GENDER INSTITUTIONALIZATION

294. **Institutional fragmentation has created accountability gaps that are likely to deepen with the GCF's regionalization expansion. Ambiguity in roles and responsibilities undermines institutional ownership and coherent implementation of the updated Gender Policy.**

295. The GCF's 2024 reorganization fragmented gender responsibilities between the OSI, the Operational Safeguard team and departments relevant for programming and project appraisal, weakening internal coordination and introducing institutional ambiguity without demonstrating efficiency gains. Gender-related tasks are concentrated within the Operational Safeguards team, with limited clarity on how other divisions contribute to policy implementation. The evaluation also found that knowledge of the updated Policy is uneven among staff, with limited familiarity among senior management overseeing regional desks and no integration of gender-related KPIs in staff performance frameworks. High staff turnover, particularly at senior management levels, and limited deployment of gender champions across divisions and operational units have weakened continuity of leadership for gender and limited institutional ownership.
296. This has produced an overly centralized model in which the Operational Safeguards team effectively supports the compliance-driven model through the systematic review of project-level gender assessments and gender action plans, but with limited input from other divisions. It has placed disproportionate operational demands on a single team as the GCF portfolio is expanding significantly, contributing to workload pressures and limiting the team's ability to provide comprehensive oversight throughout the project cycle. Limited engagement of other divisions has also hindered the integration of gender considerations across strategic planning, regional engagement, portfolio management, and results monitoring.
297. While the restructuring has aimed at a separation between policy and operational functions, it has not yet established a coherent model for how gender responsibilities will be distributed, coordinated, and held accountable across headquarters and regional offices. As the Fund expands its regional, key questions remain unresolved regarding the future role of the Operational Safeguards team, the extent to which gender expertise will be embedded in regional structures, and how consistent oversight and technical support will be maintained across a growing portfolio. The absence of clear strategic direction for gender mainstreaming at the regional level also risks limiting the Fund's ability to adapt its approach to diverse countries and regional contexts. Following decision B.24/12, the current institutional GAP was established to be overseen and periodically reviewed by the Board. However, it was not sufficiently operationalized as an accountability and management tool, and the Secretariat did not systematically monitor or report on its implementation to the Board. As a result, the Board had limited visibility on progress, implementation gaps, and areas requiring corrective action, reducing its ability to provide strategic guidance and make timely decisions on gender mainstreaming.

3. EMBEDDED GENDER CAPACITIES

298. **Gender-related capacities are siloed within the Secretariat and concentrated in designated teams. At the project level, capacity for gender mainstreaming is similarly uneven across many IAEs, DAEs and NDAs. Together, these gaps continue to pose challenges to the effective implementation of the updated Policy.**
299. At the institutional level, the GCF Secretariat has strengthened its technical capacity for gender through the expansion of the Operational Safeguards team. However, such expertise remains limited across the broader Secretariat. Limited familiarity with the updated Policy and the absence of mandatory gender training or onboarding hinder the ability of Secretariat staff and liaison officers to integrate gender considerations in their day-to-day engagement with IAEs, DAEs and NDAs, and their management and oversight of the portfolio.
300. As the Fund continues to expand its portfolio and advance regionalization, there is a need to further strengthen and distribute gender capacity across the organization, including within regional

structures. Experience from comparator institutions suggests that strengthening organization-wide gender competencies and establishing focal point networks may offer useful pathways for embedding gender more systematically across the Fund's operations.

301. At the project level, gender capacities remain uneven, reflecting differences in institutional mandates and gender mainstreaming experience across IAEs and DAEs. Several AEs rely heavily on short-term consultants to prepare gender assessments and gender action plans, undermining long-term sustainability of gender competencies. In addition, NDAs' capacities to fulfil their coordination role and ensure FP alignment with the updated Policy and national gender frameworks vary considerably by country. While several country partners have used readiness support resources effectively to conduct gender analyses, develop gender-responsive NAPs, and strengthen institutional frameworks, the RPSP's potential for addressing gender-related capacity gaps among AEs and NDAs has not yet been fully realized.

4. Partnerships for gender integration

302. **Gender-focused stakeholders remain structurally marginalized in decision-making roles, engaged overwhelmingly as consulted or beneficiaries rather than as partners for executing or managing GCF-funded activities. This constrains ownership, depth of gender integration and sustainability at the country level.**

303. At the project level, gender-focused stakeholders remain insufficiently engaged across GCF processes, limiting country ownership, the quality of gender integration in funded activities and sustainability. Despite the updated Gender Policy's emphasis on inclusive, participatory approaches, women-led organizations and gender-focused CSOs were rarely identified as EEs of GCF-funded activities or entrusted as partners with decision-making or governance responsibilities. The evaluation found that they were more commonly engaged through consultations or as beneficiaries. Ministries responsible for vulnerable populations and national women's machineries were largely absent from NDA coordination mechanisms, reducing their influence on project selection, design and oversight. Limited integration of gender actors into project governance, management, and implementation roles constrains the depth of institutionalization and reduces the likelihood that gender-related capacities will be consistently maintained and applied in local contexts after GCF support ends.

304. As noted by the *Independent Evaluation of the GCF's Approach to Country Ownership*,[185] without meaningful whole-of-society engagement that spans civil society, women's organizations and IPs, inclusion risks becoming procedural rather than substantive. This is a precondition for inclusive, legitimate country-led climate action the Fund is mandated to support. This limitation also points to a broader gap: the GCF lacks a clear, well-defined partnership model for how it engages with the full range of actors in national context.

305. Despite modalities intended to broaden access, structural barriers in the GCF operating model continue to limit the ability of local gender-focused and other under-resourced actors to access climate finance directly, thus constraining the inclusivity and country ownership the updated Gender Policy seeks to advance. The GCF has introduced mechanisms intended to widen access, most notably the Request for Proposals for Enhancing Direct Access and successive reforms to readiness. The EDA pilot, which was intended to strengthen the involvement of gender-focused organizations and those serving vulnerable populations, has not yet proven successful in overcoming the structural

[185] Independent Evaluation Unit, *Independent Evaluation of the GCF's Approach to Country Ownership*, https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/250915-coa-final-report-top-web_2.pdf.

obstacles facing women's organizations, local CSOs and other marginalized groups in accessing the GCF.

5. Monitoring and knowledge management

306. **The GCF's M&E and knowledge management architecture is fragmented and functioning sub-optimally, not currently well-suited to monitoring, reporting on, and learning from gender results. The project-level Gender Assessment and Gender Action Plan system functions as an approval mechanism, not an implementation monitoring tool. Knowledge about what works related to gender in diverse contexts exists, to a certain extent, but it is certainly not systematically reaching the people and institutions that need it to adapt.**

307. While most GCF projects collect sex-disaggregated data, the current monitoring, reporting and learning systems are not capable of capturing and aggregating gender-responsive results across the portfolio. Monitoring remains largely activity-focused, with APRs functioning primarily as reporting tools for participation counts. Few APRs provide evidence of outcome-level change, limiting the Fund's ability to systematically assess whether gender-related activities are producing meaningful or sustained results.

308. Key elements of the GCF monitoring architecture remain insufficiently aligned. The IRMF, the institutional GAP, project-level gender action plans and APR reporting are not sufficiently aligned, limiting monitoring and aggregation of gender-related outcomes. Project-level gender action plans often include indicators that do not align with IRMF indicators. APRs do not consistently report against project-level Gender Action Plan commitments, and the institutional GAP lacks a dedicated tracking system for organizational-level indicators. This lack of alignment has resulted in fragmented, non-comparable data that cannot be aggregated to assess portfolio-level progress or inform adaptive learning.

309. The enabling environment for learning, replication and scaling of gender-responsive approaches is weak. While some spaces for knowledge exchange exist, such as ad hoc workshops, thematic analyses, and Secretariat-led learning products, these are not systematic and do not constitute a functioning institutional learning cycle. Strong gender-responsive practices identified in individual projects or entities remain isolated, with very limited cross-portfolio uptake. Also, the Fund lacks mechanisms to track, curate, or disseminate gender-related innovations.

310. The GCF cannot systematically assess and report gender-related expenditure. Limited financial tracking and budgeting for gender further constrain implementation and accountability. A financial disconnect exists between institutional-level commitments and project-level budgeting for gender. Project level gender action plans rarely include clearly defined budgets for gender-related activities, and the GCF does not systematically track gender-related expenditures during implementation or at the portfolio level. This lack of financial visibility limits the Fund's ability to assess whether resources align with gender-related ambitions and weakens accountability for implementation.

6. Gender-responsive results

311. **The GCF has been supporting projects that are designed for, and actually producing primarily gender-responsive outcomes. However, these results are underdeveloped and reflecting early--stage outcomes. More broadly, the absence of defined gender-results pathways and a lack of portfolio-level gender outcome objectives prevent meaningful results aggregation. Thus, gender-responsive results are almost certainly being under-reported.**

312. The updated Gender Policy has had a clear effect on upstream compliance, particularly in strengthening gender assessments and gender action plans at entry. However, this has not translated into outcome-level reporting. According to the IEU's analysis, gender-responsive results across the GCF portfolio remain at an early stage, reflecting the relatively early stage of implementation across many projects and the time lag between design-stage commitments and observable outcomes.
313. While limitations in monitoring and reporting constrain an assessment of results, available evidence indicates that gender-responsive achievements remain concentrated at the output level. The majority of reported achievements relate to participation, capacity-building, and knowledge generation. For example, this includes increased participation of women in consultations, training activities, and community-level planning processes, enhanced awareness of climate risks among women and vulnerable groups and strengthened institutional capacities through gender responsive training or technical assistance.
314. The evaluation identified examples of more substantive outcomes, including increased decision-making power, improved access to climate-resilient technologies, and resilience gains for women. However, these were relatively limited across the portfolio at the time of the evaluation.

B. Recommendations

315. Before presenting the evaluation's six recommendations, it is important to recognize the cross-cutting challenges they seek to address. The GCF's implementation of the updated Gender Policy operates in an institutional environment where compliance is rewarded and structurally incentivized. Accreditation, concept note reviews, FP appraisals, and project monitoring and reporting through APR cycles are all organized as checkpoints for assessing policy requirements. This compliance-driven model, given the diversity of GCF partners, instruments and country contexts, sets the standard for gender-responsive mainstreaming and has helped institutionalize the use of project-level gender assessments and gender action plans across the portfolio.
316. The evaluation finds that the updated Policy is ambitious and technically sound. However, an ambitious policy deployed into a compliance-dominant organizational architecture runs the risk of being absorbed by that architecture: processed, documented, approved, and effectively set aside. This suggests that the key challenge resides in ensuring that compliance requirements translate into meaningful implementation, monitoring, learning and course correction. The updated Policy increased upstream compliance but had a lower effect on downstream outcome reporting. As noted, APRs continue to function as activity reports, not intermediate outcome assessments.
317. This means that recommendations which simply add more requirements, new tools or additional guidance will be absorbed by the same compliance logic, increasing the burden on AEs, NDAs and the Secretariat without improving results. These recommendations therefore deliberately avoid expanding compliance obligations. They are not technical fixes but calls for institutional reform and culture change, recognizing that consequential changes result from incentive structures, performance frameworks and what the institution rewards.

1. Strengthen institutional coherence and accountability

318. **The GCF Secretariat should reinforce institutional coherence, clarify institutional roles and establish clear institutional accountability for the operationalizing the updated Policy and gender mainstreaming. The GCF Secretariat should consolidate the gender coordination architecture by establishing a mechanism spanning the relevant departments and offices,**

including the Operational Safeguards team, regional desks, liaison officers, and the monitoring, evaluation and learning function.

319. To operationalize this recommendation, the GCF Secretariat could consider the following options:

- **Staff incentives:** Integrate gender-related responsibilities and performance indicators into job descriptions and performance frameworks for staff in pipeline, investment, and country programming functions, either as standalone gender KPIs or as part of broader inclusion KPIs.
- **Operations Manual:** Update and operationalize the Operations Manual and related standard operating procedures to clearly define responsibilities across the project cycle, from project ideation and origination through to monitoring and reporting.
- **Regionalization:** Ahead of the 2027 establishment of regional offices, defining minimum gender responsibilities and shared accountability standards at and across the distributed regional desk level, including whether dedicated gender focal points will be embedded in regional structures or whether responsibility will be distributed across existing roles.
  - Developing terms of reference for regional offices to include clear roles and responsibilities on gender mainstreaming, with allowances for flexibility in approaches and modalities of support for tailoring to different institutional capacities and regional contexts.
  - Considering establishing a network of regional gender focal points who can provide contextualized support to AEs, NDAs, and DPs, and can help ensure consistent implementation of the updated Gender Policy.
- **Consistency in use of terminology:** Align the IF and relevant policies, frameworks and terminology with the updated Gender Policy by replacing references to gender sensitivity with gender-responsive language consistent with the 2019 Policy. This would provide consistent guidance for AEs preparing proposals and for reviewers assessing them.

2. Board accountability for the effective implementation of the institutional GAP

320. **The GCF Board should reinstate its accountability for implementation of the future institutional GAP and require the Secretariat to report periodically through a dedicated reporting mechanism. The Secretariat should establish a financial visibility mechanism necessary to track gender-related expenditure at the institutional level.**

321. To operationalize this recommendation, the GCF Board should consider the following options:

- **Board oversight mechanism:** Reinforcing the oversight of institutional GAP implementation to a Board committee or working group, aligned with implementation of the GAP. Mandating a Board committee to periodically review and inform the Board on implementation of the institutional GAP.
- **Budget tracking:** Requesting the development of a dedicated gender budget tracking system that disaggregates gender-dedicated expenditures across administrative and programmatic budgets; furthermore, commissioning a scoping exercise to define what constitutes gender-dedicated expenditure and identify a methodology for tracking it.
- **Future institutional GAP:** Ensuring the institutional GAP is systematically updated with clear, measurable, and monitorable indicators, including both institutional process indicators, such as procedures, staffing, guidance, accountability mechanisms and outcome-oriented indicators linked to gender-responsive climate results. Align these indicators with the IRMF

and emerging work on gender co-benefits, supported by a dedicated institutional tracking system with defined responsibilities across teams and units.

- **Strategic consideration:** Embed gender more explicitly as an institutional objective in USP-3, ensuring alignment with the future institutional GAP and reinforcing gender as a cross-cutting priority across programming, operations and institutional performance.

3. Capacity building for a shared gender responsibility

322. **To ensure that gender integration further becomes a shared responsibility across the GCF and its ecosystem of funded activities, the Secretariat should strengthen system-wide capacity-building and guidance to support the implementation of the updated Policy. Capacity-building should include all relevant stakeholders.**

323. To operationalize this recommendation, the GCF Secretariat could consider the following options:

- **Capacity baseline:** Commission an organizational gender capacity assessment to map where gender expertise sits across the Secretariat, identify gaps, and provide the evidence base for a staffing and training strategy aligned with the future GAP.
- **Leadership engagement:** Introduce mandatory training on the updated Gender Policy for senior management and regional directors, either as a standalone onboarding requirement or integrated into the next scheduled all-staff training cycle.
- **Gender champions:** Leverage gender champions across the Secretariat by providing advanced training and supporting them to serve as gender focal points providing first-line support.
- **Guidelines and toolkit:** Update the 2017 Mainstreaming Gender Guidelines and Toolkit to reflect the 2019 Gender Policy and future GAP, and disseminate the updated guidance and toolkit among Secretariat staff, AEs, NDAs and other relevant stakeholders.
- **Readiness:** Leverage readiness support strategically to continue building gender capacity, including through clear guidance for NDAs on integrating gender into national coordination mechanisms, NAP development and country programming and platforms.
- **Intersectionality:** Develop clear guidance on intersectionality across design, implementation, monitoring and reporting, and integrate minimum expectations for addressing the needs of vulnerable groups across project design, implementation, safeguards, monitoring and reporting.

4. Effective compliance: from compliance tools to implementation and learning

324. **The Secretariat should fundamentally redesign the function and use of project-level gender assessments, gender action plans and portfolio-level M&E to shift from compliance documentation to active implementation guidance and evidence-based learning. It is important for the Secretariat that these requirements function not only as entry-point compliance tools for FP approval, but also become active instruments for guiding implementation, monitoring, reporting and course correction throughout the project cycle.**

325. To operationalize this recommendation, the Secretariat could consider the following options:

- **Project-level gender assessments and gender action plans:** Strengthen the integration of gender assessments and gender action plans with core project elements. Ensure that gender assessments must inform the project's theory of change and risk management approach; gender

action plan indicators must be reflected in core project KPIs, not maintained as a siloed parallel tracking system.

  - Conducting project-level gender action plan updates at the mid-term review stage of the project, with updated gender action plans reviewed and cleared by Secretariat gender staff.
  - Develop differentiated gender assessment and gender action plan guidance for programmatic models, multi-country projects and private-sector intermediary financing, where design-stage specificity is structurally limited.
  - Clearer guidance to AEs on budgeting for gender at the design stage, alongside systematic tracking of gender-related expenditures.

- **Project Preparation Facility:** Continue using the PPF to improve the quality, depth and operationalizability of project gender action plans for DAEs, private-sector proponents and mitigation-focused projects where gender gaps are most pronounced.
- **Portfolio oversight:** Considering the introduction of a gender quality score (modelled on the AF's Gender Scorecard) as a portfolio-level diagnostic tool, enabling assessment of gender assessments and gender action plan quality beyond binary compliance, applied at both project approval and mid-term review stages.

5. Structural pathways for meaningful access and implementation

326. **The GCF Secretariat should consider strengthening and leveraging the role of gender-focused and local actors through a partnership model that aims to deepen inclusivity, integration of gender-responsive practice and broader transformative outcomes at country level.**

327. In order to operationalize this recommendation, the GCF Secretariat could consider the following options:

- **A partnership model for engagement and access:** Developing a partnership and access model that should apply across all partnerships, defining how different actors are identified, engaged, supported and leveraged. Such a model should establish pathways for women's organizations, government bodies, and CSOs as strategic partners. Readiness support for these partners to support access should be deployed.
- **Capacity location:** Making in-house gender capacity-building, not external consultant engagement, the explicit goal of AE capacity development programmes, with multi-year, sustained support for DAEs to develop institutional gender expertise rather than project-by-project consulting arrangements.
- **Gender-focused standard setting:** Setting minimum thresholds for gender-focused institutional involvement in country programming processes, going beyond consultation to include co-design roles in identifying national gender priorities and shaping the pipeline.
- **Civil society participation:** Establishing clearer modalities for engaging CSOs in third party monitoring, including through readiness support where appropriate; clarifying the roles of NDAs and regional desks in facilitating these engagements.
- **Private-sector participation:** Clarify the application of the updated Gender Policy in private-sector projects, including investments financed through co-financing mobilised from development finance institutions, where the policy boundary is currently ambiguous.

6. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING FOR GENDER-RESPONSIVE RESULTS

328. **The GCF should strengthen its monitoring, reporting, and learning systems so that gender-responsive results are effectively tracked and aggregated, and used to inform decision-making and adaptive programming. The revision of the institutional GAP presents a critical opportunity for addressing longstanding gaps in results definition, indicator quality and institutional ownership of gender outcomes.**

329. In order to operationalize this recommendation, the GCF Secretariat should consider the following options:

- **Co-benefits categorization:**
  - Standardize gender-results reporting through harmonized gender co-benefit categories, associated indicators and clearer reporting guidance linked to APRs and the IRMF architecture.
  - Strengthen quality assurance through periodic spot checks, targeted validation exercises, and clearer expectations for evidence of reported results.

  The ongoing APR revision offers a timely entry point to integrate these improvements.
- **Cross-institutional learning:** Leverage the expertise of UNFCCC gender focal points and other climate finance institutions to strengthen cross-institutional learning and the transfer of effective gender-responsive practice.
- **Belém GAP anchor:** Anchoring GCF's updated knowledge architecture explicitly to the B-GAP (2026–2034) priority areas, positioning GCF as a knowledge contributor within the UNFCCC gender architecture and providing external accountability for commitments that would otherwise remain internal, all based on a clear articulation of the GCF's positioning and comparative advantage.
- **Complementarities across climate funds:** Harmonizing gender indicators among climate funds for a more intensified engagement with the other climate funds, to remain actively engaged in efforts to harmonize gender responsive indicators and monitoring approaches across climate funds, while ensuring that its own systems remain interoperable and aligned with broader climate finance standards. The scope and pace of this reform may be sequenced with the planned IRMF and Harmonized Results Monitoring Framework revision cycle.

ANNEXES

Annex 1. CONSULTED STAKEHOLDERS

Table A – 1. Consulted stakeholders listed alphabetically

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	POSITION	AFFILIATION
Avila	Rubén	Sustainable Finance and Partnerships Specialist – DAE (FP166)	Central American Bank for Economic Integration
Aarati	Shrestha	Vice Chair	The Himalayan Grassroots Women's Natural Resource Management Association, Nepal
AbuRas	Aida	IAE (FP155)	FAO
Acosta	Rosa	IAE (FP126)	FAO
Ademonla	Djalal Arinloye	*Directeur pays* [Readiness ICRAF]	ICRAF Benin
Adjahatode	Flora	*Coordonnatrice de projet* [SAP005]	UNEP, Benin
Adjahoungbo	Merveille	*Assistante administrative et financière* [Readiness ICRAF]	ICRAF Benin
Adjinda	Aylakou Akharon	*Directeur Général de l'Environnement et du Climat par intérim*	DGEC Benin
Adoassou	Béranger	*Chef service des études prospectives*	FNEC Benin
Adounkpe	Martial	*Directeur de planification et responsable suivi et évaluation*	FNEC Benin
Afolabi	Djagoun	*Agronome spécialiste en suivi et évaluation* [Readiness ICRAF]	ICRAF Benin
Afonso da Silva	Ismália	Gender and Race Officer	UNDP Brazil
Aguilar	Geilyn Marlene	Environmental and Development Project Manager – DAE (FP166)	Central American Bank for Economic Integration
Alejandre	Florencia	Programme Officer	IFAD Brazil
Alsharif	Munjed	IAE (FP155)	FAO
Alzoubi	Maysoon	IAE (FP155)	FAO
Amedegnan	René Comlan	*Responsible de suivi et évaluation* [SAP005]	UNEP Benin
Assogba	Aurore	*Experte genre* [FP187]	FAO Benin

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Atieno	Wendy	Chief Technical Adviser	UNEP Lao
Austin	Miles	Developed countries constituency	PSO Active Observers
Baorou	Al Moustapha	*Responsable administratif et financier* [SAP005]	UNEP Benin
Baran	Flavio Daniel	Public Policy and Government Management Specialist	NDA Brazil
Bazartseren	Bunchingiv	IAE (SAP003)	UNEP
Bekenova	Guzel	FAO Gender/Technical Specialist (FP116)	FAO (Kyrgyzstan)
Bhattarai	Om Prakash	Under Secretary	Ministry of Finance, NDA Nepal
Bhusal	Prashamsa	Section Officer	Ministry of Finance, NDA Nepal
Biah	Grace	Gender Focal Point	EPA Liberia
Biangalen-Magata	Helen	Chair	Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group
Biaou	Mathieu	*Chef de service adaptation*	DGEC Benin
Bioyerima	Mouhaman	*Chargé de programme du bureau pays* [FP187]	FAO Benin
Bista	Poonam	Programme Assistance	FAO, Nepal
Bizeu	James	M&E Manager [SAP018]	EPA Liberia
Borsato da Silva	Filipe	Climate Change Division Executive	BNDES Brazil
Borysova	Olena	Senior Accreditation Specialist (DINVS)	GCF Secretariat
Bossou	Bertin	*Directeur Général Adjoint de l'Environnement et du Climat*	DGEC Benin
Bouda	Zoewinde	*Directeur par intérim* [FP187]	FAO Benin
Brandes	Raymond	Programme Manager (Gender)	UNEP
Bravo De Lallana	Cristina	Investment Analyst	COFIDES Brazil
BUGE	Antoine	IAE (FP119)	Agence Francaise de Developpement
Caballero	Alisson Yheraldin Onzueta	Consultant at the Social Sustainability and Inclusion Global Practice	IDB/IADB Brazil
Cabezudo Aguayo	Crisell	DAE (FP193)	Profonanpe

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Cano González	Eva Beatriz	*Oficial de Monitoreo, Salvaguardas y Género*	Fondo Golfo de México, VeracruzMexico
Carvalho	Pedro	Developing countries constituency	PSO Active Observers
Carvalho	Renato	International Co-operation Project Specialist	IICA Brazil
Cavini	Regina	Project Coordinator	UNDP Brazil
Cerbu	Gillian Ann	IAE (FP163)	World Bank
Chabi	Adeyemi	*Chercheur en environnement* [Readiness ICRAF]	ICRAF Benin
Chawanda	Esther	[FP160]	UNDP Liberia
Chhetri	Nar	Monitoring Evaluation Research and Learning Adviser	Save the Children International Lao
Choga	Faith	Environmental and Social Specialist	GCF Operations Team
Cicchini	Florencia	*Oficial de Género y Vulnerabilidad Social*	Fondo Mexicano para la Conservación de la Naturaleza A.C. Mexico
Cole	Harrison	Assistant Director	MGCSP Liberia
Collantes	Verona	Senior Gender Specialist	GEF
Cornejo	Ivan	Director of International Financial Organizations	Nacional Financiera, Mexico
Costa	Cristina	Technical Co-ordinator, International Technical Co-operation Project	IICA Brazil
Costa	Maurício Moura	COO / Chief of Operations	SIM Brazil Brazil
Creese	Tyler	Head of Impact	Catalytic Finance Foundation Brazil
da Fonseca Dizner	Gabriel Felipe	Deputy Coordinator of Sustainable Finance	NDABrazil
Daniels	Ciara	Global Gender Team	UNDP
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		Division	
Daza	Natalia	GCF Gender Monitor for Latin America	GCF Watch
de Macedo	Morenno	Head of Sustainable Finance	Caixa Brazil
Dehfer	Fred	Project Coordinator	EPA Liberia
Dela Cruz	Kairos	Developing countries constituency	CSO Observer Network
Dhakal	Maheshwar	Joint Secretary and Division Chief of the Climate Change Management Division	Ministry of Forests and Environment Nepal
di Giacomo	Alessandra	Country Programme Analyst	IFAD Brazil
Djossou	Jean	*Coordonnateur du projet à Ouémé* [FP187]	FAO Benin
Domingo	Théodore	*Cadre de la direction de l'environnement*	DGEC Benin
Dorley	Exodus	Driver [SAP018]	EPA Liberia
Dullah	Ansu	ED [SAP018]	NDMA Liberia
Eggerts	Elizabeth	Global Gender Team	UNDP
Ekyinabah	Samuel K.	Director/Research	MGCSP Liberia
El Ghossein	Amanda	Associate	GEF Capital Brazil
Farias de Ferreira Oliveira	Livia	General Coordinator for Sustainable Finance	NDA
Fenyves	Katia Queiroz	Climate Change and Sustainability Specialist	IDB / IADB Brazil
Fernández	Ana	*Coordinadora de Manejo Integrado de Paisaje*	Fondo Mexicano para la Conservación de la Naturaleza A.C., Mexico
Flores Gonzalez	Joselyn Alexia		NAFIN (Nacional Financiera) Mexico
França	Joan	Climate Finance Adviser	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Franco Bartelega	Camila		GCF Watch
Frazier Gomez	Jose	Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialist	GCF Secretariat
Freyre Pinto	Juan Carlos	Deputy Director of International Cooperation	NAFIN (Nacional Financiera) Mexico
Furst	Maurizio		FAO
Garcia	Oscar	Director of Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning	GCF Secretariat

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Garcia Galindo	Beatriz Adriana	ESG and Gender Officer	Global Green Growth Institute Mexico
Gbah	Emmanuel	Acting Project Director	EPA Liberia
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Godfrey	Claudia	DAE (FP193)	Profonanpe
Grant	Abayomi	Safeguards Specialist [FP160]	EPA Liberia
Guerra	Raíssa	Project Technical Analyst	UNDP Brazil
Guragain	Yubraj	Climate Chane, Safeguard and Gender Officer	IUCN Nepal
Guzman	Isaura		NADB Bank
Hadonouyovo	Gloria Armelle	*Coordonnatrice du projet* [FP187]	FAO
Hara	Helio	Head of Communications	FUNBIO
Henry	Antoinette	Admin [FP160]	EPA
Hermann	Padonou	*Point focal changement climatique et Directeur de la maison du climat de l'ANCB*	ANCB
Hijar	Graciela	Consultant	Adaptation Fund
Hincapie Salazar	Daniel	Operations Lead Specialist	IDB/IADB Brazil
Hino	Kumiko	Urban Lead and Programme Management Specialist	UN-Habitat
Holganza	Alyssa	Locally led Adaptation Action Specialist Consultant	GCF Secretariat
Houssou	Calixte	*Cadre Atténuation changement climatique*	DGEC
Isaacs	Wainella	Project Preparation Facility and Technical Assistance Specialist (previously PSAA focal)	GCF Secretariat
Islam	Anisul	Chief of Party	Save the Children International
Iuldashev	Sanatbek	National Project Coordinator (FP116)	FAO, Kyrgyzstan
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Johnson	Christopher	Head of programme [SAP018]	LNRCS

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Keomueangkhoun	Thepthida	Project Assistant	UN-Habitat
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Kibiki	Hailo	DAE (FP179)	CRDB
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Logba	Patricia	Technical Assistant	MGCSP
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Negrete	Alejandro	*Coordinador del proyecto "Gestión para la conservación de Ríos Huatusco, Ver"*	OSC Conecta Tierra
Negussie	Seblewongel	Gender Policy Specialist	GCF Secretariat
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Phillias	Jacop	Accounting Officer [SAP018]	EPA Liberia
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Poudel	Bishnu	GCF Liaison Officer	GCF, Nepal
Poudel	Barsha	Agriculture Technician/ Gender Focal Point	PMU, Bardibass, Mahotari Nepal
Poudyal	Amit	Program Manager	IUCN, Nepal
Pradhan	Narendra	Country Representative	IUCN, Nepal
Quesada	Andrea	Global Gender Team	UNDP
Rajbhandari	Kanti	Chair	The Himalayan Grassroots Women's Natural Resource Management Association, Nepal
Ramachandran	Veena	Climate Change Specialist	UN-Habitat Lao PDR
Ramos Guimarães de Faria	Daniela	Project Coordinator	NDA, Brazil
Reyes	Priscila	*Responsable técnica del proyecto*	Regeneractivo, Mexico
Reyes-Retana	Graciela	Director, Research and Institutional Development Area	Fondo Mexicano para la Conservación de la Naturaleza A.C., Mexico
Rodrigues	Isabela	Project Manager	UNDP, Brazil
Rodríguez Maldonado	Erick	*Subdirector de Medio Ambiente*	Fideicomisos Instituidos en Relación con la Agricultura, Mexico
Rothschild	Kurt	DAE (FP193)	Profonanpe
Roy Akullo	Patricia	NDA (FP128)	Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
Sabirova	Zhanyl	Project ESS Specialist (FP116)	FAO, Kyrgyzstan
Sacramento	Claire Stephane	*Assistante de projet* [Readiness ICRAF]	ICRAF Benin
Saru Magar	Bimal	General Secretary	Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities
Schomer	Inka	IAE (FP163)	World Bank
Segda	Zenabou	President	Women Environmental Program Burkina Faso

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Sena	Legbagah M.	*Chef de la cellule genre du ministère de l'Environnement*	MAEP, Benin
Sengdala	Vilayphone	Impact Manager	Save the Children International, Lao PDR
Serrano	Ivonne	*Especialista en Medio Ambiente*	Fideicomisos Instituidos en Relación con la Agricultura, Mexico
Sharma	Bijay Kumar	Under Secretary	Ministry of Women Children and Senior Citizen Nepal
Sharma	Dhani Ram	Joint Secretary	Ministry of Finance, NDA Nepal
Shimizu	Ken	Country Representative	FAO, Nepal
Shrestha	Nirmala	General Secretary	The Himalayan Grassroots Women's Natural Resource Management Association, Nepal
Shrestha	Nabina	Accountant	The Himalayan Grassroots Women's Natural Resource Management Association, Nepal
Simón Gomez	Laura	Investments Analyst – Development Finance	COFIDES, Brazil
Sisto	Ilaria	Gender and Development Officer	FAO
Soares	Nazaré	General Co-ordinator – Extraordinary Secretariat for Deforestation Control and Territorial Planning	Brazil Ministry of the Environment
Soobin Park	Adrienne	Environmental and Social Specialist	GCF Secretariat
Souza	Romélia	Project Specialist in International Co-operation	IICA Brazil
Sowion	Zachariah	Finance Manager [SAP018]	EPA Liberia
Strobel	Juliana	Climate Action Director	Fundación Avina Brazil
Stubblefield	Marzu	[FP160]	UNDP Liberia
Sunar	Sita	Secretary	The Himalayan Grassroots Women's Natural Resource Management Association, Nepal
Taborda	Santiago Monroy	Operations Specialist	IDB/IADB Brazil

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Tamba	Moses	CEA Assistant [SAP018]	LNRCSBenin
Teixeira	Alexandra	Country Programme Analyst	IFAD, Brazil
Thammavong	Souvanaly	Environmental Health Technical Officer	WHO, Lao PDR
Thapa Magar	Sushila Kumari	National Gender and Indigenous Peoples Specialist	FAO, Nepal
Thapaliya	Bhawani	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Specialist	FAO, Nepal
Thipphavongphanh	Khampien	Project Manager	FAO, Lao PDR
Thompson	Desmond	Project liaison	EPA Liberia
Tolbert	Outta	Gender Consultant [SAP018]	EPA Liberia
Topalovskajovichikj	Ivana	EE (FP194)	GIZ
Trevisan	Marcelo Mateus	Director of Environmental and Territorial Planning	Ministry of the Environment (MMA) Brazil
Troni	Jessica	IAE (SAP003)	UNEP
Vandebeek	Johan	Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist (DMEL)	GCF Secretariat
Vanderpool	Marie-Helene	Regional Manager for the Caribbean (DLAC)	GCF Secretariat
Vawah	Michael	Programme Analyst [FP160]	UNDP Liberia
Vázquez	Carolina	*Técnica del proyecto*	Regeneractive Mexico
Vilaysane	Nalinthone	Coordinator	EBS Project Lao
Villalobos	Maria Vanessa	Project Executive – DAE (FP166)	Central American Bank for Economic Integration
Villoria	Valentina	Climate Investment Specialist (DLAC)	GCF Secretariat
Vongsaly	Phicksaway	Head of Administration and Procurement Division	Environment and Forest Protection Fund, Lao PDR
Werner Escobar Condor	Edward	Technical Specialist in Sustainable Development, NDA (FP193)	Ministry of Finance
Whapoe	Zargou	National Committee for Climate Change Coordinator	EPA Liberia
Williams	James	Project Management Performance and Excellence Manager	GCF Secretariat
Wongtschowsi	André	Executive Director	Instituto Belterra: Brazil
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		Management Specialist	
Youayee	Houathor	Forestry Adviser	GIZ, Lao PDR
Zayzay	Bendu	Programme assistant [FP160]	UNDP Liberia
Zepeda	Raquel	*Consultora de acompañamiento en género; acompañamiento en campo para la incorporación del enfoque de género con los subproyectos de Veracruz*	FONNOR, Mexico
Zerbini	Fabiola	Executive Director	Conexsus, Brazil
Zich-Nimely	Ellen	Director of Legal [SAP018]	NDMA, Liberia

Source: IEU evaluation team, recorded list of interviewees and their affiliation.

Annex 2. CONSULTED DOCUMENTS

GCF Board decisions and documents

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