



**GREEN
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Annual Report of the Independent Evaluation Unit for 2017

Summary

This document provides a report of IEU's key activities over a 10-month period (March – December 2017). It reports IEU's outputs and achievements in line with its work plan for 2017, presented in its interim work plan (GCF/B.16/18) and its supplementary work plan and budget (GCF/B.BM-2017/09).

I. Introduction

1. This document provides a report of the IEU's key activities and outcomes over a 10-month period (March - December 2017). The IEU's objectives and key work plan activities are presented in its interim work plan (GCF/B.16/18) and its supplementary work plan and budget document (GCF/B.BM-2017/09). This document is organized as follows:

- (a) Introduction
- (b) Overview
- (c) Report on key achievements
- (d) Budget and expenditure report

II. Overview

2. The Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) was established by the GCF Board Decision B.06/06 on 13 February 2014. The first Head of IEU joined the Unit on 27 February 2017. The IEU's Interim Work Plan and Interim Budget were approved by GCF Board Decision B.16/18 on 21 March 2017. This was for an overall amount of USD 370, 930 and covered the period March – June 2017. The IEU's 2017 Work Plan and Supplementary Budget was approved as per GCF Board Decision B.BM-2017/09 on 21 September 2017 for the amount of USD 1,010,000.

3. Key activities of the IEU during 2017 were:

- (a) Establishing and building the Independent Evaluation Unit.
- (b) Planning for evaluations and taking stock of evaluation evidence for learning and benchmarking.
- (c) Building awareness around standards and strengthening capacity for evaluations amongst GCF stakeholders.

III. Report of activities and outcomes.

4. This section provides an update on the IEU's key activities and achievements over a ten-month period (March -December 2017). The IEU accomplished all its key promised activities and objectives for this period.

3.1 Establishing and building the Independent Evaluation Unit

5. **Staffing:** The IEU hired one team assistant and following budget approval in September 2017, all four IEU staff positions were advertised. The search for high calibre staff has been successful and as of January 2018, the IEU is in the process of making three offers to senior staff members, and selecting a fourth staff member.

6. **Policies:** A key output for the IEU during its current inception stage is to formulate the independent evaluation policy as well as to recommend policies that can improve the IEU's effectiveness. The outline of the Independent Evaluation Policy was presented in GCF/B.18/16. The IEU hired one evaluation associate consultant for this task and the search for a senior consultant is in its final stages. If procurement for the consultant goes according to plan, a draft of the independent policy will be presented to the GCF Board at B.21. The IEU also shared a document titled 'Policies and procedures to ensure the effectiveness and independence of the

IEU with the co-chairs of the GCF Board in July 2017. An amended version of this document will be presented to the Board by B.21 and the work is proceeding in accordance with the plan.

7. **Workplan and vision for the IEU:** To ensure certainty and the ability to plan, the IEU submitted two workplans during 2017. The first was an interim work plan and budget (March – June 2017) and the second was a work plan and supplementary budget for 2017. The GCF Board approved the latter in September 2017.

8. **Advisory group:** The IEU established an external advisory group comprised of four internationally recognised evaluation experts. The group provides technical advice to the Head of the IEU and ensures that the IEU is at the frontier of practice and policy.

9. **Awareness of IEU's mission:** The IEU hired a Communication and uptake consultant in November 2017 to assist in developing a strategy to increase awareness on the IEU and more importantly, to inform the IEU's stakeholders on the application and relevance of evaluations.

3.2 Planning for evaluations and taking stock of evaluation evidence for learning and benchmarking.

10. **The IEU undertook several evaluation related activities which will serve as the building blocks of upcoming evaluations carried out in 2018.**

11. **Evaluation maps and analyses:** Through an evaluation evidence map, the IEU is examining high quality evidence related to transformational change. This study will be completed before B.21 and will also be used as a background paper for the IEU's planned review of the GCF's transformational change. The IEU is also completing another study of the 'evaluability' of GCF's approved portfolio. This desk review will inform not only IEU's independent evaluation policy and guidelines but also inform potential improvements that may be made in the process of informing the GCF Board of key indicators of impact. This study also will form the basis of a new learning oriented real-time impact assessment window to help inform in real-time, through evaluations, programmes and projects (please para 15).

12. **Review of the results management framework:** The IEU has also hired an evaluation associate consultant to undertake scoping work for the review of the results management framework for the GCF. A senior consultant will be hired in Q2 of 2018.

13. **Readiness evaluation:** The GCF Board requested the IEU to lead and undertake the independent evaluation of the readiness program (B.17/07). Given it's current capacity, the IEU issued a request for proposals (RFP) inviting qualified teams to provide professional services to carry out the independent evaluation of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme. Subsequently, the IEU has received strong proposals. The next step is to get the Board's approval on the Terms of Reference for the evaluation.

14. **Agreements and partnerships:** During this ten-month period, the IEU was active in liaising with the GCF Secretariat to insert, negotiate and strengthen clauses related to evaluation and the independent evaluation office. It has worked closely with the secretariat to ensure that IEU related clauses are adhered to and well recognized in all AMAs.

15. **The IEU also worked to create awareness and recognition amongst GCF accredited entities (including the World Bank, FAO, WFP, etc.) on the need and requirements for high quality evaluations. As part of this partnership building effort, the IEU was asked to be on the advisory group of two agency led evaluations: the first is an evaluation of resilience led by WFP¹**

¹ Expert Advisory Board Member of World Food Programme's Agency-wide evaluation focused on resilience.

and the second is an evaluation of climate adaptation among the Caribbean islands being led by the Caribbean Development Bank.² These evaluations are being led by accredited entities and the IEU's participation in the advisory group will help enhance capacities of accredited entities' capacities and inform IEU's own subsequent evaluations.

16. Learning-oriented real-time impact assessment window: Following up on the work being done on evaluability, the IEU is also proposing a pilot for a learning-oriented, real-time impact assessment window in 2018. This window will support learning in real-time amongst chosen projects: projects will be chosen on the basis of their potential for demonstrable impact potential and the extent to which these projects plan for scaling up and replication, as well as the evidence base that they can contribute to. In this window, the IEU will, through the secretariat, offer the implementing entities advice on implementation and evaluation designs to inform their impact in a robust way.

3.3 Building awareness around standards and strengthening capacity for evaluations amongst GCF stakeholders.

17. Evaluations are only important if they are used. An important role for the IEU is creating awareness on the uses of evaluations for learning as well as building capacity amongst its stakeholders, including staff of the secretariat, accredited entities, implementing agencies and executing agencies. In this context, both of the IEU's workstreams, the first that focuses on building awareness and capacity, and the second that focuses on communicating evaluation's uses and standards, are important. Furthermore, to be cost-effective and efficient, the IEU is building partnerships with similar agencies globally so that the IEU partners may help to further create this understanding and awareness amongst country partners. We summarize key achievements in these areas below.

18. Building awareness and capacity: In June 2017, the IEU participated in the Direct Access Entities workshop which was held in Songdo and hosted by the GCF Secretariat. More than 100 entities participated. The IEU conducted two training workshops and also surveyed direct access entities (DAEs). A key finding from the survey was that most DAE staff have little or no understanding of evaluations, their requirements, evaluation standards or their uses. Perhaps as a consequence of this, most participants also underscored their own need for training: 84% of respondents requested training: 84% in impact evaluations and 82% in process evaluations. The IEU also trained developing country officials on the requirements of climate change evaluation at a day long workshop it led at the Asian Evaluation Week, hosted by the ADB in China in October 2017³ and hosted a day-long training event at the International conference on evaluation capacities hosted by the UNDP and European Evaluation Society⁴. Once IEU staff come on board, the IEU will prepare a capacity building and advisory services plan.

19. Communicating uses and standards: The quality of evaluations is keenly dependent on the capacity and data that programmes and projects build into them. The IEU is slowly building awareness about the requirements of evaluations at the entities' level. To do this, it is also building awareness around its own vision, standards and uses.

20. The IEU has undertaken several critical and strategic communication activities to produce greater awareness around its mission and standards. Its website will be available

² Terms of Reference: Advisory Group for the CDB's "Disaster Management Strategy and Operational Guidelines" Evaluation

³ Asian Evaluation Week, 4-7 September 2017.

⁴ National Evaluation Capacities Conference, 16-20 October 2017

before B.19 with key documents presented. It is using multi-platform instruments to communicate its message including videos (three have been produced); a brochure; a quarterly newsletter (two issues of which have been produced); and organizing the monthly “IEU lunch talks” forum for exchanging ideas in an open and enthusiastic way on high-quality methods and evidence. IEU talks have especially become a well-recognized arena for idea-exchange around high quality work.⁵

21. **Building partnerships:** The IEU has a purposefully ambitious agenda. It cannot accomplish all its goals without leveraging the support and expertise of specialised agencies around the world. In 2017, IEU signed partnership agreements with Seoul National University and Incheon National University. Under the MoUs, the partners agreed to share and disseminate knowledge and experience, and to develop joint knowledge products in such areas as impact evaluation, process evaluation, systematic reviews, quantitative and qualitative methods of measurement, among other areas of climate action evaluation.

22. Additionally, the IEU has also built strong relationships with NORAD’s independent evaluation agency⁶, the GEF Independent Evaluation Office, the Climate Investment Funds evaluation office (CIF), the UNDP Independent Evaluation office⁷, Global Development Network (GDN), Community of Evaluators South Asia, Evalpartners, International Centre for Evaluation and Development (ICED) and the African Evaluation Association (AFREA). The Head of the IEU also co-edited a book on climate change in the context of sustainable development goals and, separately, contributed a chapter to an edited volume on evaluating the SDGs (‘Evaluation for Agenda 2030’). These efforts all contribute to ensuring that the IEU is viewed as a leader in the field of climate change evaluation and are excellent ways to share good practices.

23. The IEU is also an observer member of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and is liaising with the Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG) to examine opportunities for learning and observation. IEU is also a member of the American Evaluation Association and the International Development Evaluation Association (IDEAS).

VII. Budget and Expenditure Report

24. The table below shows the IEU budget and expenditure report for 2017. It should be noted that IEU’s 2017 budget was only approved in September 2017 (B.BM-2017/09).

	IEU budget lines	Approved Budget March - December 2017	Actual expenditures to 31 December	Balance	% spent
4.1	Salaries and consultants				
4.1.1	Full-time staff	540,930	314,525	226,405	58%
4.1.2	Consultancies	370,000	55,926	314,074	15%
	Sub-total: Salaries & consultants	910,930	370,451	540,479	41%
4.2	Travel				

⁵ Guest speakers at the ‘IEU Talk Series’ have included Dr. Dean Karlan of Northwestern University leading a discussion on ‘Theory and evidence on climate change communication, mitigation and incentives’ and, In August, Dr. Tulika Narayan, Head of Monitoring, Evaluation, and Analytics at Abt Associates, posing the challenging question: ‘What works in incentivizing private sector to solve development problems’.

⁶ IEU, NORAD, GEF IEO and UNEP EO jointly organized a 2-day workshop titled ‘Evaluation and Learning for International Sustainable Forest Initiatives’ 12-13 October 2017.

⁷ The Head of IEU gave a key note address on the challenges of evaluating climate change



4.2.1	Travel	50,000	41,509	8,491	83%
	Sub-total: Travel	50,000	41,509	8,491	83%
4.3	Professional services				
4.3.1	Professional services	400,000	0	400,000	0%
4.3.2	Operating costs	20,000	552	19,448	3%
	Sub-total: Professional services	420,000	552	419,448	0%
	Grand total (1+2+3)	1,380,930	412,512	968,418	30%