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INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF THE
GREEN CLIMATE FUND'S READINESS
AND PREPARATORY SUPPORT
PROGRAMME (RPSP)
An Inception Report

Independent Evaluation Unit, Green Climate Fund

INDEPENDENT EVALUATION
OF THE GREEN CLIMATE FUND'S
READINESS AND PREPARATORY SUPPORT PROGRAMME

INCEPTION REPORT

27 JUNE 2018

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ABBREVIATIONS

AE	Accredited Entity
AF	Adaptation Fund
aDAE	Accredited Direct Access Entity
B.19	Nineteenth meeting of the Board
CAF	Corporación Andian and Foment
CFO/DSS	Chief Financial Officer and Director of Support Services
CIF	Climate Investment Funds
CP	Country Programme
CPD	Country Programming Division/Division of Country Programming
CSE	Centre De Suivi Ecologique
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAE	Direct Access Entity
DCP	Division of Country Programming/Country Programming Division
DCAP	Direct Climate Action Platform
DMA	Division of Mitigation and Adaptation
DP	Delivery Partner
EDA	Enhanced Direct Access
EIF	Environment Investment Fund
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FP	Focal Point
FWA	Framework Agreement
GA	Grant Agreement
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GGGI	Global Green Growth Institute
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
IAE	International Accredited Entity
IEU	Independent Evaluation Unit
IFC	International Financial Corporation
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
LDC	Least Developed Countries
MLF	Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol
NAMA	Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions
NAP	National Adaptation Plan

NAPA	National Adaptation Programme of Action
NDA	National Designated Authorities
nDAE	Nominated Direct Access Entity
NOA	Notice of Agreement
NRSP	National Rural Support Programme
oDP	Other Delivery Partners
OGC	Office of General Counsel
OPM	Office of Portfolio Management (formerly Portfolio Management Unit)
ORMC	Office of Risk Mitigation and Compliance
PMU	Portfolio Management Unit (now Office of Portfolio Management)
PPF	Project Preparation Facility
PSF	Private Sector Facility
PT	Process Tracing
PwC	PricewaterhouseCoopers
RA	Regional Advisor
RPSP	Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme
RWG	Readiness Working Group
SC	Standard Conditions
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
TBE	Theory-based Evaluation
ToC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

I. INTRODUCTION

This Inception Report outlines the methodology and work plan of the evaluation team undertaking the Independent Evaluation of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme (RPSP) of the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

Background of the evaluation

The RPSP¹ was created in 2014 and is a relatively new programme of the GCF. The RPSP is a strategic priority of the GCF Board, as stated in decision B.05/14 and again in decision B.08/11. With its decision B.17/07, the Board invited the Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) to undertake the independent evaluation of the RPSP and approved the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the evaluation as per decision B.19/43.

The GCF Board requested this evaluation with the following objectives:

- (i) *Assess the effectiveness of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme and assess the extent to which the RPSP processes are fulfilling the intended objectives of the RPSP as contained in decision B.08/11 paragraph (i) as well as objectives of country ownership;*²
- (ii) *Review approaches in the implementation of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme with a view to making recommendations for improved alignment with the objectives of the RPSP; and recommend gains in effectiveness, efficiency, country ownership and sustained impact.*

The evaluation will use the following criteria to examine the Programme: relevance and coherence, effectiveness, country ownership, innovativeness, cross-cutting issues (including gender and environment), efficiency, the likelihood of sustained impact, and the potential for building scale. Operationally, the evaluation will contribute to “improving the approval process and timely disbursement of resources to facilitate readiness programme implementation pursuant to GCF Board Decision B.11/04”.

In this context, it is relevant to note that the evaluation will inform the forthcoming replenishment of the Programme, subject to further decisions of the Board in 2018.

With the aim of advancing these objectives, the independent evaluation is considering all three dimensions of the RPSP: (1) design and planning; (2) implementation; and (3) expected RPSP results.

The evaluation criteria defined for the independent evaluation reflect the ambitious nature of the mandate. These criteria have been refined into questions and sub-questions included in an evaluation matrix (see discussion below, and also Appendix II).

Aim of the Inception Report:

The methodology and work plan presented in this Inception Report reflect the mandate outlined in the TOR for this evaluation and subsequent discussions with key stakeholders during two inception missions. The first mission took place at the GCF offices in Songdo, Republic of Korea, from 9 to 11 April 2018, and the second occurred during the GCF Asia Structured Dialogue held in Da Nang, Vietnam, from 17 to

¹ The RPSP is also referred to as the Readiness Programme in this report, with RPSP support referred to as Readiness support, as per GCF institutional parlance.

² As contained in decision B.10/10 paragraph (c) and (f) and the Guidelines for Enhanced Country Ownership and Country Drivenness decision GCF/B.17/14, Annex II.

20 April 2018. For the purposes of this and subsequent mentions, the evaluation team referred to consists of staff members and consultants of the IEU, including consultants from Universalia.

The current Inception Report builds on the recent review of the RPSP by Dalberg Global Development Advisors.³ The current evaluation is methodologically quite distinct from the Dalberg study and presents several methodological advances. The IEU evaluation engages with more stakeholders through a diversity of methods including face-to-face meetings, structured dialogues and webinars; it ground-truths and triangulates its findings using a portfolio analysis and a time-lag analysis, country visits and a process-tracing effort. It also constructs a retrospective theory of implementation that is then assessed using evidence from both the portfolio and the field. Last but not least, it benchmarks the RPSP against other comparable programmes.

The report is organized as follows:

- Section II outlines the context of the evaluation and provides a background and overview of the RPSP;
- Section III presents the technical approach and methodology designed for this evaluation; and
- Section IV outlines the work plan and deliverables for this assignment.

The appendices include the following elements: (I) GANTT chart; (II) evaluation matrix; (III) list of stakeholders consulted during the inception phase; (IV) list of documents consulted during the inception phase; (V) draft Theory of Change (ToC); (VI) detailed approach for Process Tracing; (VII) list of RPSP activities; (VIII) RPSP improvement measures of the Secretariat; (IX) RPSP grants process map; and (X) relevant decisions taken by the Board as related to the RPSP.

II. MANDATE AND CONTEXT

The GCF is a new global fund, created in 2010 to support the efforts of developing countries to respond to the challenges of climate change. It advances and promotes a paradigm shift towards low-emission and climate-resilient development, supporting developing countries and their development partners as per the targets set by them. As a designated operating entity of the Financial Mechanism of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the GCF provides equal funding for climate change mitigation and adaptation projects and programmes to developing countries, and particularly to those vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.

An important part of the GCF funding and support modalities is RPSP, whose purpose is to support countries, through National Designated Authorities (NDAs)/Focal Points (FPs) and their partners, to advance their priorities. The RPSP provides resources for a range of preparatory, technical and knowledge-based activities and for institutional strengthening.

A. Board Decisions and Discussions

The basis for the RPSP is defined in the Governing Instrument of the GCF. In paragraph 40, it is stated:

The Fund will provide resources for readiness and preparatory activities and technical assistance, such as the preparation or strengthening of low-emission development strategies or plans, Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPAs) and for

³ https://www.greenclimate.fund/documents/20182/953917/GCF_B.19_32_Add.01_-_Readiness_and_Preparatory_Support_Programme_Revised_Work_Programme_for_2018_Addendum_I_Final_report_from_Dalberg_on_the_initial_review_of_the_Readiness_Programme.pdf/e3bdea93-7ff1-42b3-92de-cb2aaafdc05b

in-country institutional strengthening. This also include the strengthening of capacities for country coordination and to meet fiduciary principles and standards and environmental and social safeguards, in order to enable countries to directly access the Fund.

At its fifth meeting, the Board underlined in decision B.05/14 the importance of the RPSP in the context of promoting country ownership of GCF activities and access to funding. It decided that the GCF will provide readiness and preparatory support to:

- (i) Enable the preparation of country programmes providing for low-emission, climate-resilient development strategies or plans;*
- (ii) Support and strengthen in-country, Fund-related institutional capacities, including for country coordination and multi-stakeholder consultation mechanism as it relates to the establishment and operation of national designated authorities and country focal points;*
- (iii) Enable implementing entities and intermediaries to meet the Fund's fiduciary principles and standards, and environmental and social safeguards, in order to directly access the Fund.*

The Board also noted:

- (c) ...the importance of engaging with existing readiness initiatives and programmes at international, national and regional levels to enhance learning and ensure coherence, and mandates the Secretariat to play a leading coordinating role in this regard.*

And it further noted:

- (i) That the scope of readiness and preparatory support could evolve over time and be tailored to address countries' specific circumstances;*
- (ii) The importance of readiness and preparatory support for effective private sector engagement, particularly for small- and medium-sized enterprises and local financial intermediaries in developing countries, and activities to enable private sector involvement in small island developing States (SIDS) and least developed countries (LDCs).*

These principles have guided the RPSP ever since, with some amendments in later decisions and constant attention of the Board to the progress of this Programme, which is considered a crucial element in making the Fund operational.

The Board approved the operationalization of the RPSP in October 2014, at its eighth meeting. In decision 08/11, the Board defined the modalities of the RPSP as follows:

- (e) Decides that all developing countries will have access to Readiness support and that the Fund will aim for a floor of 50% of the Readiness support allocation to particularly vulnerable countries, including SIDS, LDCs and African States;*
- (f) Also decides that Readiness commitments to individual developing member countries will be capped at US\$ 1 million per calendar year; and that the Fund can provide up to US\$ 300,000 of direct support to help establish an NDA/FP;*
- (g) Affirms that Readiness requests will be assessed to ensure complementarity with existing Readiness activities, if any;*
- (h) Decides that progress in meeting these objectives will be subject to an independent evaluation after two years to assess lessons learned.*

In Annex XVI of the Eighth Meeting Report, an indicative list of activities to be included in the Readiness Programme was provided. It outlines in some detail the various activities considered to be an

integral part of the RPSP. An updated list was approved at the thirteenth meeting of the Board (for the list, see Appendix VII).

In the following years, at nearly every meeting, the Board has discussed progress reported by the Secretariat and made further decisions about the Programme's implementation, while reaffirming its principles. Notably, decision 11/04:

- (c) Recalls that, in accordance with decision B.08/11, paragraph (j), progress in meeting the objectives of the RPSP will be subject to an independent evaluation;
- (d) Underscores the importance of significantly increasing the approval and timely disbursement of resources to support developing countries in undertaking country programming processes, and strengthening national institutions from the public and private sectors to access the GCF and to build country programmes and pipelines;
- (e) Requests the Secretariat, in consultation with NDA/FP and Readiness DP, to present to the Board at its twelfth meeting a proposal to improve and simplify the process to access funds for country programming and Readiness and Preparatory Support.

Decision B.13/32 again shows the concerns of the Board about providing the necessary resources for countries to simplify access to the Fund, and its concerns about getting an analysis of the difficulties encountered:

- (a) *Reaffirms the resource allocation framework for the RPSP as contained in decision B.08/11;*
- (b) *Also reaffirms decision B.06/06 on the initial parameters and guidelines for allocating resources during the initial phase of the GCF, that decided that sufficient resources should be provided for Readiness and Preparatory Support activities;*
- (c) *Further reaffirms the important role of the GCF RPSP in the development of country programming frameworks;*
- (d) *Welcomes the simplification of the Readiness support template and encourages the Secretariat to continue to expedite the approval and disbursement of RPSP resources;*
- (e) *Adopts the revised indicative list of activities that can be supported by the RPSP as contained in annex VII;*
- (f) *Requests the Secretariat to present, in their report to the Board at its fourteenth meeting, analysis of the challenges identified so far in the effective and efficient implementation of the RPSP, and an assessment of actions taken as well as progress achieved to date on the implementation and outcomes of approved Readiness activities;*
- (g) *Notes difficulties that have been encountered in the conclusion of Readiness grant agreements;*
- (h) *Agrees to simplify the Readiness grant agreement with a view to developing an arrangement for country programme framework agreements in order to expedite the disbursement of Readiness resources.*

In its fifteenth meeting, the Board continued to provide additional resources and repeated the request to present the results of the independent evaluation of the Programme no later than the last meeting in 2017. Decision B.15/04 of the Board:

- (a) *Decides that, from the resources available in the GCF Trust Fund, up to an additional US\$ 50 million is to be made available for the execution of the Fund's Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme ("Programme");*

- (b) *Requests the Secretariat, recalling decision B.08/11, paragraph (j), and decision B.13/03, to present the results of the independent evaluation of the Programme to the Board no later than the last meeting in 2017, and to ensure that the results of the evaluation are taken into account when considering requests for resources for the Programme subsequent to the evaluation; and*
- (c) *Also requests the Secretariat to present the draft terms of reference for the independent evaluation of the Programme for Board consideration at the sixteenth meeting of the Board.*

Decision B.18/09 had requested the Secretariat to implement immediate measures to address the quality issues identified in the RPSP progress report. The Secretariat was to present a revised work programme for the RPSP, including a request for funding for 2018, for the Board's consideration at its nineteenth meeting, based on the outcome of the initial review by the Secretariat of the RPSP. After further discussions at the seventeenth and eighteenth meetings of the Board, an agreement was reached at the nineteenth meeting (B.19) about the TOR for the independent evaluation (decision B.19/16).

At B.19, the Board approved the Revised 2018 Readiness Work Programme (doc. GCF/B.19/32/Rev.01) and measures for Programme improvement (decision B.19/15). The list of these measures is included in Appendix VIII. They are to a large extent based on the Dalberg report submitted to B.19 as an Addendum to the Revised 2018 Readiness Work Programme (GCF/B.19/32/Add.01) and were taken up or supplemented by the Division of Country Programming (DCP).

At B.19, the Board approved an additional amount of US\$ 60 million to be made available for the execution of the RPSP. It also requested that the Secretariat submit to the Board a proposal for improving the RPSP based on the outcome of the conclusions of the Secretariat's initial review and of the independent evaluation of the RPSP as soon as it is concluded.

B. Overview of the RPSP Portfolio

Under the Readiness Programme, all eligible countries can apply for US\$ 300,000 for NDA/FP strengthening and another US\$ 700,000 for the development of a country programme (CP). These funds would also cover stakeholder consultations and the establishment of the non-objection procedure under which the NDA has to sign off on each project application to the GCF. Moreover, eligible countries can apply for a further US\$ 3 million for the preparation of a NAP. In addition, the GCF provides funds from central resources every year for structured dialogues in all regions, as well as workshops and missions of GCF staff and experts to individual countries to transfer knowledge and share experiences.

Disbursements and expenditures: As per the latest progress report on the Readiness Programme submitted to B.19 (GCF/B.19/15/Rev.01), the GCF has, up to the end of January 2018, engaged with 124 countries on 253 readiness requests:

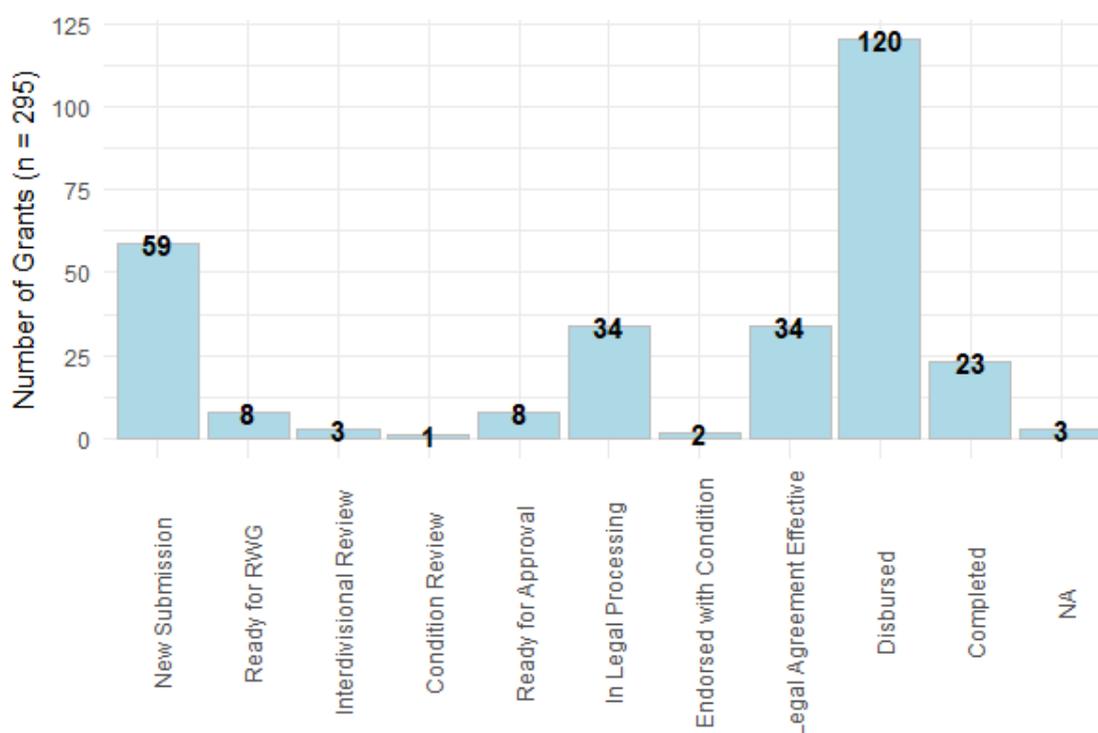
- (a) 84 of these 124 countries are SIDS, LDCs or African States, which make up 68 per cent of the countries requesting Readiness support;
- (b) 167 (66 per cent) of the 253 Readiness support requests have been approved since the inception of the Programme, with 106 countries accessing readiness resources directly or through international Delivery Partners (DPs);⁴
- (c) Of the 167 readiness requests approved, 86 of them (51 per cent) have received disbursements, and entered the implementation stage; and

⁴ DPs include accredited partners (International Accredited Entities and Direct Access Entities) and non-accredited partners.

(d) By January 2018, 16 of these had completed their activities. According to the more recent database-recorded progress, as of May 2018, 23 have been completed (see Figure 1).

Since the Programme’s implementation in 2015, the Secretariat has doubled the commitment of funds to countries each year: from US\$ 8.5 million in 2015 to US\$ 16 million in 2016, and to US\$ 33 million in 2017. Disbursements increased from US\$ 0.44 million in 2015 to US\$ 2.8 million in 2016 and US\$ 10.9 million in 2017 (see Figure 2).^{5,6} According to the iPMS database (which shows if projects are still in legal processing), the status of readiness grants across the portfolio is as presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Status of readiness grants – portfolio



Source: IEU iPMS Dataset (May 2018)

According to the RPSP progress report submitted to B.19, the Programme significantly accelerated its *actual* disbursements in 2017, while still lagging with respect to the *planned* disbursement schedules, reaching in total only about 51 to 52 per cent of the planned figures.⁷ In 2018, disbursements accelerated, showing 51.4% in the first four months compared to the whole of 2017⁸ (Figure 2). Disbursements by region shows that Asia-Pacific, Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean received roughly equivalent amounts of the disbursed funding (Figure 3). The average grant amounts by region varied between US\$ 150,000 and US\$ 250,000 (Figure 4).

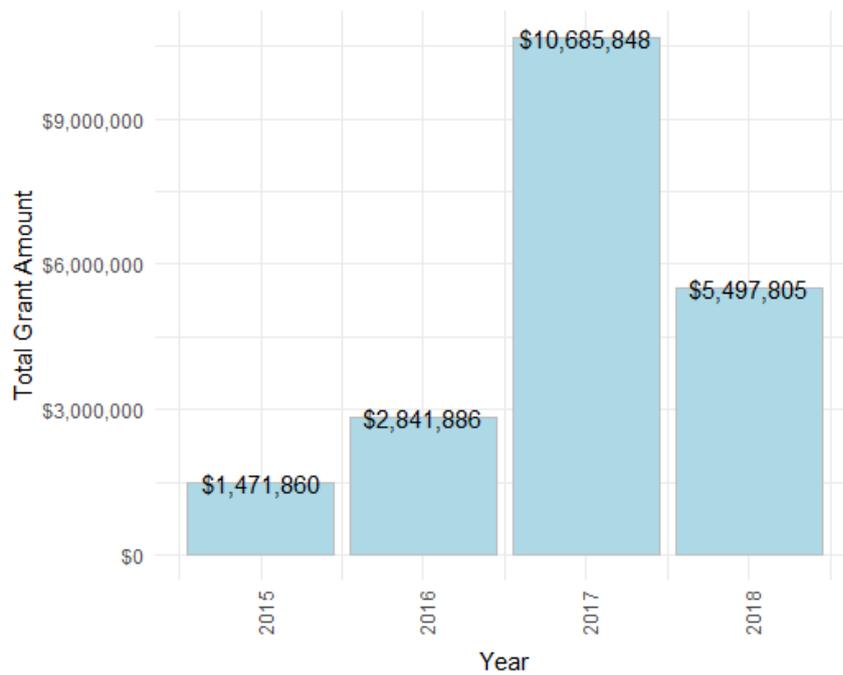
⁵ Source: Fluxx readiness disbursement database, 26 March 2018.

⁶ The iPMS database does not include disbursement amounts, or dates of final or first disbursement. These are only available on the Fluxx readiness disbursement database. According to this dataset, annual disbursement has seen large annual increases since 2015 (Figure 2).

⁷ This is shown in Table 2 on page 3 of the progress report.

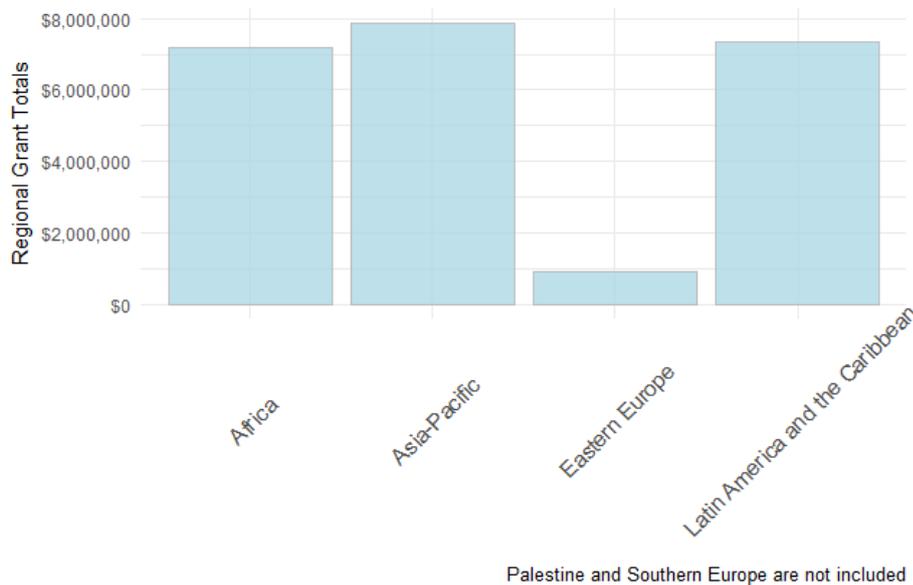
⁸ This does not include funding allocated to regional workshops.

Figure 2 Grant disbursement (USD)



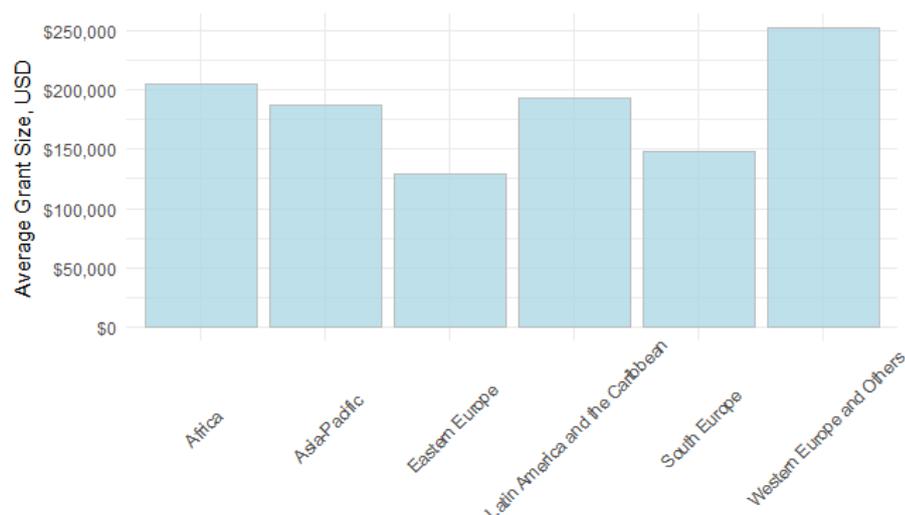
Note: Total amounts are inclusive of workshops held during each respective year.
Source: IEU fluxx dataset (April 2018)

Figure 3 Readiness disbursement amounts, by region



Note: Not inclusive of 2018
Source: Regional classification from iPMS and disbursement totals from Fluxx (May 2018)

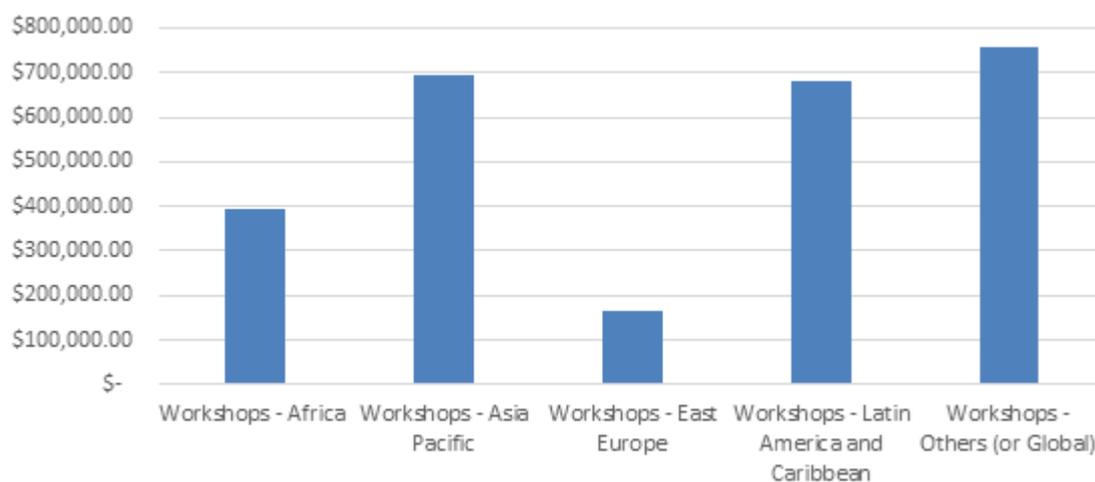
Figure 4 Average grant size, by region



Source: Grant Amount – IEU flux dataset (May 2018)
 # of Grants – IEU iPMS dataset (May 2018)

In addition to the disbursement of funds to individual countries, the GCF also supports workshops, through structured dialogues in all regions. This funding is from a central pool rather than in response to specific requests. To date, about 18 structured dialogues have been held with a budget of nearly US\$ 2.7 million in support.⁹ The regional distribution of these disbursements is shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5 Disbursement amount by workshop/structured dialogue



Source: IEU Flux dataset (May 2018)

Process cycle and processing times: In a preliminary analysis, according to dates provided by the iPMS database, regarding processing times, the “submission-to-effective” time varies. The steps may be understood concisely as follows (as per Table 1).

Table 1 Description of temporal steps

TEMPORAL STEP	DESCRIPTION
1. Submission to Endorsement	The time, in days, between the official submission date by the NDA/FP and until it is “endorsed” by the GCF Secretariat.

⁹ Four workshop grants had no funding amount allotted at the time of writing: grant numbers 1801-15096, 1801-15102, 1803-15141, 1804-15176

TEMPORAL STEP	DESCRIPTION
2. Endorsement to Approval	The time, in days, between official GCF Secretariat endorsement and proposal approval.
3. Approval to Agreement	The time, in days, between the proposal being approved and a legal agreement being finalized.
4. Agreement to Effectiveness	The time in days between legal arrangements being concluded in the form of a grant agreement and the grants becoming effective. A grant agreement is considered effective once a legal opinion on the agreement is communicated to the GCF Secretariat and the grant recipient submits a Letter of Authorization.
5. Effective to Disbursement – Grant Closure	The time, in days, from the date the grant is considered effective to the date it is disbursed. The first tranche of funding is released upon the grant becoming effective, the last preceding the closure of the grant itself. This temporal step will include both disbursement dates, when applicable.
6. Submission to Disbursement	The time, in days, from proposal submission to full grant disbursement (Total points of 1–5).

Source: Green Climate Fund (2017). GCF Guidebook: Access the GCF Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme – An Introduction and how-to guide. 25 September 2017

There are some regional disparities in the duration between the temporal steps of the RPSP process, through Submission, Endorsement, Approval, Agreement, Effectiveness and Disbursement, as presented in Table 2.¹⁰

Table 2 *Temporal steps by region, in days*

REGION	SUBMISSION TO ENDORSEMENT	ENDORSEMENT TO APPROVAL	APPROVAL TO AGREEMENT	AGREEMENT TO EFFECTIVE	EFFECTIVE TO DISBURSEMENT
Africa	61.74	40.94	123	100.39	AF
Asia-Pacific	71.51	55.81	17	115.92	AF
Eastern Europe	125.50	67.80	AF	155.80	AF
Latin America and the Caribbean	117.93	65.93	56.17	89.08	AF
South Europe	42.00	34.00	20	35.00	AF

Abbreviations: AF = analysis forthcoming

These data merit further analysis to track developments over the most recent years. A preliminary look at the data suggests processing times are decreasing.

C. The Range of RPSP Activities

The first activity of the RPSP is generally to establish a no-objection procedure in countries, empowering NDAs to sign off on any project proposal before it goes to the GCF, thus enabling the NDAs/FPs of these countries to lead effective coordination mechanisms. As of 31 January 2018, 104 RPSP proposals requested funds to support establishing such a procedure; however, no data are available so far to assess

¹⁰ Data for the first four temporal steps are available in the iPMS database, with disbursement dates available in the Fluxx database.

how many countries have effectively established such a procedure. There is also a paucity of data about whether a non-objection procedure is operational and working well as intended or is creating an additional obstacle for the rapid development and presentation of good project proposals.

The second activity of the RPSP is to develop country programmes, strategic frameworks and pipelines of projects/programmes. This goes hand in hand with strengthening the NDAs, which are expected to engage with stakeholders in their countries, as well as with DPs and the Secretariat, to develop country programmes. As of 31 January 2018, the GCF had approved only two country programmes, while a number of others were being prepared and were in various stages of drafting and review.

The third activity of the RPSP is to support consultations with national stakeholders, whose active engagement is key to making any country programme a living document and to increasing its likelihood of being implemented. The most recent progress report provides several examples of such consultations and stakeholder engagement supported by RPSP funding.¹¹ The evaluation team's planned country visits will elucidate this matter further.

The fourth activity of the RPSP is to assist DAEs in the accreditation process. Once accredited, DAEs may receive Readiness support to develop their capacities to build their project pipelines and to effectively implement projects/programmes funded by the GCF (including the pilot programme to enhance direct access, or EDA). At the end of January 2018, about 37 RPSP projects included elements of DAE support. In addition, 26 DAEs received technical support through PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) to identify gaps and develop action plans for accreditation.¹² Moreover, seven proposals had been submitted by already accredited DAEs, aimed at improving their capacities as AEs.

The fifth and increasingly important RPSP activity is the support for mobilizing the private sector for climate action. Countries may engage the private sector during their consultative processes to identify opportunities to involve private sector investments in project proposals, reportedly with growing success.

Finally, as indicated above, there are up to US\$ 3 million in financial resources for each country to formulate national adaptation plans and/or other adaptation planning processes. This is the most recent component of the RPSP; it started only in 2016 as per decision B.13/09 and increased significantly in 2017. This is discussed in greater detail below.

National Adaptation Plans

The Governing Instrument of the GCF defines in paragraph 36 that the GCF will support NAPs, in addition to other country-level plans. In June 2016, the GCF Board adopted decision B.13/09, having considered doc. GCF/B.13/05 titled "Adaptation Planning Processes". The first two paragraphs read as follows:

- (a) *Decides to expedite support for developing countries for the formulation of national adaptation plans, on the basis of the paragraphs below and consistent with United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change decisions 1/CP.16, 5/CP.17 and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change decision 1/CP.21, paragraph 46, and for the subsequent implementation of projects, policies and programmes identified by them;*
- (b) *Recalls the decision B.06/06 aim for a 50:50 balance between mitigation and adaption over time on a grant equivalent basis; and also recalls paragraph 40 of the Governing Instrument for the GCF that states that the GCF will provide resources for readiness and preparatory*

¹¹ See GCF/B.19/15/Rev.01, p. 5 ff.

¹² PwC sends a mission to the DAE concerned, which examines the various internal controls, policies and procedures. A gap analysis is undertaken, and an action plan is developed for making the necessary improvements for ensuring accreditation. These interventions generally cost about US\$ 34,000.

activities, including for national adaptation plans; and that paragraph 36 of the Governing Instrument states that the GCF will support developing countries in pursuing project-based and programmatic approaches in accordance with climate change strategies and plans, such as national adaptation plans.

This was confirmed with decision B.17/21, which adopted guidelines for enhanced country ownership and country commitment, as stated in paragraph 5:

The process of developing a country programme should take into account the country's (I)NDC, national communications, as well as NAMAs, NAPAs, NAPs and/or other adaptation planning processes where applicable, as well as regional, national, sub-national and local climate policy frameworks, ensuring GCF climate finance is consistent with national priorities.

It continues in paragraph 6 as follows:

Country programmes should capture the diversity of activities and processes taking place at national level and how they support each other by: (a) Linking individual funding proposals to national sustainable development plans, INDCs/NDCs and other existing national strategies and plans, including NAMAs, NAPAs, NAPs and other adaptation planning processes, as appropriate.

As of February 2018, 16 NAPs have been approved, and 14 of are effective (i.e. completion of legal processing; see Table 1 above). A further four were endorsed by the Readiness Working Group (RWG). UNDP and UNEP implement most of them (more than two-thirds), one is implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and three by national DPs or DAEs (Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina and Colombia). First disbursements have been received by only three countries thus far: Liberia, Nepal and Colombia. Projects to develop NAPs in another 35 countries are in preparation or under review, while four have been endorsed, in Bhutan, Dominica, Mauritania and Swaziland.

In most cases, the total amounts approved reach or are close to US\$ 3 million, the maximum funding the GCF has allocated for NAPs and related processes. The totals are significantly lower in only Liberia and the Democratic Republic of Congo, at US\$ 2.2 million and US\$ 1.4 million respectively, implemented by UNDP. Most NAPs in the pipeline have budgets planned close to the maximal amount. In the case of Gabon, the envisaged amount is US\$ 969,000, with implementation in 18 months; it comes with the option of applying later for additional funding up to the US\$ 3 million ceiling. The DPs involved remain principally UNDP and UNEP, followed by FAO, Rainforest Alliance, Sahel Eco, Corporación Andian and Foment (CAF) (with one NAP each), and three national entities (Gabon, Mauritius, and Antigua and Barbuda for Dominica).

While it is too early to talk about implementation and impact, it can be said that the review and approval process has in many cases been difficult. While some proposals have been considered inadequate, and rejected by the Secretariat, proposals have reportedly much improved.

The Approval and Monitoring Process

The Board delegated approval of RPSP projects to the Secretariat. The key structure for the approval of readiness activities is the RWG, which was created in May 2015. As defined in the relevant Administrative/Internal Instruction Form (Ref. No.: CPD-Readiness/CFO-DSS/001), the purpose and objective of the RWG is to review and endorse all RPSP grants and to ensure that RPSP grant allocations are processed with efficiency and transparency. The Executive Director appoints RWG members for one year, with the possibility of extension. Members consist of the DCP Director as Chairperson, the Chief Financial Officer and Director of Support Services (CFO/DSS) as alternate Chairperson, and three staff members of DCP plus two optional members of other divisions.

The DCP Director and the CFO/DSS Director, acting jointly, are the Approving Authority for RPSP grant requests/applications and disbursement requests for approved RPSP grants of up to US\$ 300,000 that follow the standardized packages for RPSP activity areas, NDA strengthening and country programme development. The DCP Director is the Approving Authority for all other RPSP grant requests/applications and disbursement requests for approved RPSP grants of up to US\$ 150,000. The Executive Director is the Approving Authority for other such requests above US\$ 150,000.

The flow charts for the processing of RPSP applications are contained in Appendix IX. All proposals/applications must come from the NDA, which can be assisted by national or international DPs, accredited or not. After DCP conducts an initial review of the readiness proposal submitted by the NDA, DCP provides feedback to the NDA. The NDA provides the DCP with a revised version for review by the RWG. In practice, this back and forth may occur more than once. The RWG could then either endorse the proposal, endorse it with conditions, or send it back with a request to revise and resubmit. Once endorsed by the RWG, proposals go to the Executive Director (ED) or the DCP Director with the CFO/Director for approval.

Once approved, as per the approval limits described above, the Notification of Approval (NOA) letters are sent, along with the template and Standard Conditions (SC) of the Grant Agreement (GA) to the NDA and DP to review. If they have any comments on these documents, they need to be cleared by the Office of General Counsel (OGC), providing their legal opinion, before the GA template and SC are finalized. Once the GA and SC are finalized, both parties sign the GA, and DPs are asked to send their legal opinion. OGC then clears the legal opinion, upon which a GA can be declared effective.

This whole process, as described above (GA and SC, legal opinion etc.) takes place if a DP does not have a Framework Agreement (FWA). If a DP does have a FWA with GCF, the above process is much simpler. For DPs with FWA, upon approval, they can send a disbursement request. Currently, there are 7 delivery partners who have FWA (CAF, CCCCC, FAO, GGGI, GIZ, UNDP, and UNEP).¹³

After the first disbursement is completed, responsibility for monitoring and reporting shifts to the Office of Portfolio Management (OPM), which was created in January 2017. The OPM is responsible for collecting progress and completion reports as per the agreed timelines. These reports need to be duly filed before any new tranche of the approved project is disbursed or a new project approved. The OPM also reviews the financial reports with the support of the Finance Unit.

As of 31 January 2018, the latest data available to the evaluation team at the time of writing, of the 71 ongoing readiness grants, 35 had yet to submit either progress reports or financial reports. Of all ongoing readiness grants, 19 were yet to reach their reporting deadlines, 36 had met their reporting requirements, and the remaining 16 were behind in providing the scheduled reporting. In addition, there were portfolio reports from UNDP and UNEP covering 21 readiness grants. However, so far fewer than 20 completion reports (including on Fund projects) have been collected by the OPM. The submission of these reports is required before final disbursements are made. At the time of writing, there was reportedly quite some email traffic between the recipients and the OPM about getting the reporting right in substance and timing.

At the eighteenth meeting of the Board, several Board members stressed the need to establish an adequate monitoring and reporting system for the RPSP, so as to effectively assess its impact, both in qualitative and quantitative terms. This would serve to justify the results of the funding disbursed and

¹³ The Framework Agreement (FWA) is a completely separate process.

enable subsequent improvements to the Programme as appropriate. One Board member specifically requested that an audited report on readiness expenditure be conducted and issued to the Board.¹⁴

D. Conclusions

The Board discussions and decisions regarding the RPSP repeatedly address three issues:

- (a) To support countries in getting ready to access GCF resources, emphasizing capacity building and country ownership;
- (b) To install some focus (priority country groups and eligible modalities) and limits (funding caps) to such support; and
- (c) To develop accountability mechanisms, in particular progress reporting and the repeatedly debated independent evaluation.

It is noted that there are no clear definitions of country ownership and readiness. It is assumed that the outcomes of the RPSP activities (a strengthened NDA organizes stakeholder consultations and the preparation of a country programme in cooperation with the private sector and accredited entities, especially DAEs) result in country-owned processes. It is assumed that countries will be ready to successfully address mitigation and adaptation with improved access to Fund projects. Hereafter, our current understanding of these assumptions is made explicit in the form of a ToC (see Appendix V and also Figure 6 in section III below).

Other elements that are not mentioned in the stakeholder consultations (among others) include the political will of the countries; support by media, the private sector and the public; priority setting among ministries; and coordination among them. Also, the readiness programmes funded and implemented under other international environment conventions are not explicitly considered. At the same time, it is clearly and repeatedly stated that the specific context and conditions in each country have to be taken into account. While a standard package (in terms of funding type and size) has been offered, additional space for tailoring this support is now in evidence, notably since June 2017. The evaluation team will examine these issues over the course of the evaluation.

Overall, the RPSP remains a young programme. While it has evolved since 2017, those familiar with the RPSP have frequently stated in inception interviews that its progress remains slower than expected. The main concerns of the Board, in particular regarding the representatives of the developing countries, are the following:

- About 20 developing countries have not yet requested any support;
- The majority of countries request less funding than they could. In particular, requests for supporting the development of NAPs are coming in slower than anticipated;
- The approval process remains slow, and disbursements take a seemingly long time given the needs and size of RPSP support. To date, relatively few projects have been completed; and
- The accreditation process is likewise slow, and two thirds of the accredited agencies are international ones, contrary to the intentions of increasing national ownership through the use of national agencies.

The evaluation team will examine the likely complex reasons for all of this throughout the evaluation process. A methodology for doing so is detailed in the next section of the present report.

¹⁴ See meeting report GCF/B.18/24, p. 84 ff. See also Internal Audit Report: Division of Country Programming IA/AR/2017/003.

III. METHODS

A. Process Followed to Date

Early in the inception period, members of the evaluation team met in Songdo, Republic of Korea, to outline the trajectory and approach of the evaluation. Together, team members met with a total of 15 individuals from different divisions across the GCF, and in particular those most familiar with the RPSP. Additionally, the evaluation team held meetings with 31 individuals in Da Nang, Vietnam, including one Board Member and a Regional Advisor (RA), both from Asia. The evaluation team facilitated one focus group discussion (FGD) with 50 participants (including NDAs, DPs, and two Board Members), and had brief exchanges with several other stakeholders.¹⁵ Additionally, 4 RAs responded to a series of emails, informing the country sampling approach.

In addition, a total of 13 other key experts were consulted throughout the inception process, through face-to-face discussions and phone/videoconferencing. The 13 included relevant staff from the Adaptation Fund (AF), Climate Investment Funds (CIF), Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Global Environment Facility (GEF), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Bank. These early meetings and consultations were pursued with the intention of informing our understanding of the evaluation's purpose, stakeholder priorities and aspirations for this mandate, discussing our methodological approach, and developing the questions contained within the evaluation matrix and the sampling approach proposed.

A preliminary document review has also been conducted (see Appendix IV for complete list). This review included Board decisions, reports and discussions, relevant audits and evaluations (including the Dalberg Global Development Advisors Report), readiness completion reports, readiness mid-term progress reports, readiness proposals, country programme briefs, readiness portfolio reports and readiness templates. The evaluation team also developed, refined and has drawn upon an IEU database of the GCF readiness portfolio, in preparation for a comprehensive examination of the RPSP.

The preliminary document and portfolio review served an evaluability function, informing our team about the documents and data available for this review. It enabled our team to better understand the RPSP as a programme, as well as its components and its relevance to the GCF and stakeholders; it also gave a first insight into the strengths and limitations of the RPSP (e.g. on matters of country ownership, consultation and approval processes). This preliminary document review has been key to informing the proposed sample for country missions. The evaluation team was able to meet the following inception period objectives:

- Further refine the scope of the assignment;
- Identify the key evaluation questions/performance/institutional issues to be explored;
- Develop and validate an evaluation matrix to guide the evaluation;
- Clarify the purpose and use of the different deliverables;
- Develop a sample of countries and of stakeholders to be consulted for data collection;
- Finalize the schedule and key milestones; and

¹⁵ In this report, the notion of "stakeholder" will be used to designate any party that can affect or be affected by the GCF and that has a stake in the implications of this being done.

- Discuss the roles of various evaluation team members, such that that data collection proceeds quickly, thereby ensuring that deadlines are met for deliverables.

B. Methodological Approach

Guiding Principles

This evaluation is underpinned by a series of principles, each of which is discussed below.

Utilization-Focused

Given the learning orientation of this evaluation, the evaluation team has adopted a utilization-focused approach and framework, whose main objective is to be useful to its intended users in terms of providing learning, informing decision-making and improving performance overall. This approach responds to the clear priority, as expressed in the TOR, that this is to be a “learning-oriented assessment”. The GCF Board, the Secretariat – including but not limited to the DCP, Office of Portfolio Management (formerly Portfolio Management Unit) (OPM), Division of Mitigation and Adaptation (DMA), Private Sector Facility (PSF) and Office of Risk Mitigation and Compliance (ORMC) – NDAs/FPs, AEs, DAEs and other DPs have all been identified as key actual and potential users of this evaluation.

Participatory

In line with the overall utilization-focused framework, the evaluation team will work closely with relevant stakeholders to ensure the exercise is appropriately participatory, consultative and engaging. Ensuring that key stakeholder representatives participate in a diversity of ways throughout this evaluation will ensure that the insights and recommendations generated are useful to all and foster appropriation, ownership and buy-in. The team either has or will undertake the following:

- Design the evaluation in line with the objectives and criteria articulated by the Board in its decision B.19/16;
- Elicit key priorities and questions for this evaluation in part from inception phase conversations with key GCF Secretariat staff (including the Deputy Executive Director, staff from DCP, OPM, DMA, PSF, and ORMC) and key external stakeholders (as noted above). These conversations served to inform the evaluation team’s understanding of the RPSP and of readiness programmes of comparable organizations;
- Consult with key stakeholders, including at the level of the GCF Board, selected country stakeholders (including NDAs/FPs, DPs, AEs, DAEs and others), through semi-structured interviews and an online perception survey;
- Participate in the May 2018 DAE workshop in Songdo, Republic of Korea, using this as an opportunity to engage with DAEs, RAs and additional Secretariat staff in data collection and learning processes (e.g. experience-sharing FGDs and interviews);
- Plan and conduct all country case studies with the direct involvement of NDAs/FPs, while also sharing key insights through a debriefing at the term of every mission. This is an important learning and validation opportunity for both NDAs/FPs and also evaluation team members;
- Construct a retrospective ToC, through a process that enables stakeholders to inform the ongoing development of this ToC;
- Report to the Board at several important and agreed-upon moments, at different stages of the evaluation. A process for the Board to review draft versions of the evaluation has been outlined, towards ensuring that the evaluation report is useful to them and is adjusted accordingly (if/as required to meet this objective);

- Maintain a flexible approach and adjust the trajectory of the work to be performed accordingly, if and as required; and
- Adopt a learning-oriented disposition throughout the evaluation, which includes learning and improving our work throughout.

The team has developed and will continue deploying several approaches, methods and tools to focus the evaluation on utilization and learning, to ensure participation at key steps in the process, and to deliver rigorous and credible findings. This evaluation will include qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection, dataset building and data analysis.¹⁶ Sources of data are slated to comprise a programme, policy and project document and database review, a global online perception survey, interviews and FGDs, and a series of country case studies. Each evaluation question will be answered through a systematic and traceable use of all relevant information sources in a way that maximizes triangulation.

Specific Approach

Theory-based Evaluation

As far as outcomes are concerned, the approach adopted for this work is that of Theory-based Evaluation (TBE). This approach consists of reconstructing and testing the ToC of the RPSP. Within the ToC, some causal links will receive special attention because they correspond to major learning needs or represent potential bottlenecks. These causal links will be submitted to Process Tracing (PT) tests (see subsection below), a method that helps assess the strength of the causal link. Where relevant, PT tests will be complemented by a focus on causal mechanisms, a method that enables the learning of transferable lessons. The evaluation will also include a meta-analysis and benchmarking exercise. Each of these technical elements is discussed below.

Retrospective Theory of Change

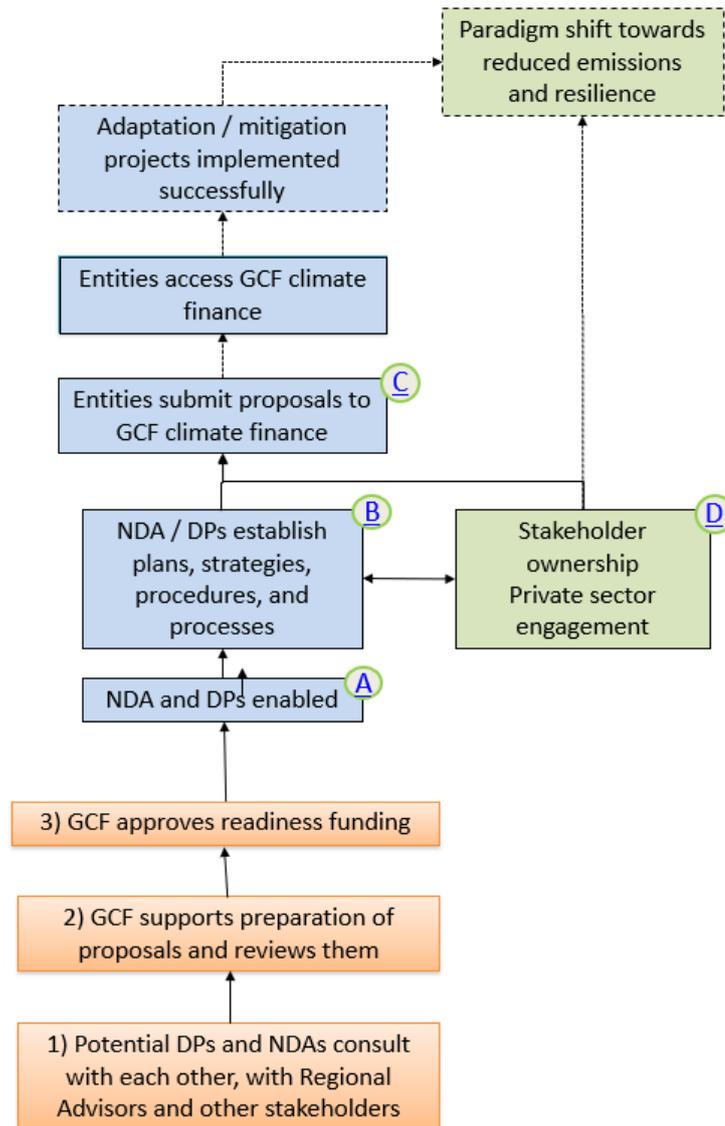
Given the theory-based methodological orientation of this assignment, the evaluation team has started developing a retrospective ToC of the RPSP. The team has drawn on GCF literature to construct a first version of the ToC, based on actual and envisaged activities and expected outcomes, as reflected in the documentation, as well as on ToC development underway at the DCP and OPM. Discussion with a wide range of relevant stakeholders during an inception mission to the stakeholder dialogue in Da Nang contributed to the refinement of this ToC.

The ToC consists of a series of diagrams, including (1) a simplified version of the ToC, sketching the overall logic of the Programme (see Figure 6), and (2) a detailed version refining causal assumptions at various levels of programme outcomes (see Appendix V). The evaluation team has highlighted some causal links in this detailed ToC where learning is especially needed or where bottlenecks are identified and where PT tests will be undertaken (i.e. during Stage 2 – Data Collection and Data Management).

In Figure 6, boxes and arrows describe our current understanding of the causal links connecting GCF readiness finance (bottom) to RPSP objectives (middle), and the overall GCF aim (top). Colours refer to the GCF supply of readiness finance (orange), intended outcomes in terms of GCF finance (blue), and country-wide expectations (green). Letters (A to D) represent four “levels” of outcomes that are presented later in the form of a detailed ToC (see Appendix V).

¹⁶ The term *data* is understood to mean information that is collected, organized, coded, represented, used and/or shared with intentionality.

Figure 6 Logic of the RPSP: an overview



Note: At the bottom of the figure, the three orange boxes summarize the steps of Readiness support by the GCF. An important first step is that NDAs become aware of and interested in GCF readiness finance. We understand that there is an expected virtuous circle through which RPSP-funded activities in the country create stakeholder ownership, which in turn raises partners' interest in readiness finance.

Moving upward in the figure, we pass through several blue boxes that represent successive logical levels of outcomes, most of them being expressed in the form of “who does what” in order to be accurate, given that precision is a must because we intend to use the ToC as a basis for collecting information. Each level could also be named as follows:

- Capacity building: NDAs and DPs enabled (level A)
- Coherent framework: NDA and DPs establish strategies, plans, country programmes, procedures and processes (level B)
- Project pipeline: Entities submit proposals to GCF climate finance (level C)
- Project portfolio: Entities access GCF climate finance
- Project completion: Adaptation/mitigation projects implemented successfully

What does not appear in this simplified figure is that the bulk of GCF finance is to be progressively provided through other channels: preparatory finance at the level of project pipeline, and adaptation/mitigation finance at the level of project portfolio. Therefore, readiness finance has a decreasing influence at upper levels of outcomes.

Green boxes on the right of the figure represent country-wide and potentially international outcomes, whereas the left-hand boxes relate to the GCF only. GCF readiness finance is expected to contribute to ideational changes within wide circles of country stakeholders, in conjunction with many other influences.

Finally, we need to go one step further than displaying chains of boxes and arrows since causality is far more complex. In actuality, readiness finance contributes to changes in conjunction with an infinite number of other causes. In order to be realistic (in the sense of being close enough to real life), our ToC needs to include the other main potential causes that can be identified at present (external factors). In Appendix V, this is not done in the form of boxes and arrows but in the form of a list established at each level of outcomes. These lists of external factors will serve as a guide for information gathering and analysis.

Thus, as the evaluation progresses, the evaluation team will continuously revisit components of the ToC against our whole range of collected information – that is, field missions, stakeholder interviews, documents, online survey, Process Tracing, the database analyses and the benchmarking exercise.

Process Tracing

This evaluation will check causal links through a theory-based approach. Some causal links will receive special attention because they correspond to major learning needs. These causal links will be submitted to Process Tracing tests, an innovative method that helps assess the strength of the causality for the links identified by evaluators as important for the analysis.¹⁷

Most evaluators are familiar with statistical approaches to analysing causality. Such approaches proceed by inducing conclusions from observed regularities and associations. TBE and PT proceed otherwise: causality is established as a starting point in the form of a hypothesized theory; that theory is tested against facts; and, most often, the tests end in improving the theory rather than clearly confirming or refuting it. This may be disappointing if the evaluation is mainly done for an accountability purpose. However, theory improvement is an excellent way of generating lessons learned, which is particularly relevant in this evaluation.¹⁸

PT tests are demanding in terms of data collection. With a programme the breadth of the RPSP, it is impossible to test *all* causal assumptions in great detail. In order to be able to undertake a rigorous analysis of causality, the evaluation team has identified what we consider to be some of the most important and challenging causal links within the ToC (based on inception period interviews and the document and database review, in particular), and we will concentrate our testing efforts on these areas. We consider that focusing analytical efforts on some key areas is fully relevant in a learning-oriented evaluation, especially if we concentrate our PT tests on areas where there is a major need for learning.

¹⁷ This is informed by Beach and Pedersen, 2013; Bennett, 2008; Patton, 2008; CDI Practice Paper 10; Oxfam, 2013, and others. See references in Appendix IV.

¹⁸ The PT method was originally developed by historians. It is being transferred into the evaluators' toolbox, but the approach is still in development. Most references to PT relate to evaluation works that have a research or pilot dimension. We are not aware of any use of PT in a real-life and large-scale evaluation like that of the RPSP. Therefore, we will pay utmost attention to applying the method in the pilot country visit and improving our methodological approach subsequently. We will also add a methodological appendix to our final report in which we will discuss the reliability of lessons learned through PT tests.

Thus, the evaluation team has selected some causal assumptions within the ToC in a learning perspective, with the aim of bridging knowledge gaps that are thought to be particularly challenging. Seven “major learning needs” are identified in Table 3.

Table 3 *Focusing the analysis on selected causal relationships*

MAJOR LEARNING NEEDS	CAUSAL RELATIONSHIP TO BE SUBMITTED TO PT TESTS	REFERENCE IN THE TOC
N1	Extent to which readiness grants have enabled NDAs/FPs to lead effective intra-governmental coordination mechanisms, including the establishment of the no-objection procedure	Figure 10
N2	Extent to which readiness grants have enabled NDAs/FPs to effectively engage stakeholders in consultative processes, including the preparation of coherent country programmes	Figure v.4
N3	Extent to which readiness technical assistance has enabled nominated candidates to achieve accreditation as DAEs	Figure 10
N4	Extent to which information-sharing and experience-sharing events and processes have contributed to the ability of countries and DAEs to engage effectively with the GCF	Figure 10
N5	Extent to which readiness grants have enabled countries to develop NAPs that build on existing country strategies and plans	Figure 11
N6	Extent to which readiness grants have enabled NDAs/FPs and AEs to develop concept notes and/or project proposals to access climate finance that address high-impact priorities identified in country programmes	Figure 12
N7	Extent to which private sector engagement in country consultative processes has helped improve the enabling environment for crowding-in private sector investments	Figure 12

Each major learning need (or learning area) corresponds to a causal assumption (a link of a causal chain in the ToC) that will be tested against factual evidence drawn from the country visits (and other sources). Factual evidence will take the form of short narratives. Note that each narrative relates to one (and only one) learning area. The evaluation team expects to collect from 3 to 8 narratives per country – that is, about 40 narratives across all field mission countries, and about 4 to 6 narratives in each learning area.¹⁹

For each area of in-depth analysis, the following steps are envisaged, although the evaluation team is mindful that these are not necessarily pursued in a linear fashion:

- Step 1: Referring to the latest version of the ToC, identifying the hypothesized causal pathways at work and predicting some facts that should be observed for the theory to be confirmed or falsified. If “A” is assumed to cause “B”, then we will (1) refine the definition of A and B in a precise enough manner as to make them observable, and (2) predict a series of facts that should be observed if A is one of the causes of B. This is the preparation step.
- Step 2: This second step will consist of testing the causal assumption associated with each narrative, based on data that have been gathered. The evaluation team will analyse factual evidence for assessing whether A occurred (yes, no, to a certain extent), whether B occurred (yes, no, to a certain extent), and whether the predicted facts are observed. The test will show that (1) the narrative confirms or refutes the causal assumption and that (2) the finding is strongly or weakly reliable.

¹⁹ This number is sufficient for matching the standards of qualitative inquiry, as explained below.

- Step 3: A comparison of all tested narratives related to a causal assumption across visited countries will be undertaken and will conclude that the tested causal assumption worked under certain conditions and did not work under other conditions. That synthesis will create fresh knowledge, which will then be expressed in the form of lessons learned. The synthesis will also feed into an improved version of the ToC. Where this is relevant, the evaluation team will discuss the issue of generalization of the lessons learned by referring to the concept of the “mechanism”, which refers to confirmed causal links demonstrated as working in many contexts.

All tests will be discussed and assembled appropriately in one or several narratives in the evaluation report and/or the appendices. The pilot mission to Mongolia (as discussed below) will also serve to inform the key areas of focus for the evaluation, and in particular PT testing.

Meta-analysis and Benchmarking

The GCF operates in an environment of many global, regional, multilateral and bilateral climate funds, each with their objectives and characteristics such as scope, scale, governance arrangements, funding mechanisms and organizational processes. Other global funds include the GEF and two related funds (the Least Developed Countries Fund for Climate Change and the Special Climate Change Fund), the CIF, the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol (MLF), the AF, and various carbon funds such as the FCPF. The multilateral development banks, UNDP and other UN agencies are also playing significant roles, both directly and as implementing agencies for these funds. German development assistance such as GIZ has been prominent among bilateral climate change initiatives.

The evaluation will conduct a meta-analysis to benchmark the RPSP against similar activities being undertaken by other initiatives. This will focus on documenting and comparing the GCF and the RPSP with other climate-related global funds and their readiness activities to identify both similarities and differences with the RPSP. It will also include information on other initiatives to the extent that these provide comparators or lessons of experience for the RPSP. The meta-analysis will comprise (1) an overview of the main features of the comparators, (2) the findings of relevant evaluation reports to the extent that these are available, and (3) consultations with the key responsible staff in each comparable organization.

The meta-analysis may also extend these comparisons to include aspects of other global funds such as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (or, simply, the Global Fund), because the Global Fund is a large global financial mechanism, like the GCF, that was established to help affected countries address a cross-cutting development issue, like climate change. After it was established in 2002, the Global Fund adopted innovative procedures to operationalize guiding principles such as country ownership, which are similar to those of the GCF. Therefore, its experience has relevance for the GCF as well.

The key questions that will be addressed include:

- How do the design and operational processes of the RPSP compare with the readiness activities of other climate-related funds?
- What are the perceived comparative advantage, value added, or core competency of the GCF and RPSP relative to the other climate-related funds?
- What are the respective ToCs of readiness activities among the climate-related funds, to the extent that these are available?
- What complementarities exist between the RPSP and the readiness activities of other climate change initiatives?

- To what extent have comparable global funds established effective cooperation to exploit synergies and avoid overlap among their respective readiness activities?
- What are the identification, review and approval mechanisms for proposed activities among the comparable global funds?
- What has been the relative efficiency of these processes among the comparable global funds, to the extent that such secondary information is available?
- What are the respective delivery mechanisms among the comparable organizations?
- What are the respective incentive structures at the national level resulting from the way in which each comparable organization operates? How do these compare in relation to aid-effectiveness principles such as country ownership, alignment, harmonization and mutual accountability?
- How do readiness and preparatory support activities of the GCF feed into the regular programming of the comparable organizations?
- What are the progress reporting, monitoring and evaluation processes among the comparable organizations?
- What has been the relative effectiveness of these processes among the comparable global funds, to the extent that such information is available?

C. Detailed Methods

The evaluation consists of three main parts, which also coincide with the three stages of the work plan (see Section IV below). These are as follows:

- Inception and planning;
- Information and data collection and management; and
- Analyses and reporting.

Each stage is discussed accordingly, including our intended use of different methods.

Stage 1: Inception and Planning

The 8-week long inception period has served the purpose of ensuring that preparations and planning could be undertaken appropriately. During this period, the evaluation team undertook the activities described below.

Inception Meetings

The Universalia Team Leader for this evaluation, Dr. Eric Abitbol, participated in a 3-day inception mission at GCF Headquarters in Songdo, Republic of Korea.²⁰ These meetings afforded the evaluation team as a whole the opportunity to define clearly shared priorities for this evaluation, establish working relations, develop common systems, and generally launch the evaluation process.

A series of meetings were undertaken with 15 high-level stakeholders at the GCF Secretariat, including with the Deputy Executive Director, Javier Manzanares, and with staff from the DCP, OPM, DMA, PSF,

²⁰ Contractual matters were finalized on 6 April 2018, and inception meetings began in Songdo, Republic of Korea, on 9 April 2018.

Internal Audit and ORMC. Dr. Abitbol participated in a presentation on the Direct Climate Action Platform (DCAP).²¹

During the following week, Senior Consultant Dr. Ansgar Eussner and a Support Programme Evaluation Expert and IEU colleagues participated in the 4-day GCF Structured Dialogue in Asia, which took place in Da Nang, Vietnam. During the initial inception phase of this evaluation, participation in the Structured Dialogue afforded the evaluation team the opportunity to meet and engage with 31 individuals directly, including high-level stakeholders. The evaluation team facilitated an FGD with 50 participants (which was primarily composed of NDAs, but also included several DPs and two Board Members) and had brief exchanges with other stakeholders. Discussions in Da Nang notably included one Board Member and one RA, both from Asia. Additionally, 4 RAs responded to a series of emails to inform the overall sampling of countries for this assignment.

Subsequent to inception meeting interviews and FGDs, Senior Consultant Dr. Christopher Gerrard undertook 12 interviews with key informants and stakeholders, either face-to-face or by phone/videoconferencing. These interviews were with relevant staff from the AF, CIF, FCPF, GIZ, UNDP, GEF, UNEP and the World Bank. These interviews have directly informed our meta-analysis and benchmarking work (discussed above) and also provided an understanding of the complementarities (where they exist) between the RPSP and the readiness activities of other agencies, funds and organizations.

The range of meetings, interviews, FGDs, and formal and informal events in which the evaluation team participated, and extensive email exchanges with diverse stakeholders, provided a good understanding of stakeholder priorities for both the RPSP overall and the current evaluation more specifically (see Appendix III for a list of stakeholders consulted). It informed the evaluation matrix designed for this evaluation (as found in Appendix II). This contributed to our understanding of the different components of the RPSP, which helped us develop a retrospective ToC and select the different sample countries for the study.

Document Review

The document review undertaken early in the assignment ensured the evaluation team was familiar with the document landscape of the GCF as relevant for the evaluation.

This review included Board decisions, reports and discussions, relevant audits and evaluations (including the Dalberg Global Development Advisors Report), readiness completion reports, readiness mid-term progress reports, readiness proposals, country programme briefs, readiness portfolio reports and readiness templates. A document guide (i.e. a structured bibliography) has been created to continually update the bibliography in real-time.

The evaluation team also worked to develop, refine and draw upon an IEU database of the GCF readiness portfolio, in preparation for a comprehensive examination of the RPSP. The database has served to inform the evaluation team's understanding of the overall readiness portfolio and to inform our country sampling. This database comprises a new and powerful tool for the current evaluation and for the IEU into the future.

Drafting the Evaluation Matrix

An evaluation matrix has been prepared as the backbone of this evaluation (see Table 4 for an abridged matrix; see Appendix II for the entire matrix). It has been based on the TOR approved by the Board for this evaluation. The matrix was further informed by inception meetings, interviews, an FGD and event

²¹ This was led by Jessica Jacob of the GCF.

participation, as well as through a preliminary document review. Finally, the draft evaluation matrix was refined through a review process among the evaluation team members.

Table 4 *Abridged evaluation matrix*

CRITERIA	KEY QUESTIONS
Relevance	What is the relevance of the RPSP?
Coherence	What is the RPSP's coherence in climate finance delivery?
Effectiveness of programme	To what extent has the RPSP been effective in delivering results, as per the activity and outcome priorities of the Programme?
Unexpected Results	Is there any evidence of unexpected results of the RPSP, both positive and negative?
Country Ownership	To what extent is the RPSP contributing to heightening country ownership of GCF projects and programmes?
Cross-Cutting Issues	To what extent has the RPSP integrated key cross-cutting issues (gender and inclusiveness, environment), as per the priorities of the GCF?
Innovativeness	To what extent is the RPSP contributing to/enabling a paradigm shift towards low-emission and climate-resilient development pathways?
Impact	What is the likelihood of sustained impact of the RPSP?
Potential for Building Scale	To what extent can RPSP activities can be scaled up in other locations within the country or replicated in other countries?
Efficiency	To what extent are RPSP <i>processes</i> efficient?

Sampling and Stakeholder Identification

The evaluation team has used a purposive sample to identify countries for field missions and to identify stakeholders to be interviewed individually and in FGDs. Each of these is discussed below.

Sampling – countries of focus

For the purposes of sampling for the current evaluation of the RPSP, the following attributes of countries were considered to create an overall purposive sample:

- (a) Disbursement levels: Countries that showed substantial disbursements for various activities;
- (b) Vulnerability: Least developed countries (LDC) and small island developing States (SIDS);
- (c) Size of countries: Large and small countries (by area);
- (d) Regional representation: Countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Pacific;
- (e) Progress along the project pipeline: Countries with differing approval dates;
- (f) Delivery partners: Readiness support implemented by different delivery partners, AEs and DAEs (international, regional and domestic); and
- (g) Readiness activities: The sampling also takes into consideration the six standard activities approved as per the latest GCF progress report on the RPSP (GCF/B.19/15/Rev.01, including Annex III) and progress along them, as discussed in an earlier section.
 1. Establishment of non-objection procedures;
 2. National stakeholders' engagement processes;
 3. DAEs' capacities (including accreditation) and pipelines;

4. Strategic frameworks, including country programmes and pipeline development;
5. Private sector engagement and mobilization; and
6. National Adaptation Planning (i.e. NAPs) and/or other adaptation planning processes.

The approach has sought to reflect the diversity of standard activities, and also diversity in progress of the standard activities.

The data presented in Table 5 are mainly based on the latest progress report on the Readiness Programme (GC/B.19/15/Rev.01). The two main criteria for inclusion in the table were that at least three of the six standard activities were approved and that some disbursement was achieved for activities 1–5 as an indicator of implementation progress.²² In three cases (Bangladesh, Kenya and Mongolia), activity 6 (i.e. preparation of a NAP) has been approved, but no disbursements have been made so far.

Table 5 contains the final list of countries for field missions, as follows: Senegal, Kenya, Namibia, Vanuatu, Haiti, Paraguay, Bangladesh and Mongolia.

In the process of selecting case studies, our main concern was to reach the highest possible degree of diversity based on a purposive sampling, rather than to achieve a statistical representativeness. As the evaluation approach is theory based, our focus is on testing assumed causal relationships. If the theory is well defined and the testing of causal links well done (i.e. with PT), the strength of the test depends on the diversity of cases. Thus, the list of countries for field missions and case studies reflects our considerations as discussed above, and reflects the confidence thereby generated in the selection.

Table 5 Overview of disbursements and profile of RPSP activities in case study countries

COUNTRY	COUNTRY CATEGORY AND REGION	DATE OF APPROVAL	APPROVED AMOUNT ('000)	TYPE OF ACTIVITIES UNDERWAY	DISBURSEMENT RATES (%)	DELIVERY PARTNER(S), ACCREDITED ENTITIES AND DIRECT ACCESS ENTITIES
Senegal	LDC, Africa	2015	300	1–2	40	CSE
		2016	600	4	0	IFC
		2017	205	3	68	CSE
		2017	30	3	99	PwC
Kenya	Africa	2015	150	1	0	Kenya National Treasury
		2015	37	3	92 (completed)	PwC
		2018	3000	6	0	FAO
Namibia	Africa	2016	391	1–5	62	EIF Namibia
		2017	300	3–4	63	EIF Namibia
Vanuatu	LDC, SIDS, Pacific	2015	300	1–2	40	GIZ
		2016	137	4	97	SPREP
		2016	370	1–2, 4	80	GGGI
Haiti	LDC, SIDS, Carib	2016	430	1–3	50	UNDP
		2017	350	1, 5	50	
Paraguay	LA	2016	300	3	0	PwC

²² Activity 6 (NAPs) has not been considered as a selection criterion because so far only three countries have first disbursements for NAPs.

COUNTRY	COUNTRY CATEGORY AND REGION	DATE OF APPROVAL	APPROVED AMOUNT ('000)	TYPE OF ACTIVITIES UNDERWAY	DISBURSEMENT RATES (%)	DELIVERY PARTNER(S), ACCREDITED ENTITIES AND DIRECT ACCESS ENTITIES
		2017	370	1–5	92	CAF
Bangladesh	Asia	2015	300	1–2	87	NRSP
		2016	37	3	96 (completed)	PwC
		2017	336	3, 0	0	GIZ
		2017	3000	6, 0	0	UNEP
Mongolia	Asia	2015	300	1–5	83	XacBank (with IFC)
		2017	350	1–4	83	
		2017	368	4	0	GGGI
		2018	2895	6	0	UNEP

Note: See list of the six approved standard activities.

Abbreviations: CSE = Centre De Suivi Ecologique; EIF = Environment Investment Fund; GGGI = Global Green Growth Institute; IFC = International Finance Corporation; NRSP = National Rural Support Programme; SPREP = Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme.

Source: Annex III of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme: progress report, doc GCF/B.19/15/Rev. 01 and the Fluxx database.

Sampling – stakeholders

The sampling methodology snapshot below (Table 6) identifies types of stakeholders, the sample size, and the data collection method(s) to be used. We intend to engage with about 156 stakeholders through interviews and FGDs, in addition to the range of stakeholders to be engaged through our online survey.²³

Table 6 Sampling methodology snapshot – stakeholders

TYPE OF STAKEHOLDER	SAMPLING SIZE AND DATA COLLECTION METHOD
GCF Board	Globally (Total of 12 – including alternates) – Interviews
RWG members	Key Programme actors (6) – Interviews
Key leadership at GCF Secretariat (in additional to RWG, from DCP, OPM, DMA, ORMC, Finance, Legal)	Key Programme actors (6) – Interviews
RAs	Key Programme actors (6) – Interviews, FGDs
NDAAs /FPs	Key Programme actors (16) (2 per country) – Interviews, survey
IAEs	Key Programme actors (6) – Interviews, survey
DAEs	Key Programme actors (16) (2 per country) – Interviews, survey
DPs (additional)	Key Programme actors (4) – Interviews, survey
Additional national-level stakeholders, including Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)	Key Programme actors (64) (8 per country) – Interviews
Additional (informed external actors; e.g. UNFCCC/COP, GEF, GIZ, WRI, CIF, MLF, AF, FCPF, UNDP)	External actors (20) – Interviews

²³ The sampling approach includes interviews undertaken during the inception and data collection and analysis phases.

Drafting and Finalizing Inception Report

The Inception Report is an important tool for the evaluation team, and thus every effort has been made to ensure that it reflects the management requirements and methodological needs of the evaluation. This has been undertaken through a three-step process that has included refining the proposed methodology and work plan, producing a Draft Inception Report and then a Final (revised) Inception Report. The Inception Report includes an evaluation matrix, which is the basis for the development of most tools for undertaking data collection. This report also outlines the plan for country visits as per our sampling approach. Overall, the Inception Report provides a comprehensive roadmap for the evaluation as a whole.

Stage 2: Data Collection and Data Management

Once the evaluation team has finalized the Inception Report, our work will shift to data collection and data management. Each of the Stage 2 components is discussed in detail below.

Preparation of Data Collection and Data Management Tools

Once the evaluation matrix is approved, as part of the inception process, the evaluation team will immediately move to the preparation of data collection tools, directly informed by the evaluation matrix. The tools will include:

- Document review protocol;
- Interview guide, adaptable to different categories of stakeholders;
- Finalization of the Process Tracing tool;
- Meta-analysis and benchmarking tool;
- An online survey; and
- Continued development of the ToC.

We will also prepare our data management system, drawing on a technical and online tool known as Dedoose.²⁴ Dedoose enables the coding of different media (interview reports, documents of all kinds, etc), so as to enable the analysis of this material in thematically specific ways and according to “descriptors” (e.g. by stakeholder type, by country, by gender).

Document Review

A thorough document review, drawing on a multiplicity of sources, has been informing every component of the methodology for this evaluation. These documents include GCF-specific programme documents, process-related documents on the RPSP specifically, a database prepared by the IEU that provides information on individual grants based on proposal properties, as well as a whole range of portfolio documentation. Such documentation will continue to inform the ongoing development of the ToC and the overall assessment being undertaken as per the evaluation matrix. As part of this review, the quality of the country and partner reports (e.g. AEs, DAEs) will be examined. Additionally, relevant external documentation will be used to inform the meta-analysis and benchmarking exercise, including documentation about readiness programmes of comparable organizations.

Interviews with Stakeholders

During this phase, the evaluation team will schedule and undertake a series of interviews with key, selected, high-level stakeholders who are well positioned to provide insights on the questions and sub-

²⁴ See <<https://www.dedoose.com/>>

questions of this assignment. It is anticipated that such key stakeholders will include the Heads and the staff of the DCP, OPM, DMA and others at the GCF Secretariat (both within and outside the RWG), as well Board Members. Additional interviews will be undertaken with some external resource persons with a good understanding of the GCF and other readiness programmes. In some cases, these interviews will be planned a priori (e.g. for the meta-analysis and benchmarking; for field missions), while for others they will be opportunistic (e.g. in the field) or the result of snowballing sampling (e.g. where key people are suggested to the evaluation team along the way).

Participation in the Direct Access Entity Workshop

During the week of 28 May to 1 June 2018, the evaluation team participated in a workshop of DAEs at GCF headquarters in Songdo, Republic of Korea. This workshop provided an opportunity for the evaluation team to engage with DAE representatives directly, through an FGD and informally. This also enabled the team to discuss with those who were operating in areas that had not been identified as field mission locations for the evaluation. Additionally, the evaluation team used this opportunity to undertake two FGDs with RAs and to interview Secretariat staff.

Field Mission to Country of Focus – Pilot Testing

Immediately following the inception phase, the evaluation team undertook one field mission to a country of focus, namely Mongolia. The purpose of this mission was to field test the evaluation matrix and the PT approach of the team. Doing so also informed the retrospective ToC analysis, as well as our approach to the remaining seven field missions and to the refinement of our proposed methodology and overall work plan.

Field Visits

Building on the first pilot country case study, the evaluation team will undertake additional field missions in seven countries of focus. The purpose of country missions is to collect detailed information enabling us to test the ToC through PT tests, and to address the range of questions in the evaluation matrix. Case studies from the eight field missions will be used as inputs for the overall assessment of the RPSP (building on careful comparisons across cases) and will also serve to inform the re-construction of the ToC and PT tests. We will ensure coverage and triangulation through engagement with a multiplicity of stakeholders in country (i.e. through interviews and FGDs). The country case studies will serve as stand-alone reports and will be included as appendices to the final report

Online Survey

The evaluation team will prepare and deploy an online survey with the aim of gathering perceptual data from stakeholders on various dimensions of the RPSP. A five-point scale Likert-style survey – including questions that make it possible for respondents to rank preferences as well as provide write-in responses – will be conducted for NDAs/FPs and DAEs. The survey will aim to assess several of the following points: extent of satisfaction with the RPSP in general/with its various activities/by region, perceptions of effectiveness in general/by activity/by region, strongest/weakest components, perceptions of value for money, and more. Space will be made available for open-ended write-in responses, which will allow for additional content analysis of responses. The survey will be delivered in English, French and Spanish.

Progress Reporting

The evaluation team will continually provide updates on progress in several ways, as outlined below. To begin with, the evaluation team is holding weekly meetings of key team members. A series of key moments in the trajectory of the evaluation have been identified for various forms of progress reporting:

- Asia Structured Dialogue: The evaluation team delivered an in-person presentation and engaged actively during the Asia Structured Dialogue in Da Nang, Vietnam, from 17 to 20 April 2018;
- DAE Event: The evaluation team made an in-person presentation and engaged actively during the DAE meeting in Songdo, South Korea, from 28 May to 1 June 2018;
- The evaluation team will be present at the B.20 Board Meeting and will engage with Board members informally about progress thus far;
- A webinar presentation about the evaluation, progress to date, emerging insights, and areas where further work is required will be undertaken during the Pacific Structured Dialogue, slated to take place from 30 July to 2 August 2018.

The purpose of these meetings and presentations is to ensure that the evaluation is socialized within the GCF community, and to ensure that the evaluation team is operationally and substantially on track.

Stage 3: Data Analysis and Reporting

The third and final stage of the evaluation comprises the analysis and synthesis of data, report writing and the delivery of a final presentation (see Table 7).

Analysis and Synthesis of Data

The evaluation team will undertake a process of data analysis and synthesis rooted in a triangulation of all sources. Trends and outliers in the data will be identified, with respect to programme activities, regional disparities, and others (e.g. using R programming language to compute statistical properties of quantitative and qualitative data). In doing so the RPSP will be situated within the wider institutional and programmatic landscape of the GCF. For qualitative data management and analysis, the evaluation team uses Dedoose. An overall analysis will be undertaken on the RPSP's relevance, coherence in climate finance delivery (within a wider landscape), effectiveness, gender sensitivity and inclusiveness, environmental sustainability, efficiency of its processes and preliminary impact. In areas of in-depth investigation (i.e. major learning needs), the analysis will include cause-and-effect PT tests.

Table 7 *Stages of reporting*

STAGE	ACTION
Factual Report – Draft	The evaluation team will draft a Factual Report for submission on 10 August 2018. The draft report will comprise the main report only (approximately 25–30 pages) and will not include recommendations. This report will be circulated within a limited group, with the purpose of ensuring that a subsequent version is free of factual errors. Internally, consolidated written feedback on the report is anticipated on 24 August 2018.
Full Report – Draft	The evaluation team will prepare a Full Report for submission on 13 August 2018. This report will comprise the main report (approximately 25–30 pages) and will include recommendations (amounting to about 3–5 pages). The report will include a scenario analysis, presenting two different scenarios of options and strategies for the RPSP moving forward. The report will include as appendices 8-10-page case studies for each of the field missions. The full report will not yet include an Executive Summary. Internally, consolidated written feedback on the report is anticipated on 24 August 2018.
Sliddeck for Socialization	The evaluation team will prepare a sliddeck of findings and recommendations by 7 September 2018. The sliddeck will be used for the purposes of presenting and discussing the draft findings and recommendations. Feedback from relevant GCF stakeholders will be provided to the evaluation team in consolidated form at two separate moments to the extent possible: 24 September, 2 November (see comment dates in the sub-sections below).

STAGE	ACTION
Full Report to the Board for Comment – Draft	Feedback from the Factual and Full reports will be integrated in an updated Full Report to the Board for Comment. This version of the report is due on 10 September, and will be circulated to the GCF Board, giving Board members an opportunity to comment on the report. This version of the report will include an Executive Summary that can be understood by non-technical readers. It will also provide recommendations that clearly articulate proposed ways forward for the Board in advancing the RPSP. The Board is expected to provide the evaluation team with consolidated, written feedback on the report by 24 September 2018.
Non-glossy Final Report	Feedback from the Board will be integrated in an updated “Non-glossy” Final report. This version of the report is due on 5 October. It will be shared with the Board and circulated appropriately within GCF circles. This will be a complete report, including the full methodology, support analyses in the form of appendices, and complete survey results.
Final Presentation	The final report (along with a PowerPoint presentation) will be presented by the evaluation team to the Board at its B.21 meeting on 23–26 October 2018. The evaluation team will make this presentation in person, facilitating a discussion to favour institutional learning. Any final additional comments will be integrated into the “Glossy” Final Report.
Glossy Final Report	Any final feedback from across the GCF will be considered by the evaluation team, and the extent and form of its integration into the Glossy Final Report will be agreed ahead of finalization. The final date for written feedback is 2 November. The evaluation team will aim to complete revisions by 22 November.

IV. WORK PLAN

The work plan for this assignment is structured in three stages:

- Stage 1: Inception and Planning
- Stage 2: Data Collection and Data Management
- Stage 3: Data Analysis and Reporting

These are mapped to the three methodological components detailed above. Thus, the work plan focuses on the flow of the assignment. It is presented in the form of a GANTT chart (Appendix I).

APPENDIX I: GANTT CHART

N°	Activity	Timeline																																			
		April				May				June					July				August				September				October				November						
		Wk 1	Wk 2	Wk 3	Wk 4	Wk 5	Wk 6	Wk 7	Wk 8	Wk 9	Wk 10	Wk 11	Wk 12	Wk 13	Wk 14	Wk 15	Wk 16	Wk 17	Wk 18	Wk 19	Wk 20	Wk 21	Wk 22	Wk 23	Wk 24	Wk 25	Wk 26	Wk 27	Wk 28	Wk 29	Wk 30	Wk 31	Wk 32	Wk 33	Wk 34	Wk 35	Wk 36
Stage 1 - Inception and Planning																																					
1,1	Inception activities: Missions to Songdo, South Korea and Vietnam	█	█	█																																	
1,2	Document Review - Stage 1	█	█	█	█	█																															
1,3	Drafting Evaluation Matrix	█	█	█	█	█																															
1,4	Sampling and Stakeholder Mapping	█	█	█	█	█																															
1,5	Retrospective Theory of Change Analysis	█	█	█	█	█																															
1,6	Draft Inception Report	█																																			
1,7	Revision and Submission of Final Inception Report	█																																			
Stage 2 - Data Collection and Data Management																																					
2,1	Preparation of Data Collection and Data Management Tool	█																																			
2,2	Document Review	█																																			
2,3	Interviews with Stakeholders	█																																			
2,4	Participation in DAE Workshop	█																																			
2,5	Field Mission to 1 Country of Focus - Pilot	█																																			
2,6	On-line Survey	█																																			
2,7	Field Visits	█																																			
2,8	Field Visit Report Writing/ Case Studies	█																																			
2,9	Meta-Analysis / Benchmarking	█																																			
2,10	Analysis and ToC Updating	█																																			
Stage 3 - Reporting																																					
3,1	Presentation to Board Members in Songdo	█																																			
3,2	Webinar to Pacific Structured Dialogue	█																																			
3,3	Development and Submission of Factual Report and Full Report - Draft	█																																			
3,4	Sliddeck for Socialization	█																																			
3,5	Full Report to the Board for Comment	█																																			
3,6	Non-glossy Final Report	█																																			
3,7	Final Presentation	█																																			
3,8	Glossy Final Report	█																																			
*	Deliverables	█																																			
	Review time (comments and feedback)																																				

APPENDIX II: EVALUATION MATRIX

The evaluation matrix forms the backbone of this evaluation, and thus draws on a variety of sources in its construction. The matrix is based on the evaluation criteria and questions as described in the TOR approved by the Board for this evaluation. “Key Questions” have been included and are aligned with the evaluation criteria. The evaluation matrix includes a series of sub-questions and indicators. Further, the various analytic approaches have been matched with the evaluation questions, as have data sources.

The matrix has been informed by inception meetings, interviews, FGDs and event participation, as well as through preliminary document review. The matrix also reflects the ToC; notably, seven of the lines in the matrix correspond with what we call “major learning needs” (highlighted in purple within the matrix).

Legend:

ToC-A = Theory of Change Analysis

PT = Process Tracing

MA/B = Meta-Analysis/Benchmarking

M = Mechanism

CS = Country Studies

D = Documents

I = Interviews

S = Survey

Db = Database Analyses

CRITERIA	KEY QUESTIONS	SUB-QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	ANALYSES	DATA SOURCES
Relevance	What is the relevance of the RPSP?	<p>How relevant is the RPSP to the GCF?</p> <p>How relevant is the RPSP to the UNFCCC?</p> <p>How relevant is the RPSP to the wider climate change adaptation and mitigation community?</p> <p>How relevant is the RPSP to DPs, NDAs, DAEs and other country-level stakeholders?</p> <p>How relevant is the RPSP to private sector needs and priorities?</p>	<p>Evidence of stakeholder perceptions of RPSP's relevance (e.g. GCF, NDAs, private sector)</p> <p>Extent of submissions for RPSP support</p> <p>Evidence of rising/shrinking demand for RPSP support over time</p> <p>Evidence that RPSP support translates into pipeline development</p>	TOC-A; MA/B; CS	D, I, S
Coherence	What is the RPSP's coherence in climate finance delivery?	<p>What is the niche of the RPSP within the wider climate change adaptation and mitigation community?</p> <p>What has been the extent and quality of coordination among development partners in helping countries respond to climate risks?</p> <p>In what ways are RPSP proposals and activities building on and complementing these other activities, etc.?</p> <p>How coherent is the RPSP with the rest of the GCF, in terms of its priorities and objectives?</p>	<p>Evidence that RPSP is situated within an overall, coherent strategic country programme to climate change adaptation and mitigation by NDAs/FPs</p> <p>Evidence that NDAs/FPs and/or country programmes also reflect awareness of and/or coordination with other readiness/climate work/strategies being used in a country</p> <p>Evidence of additionality, cooperation, complementarity, and synergies with the readiness activities of comparator organizations</p> <p>Evidence that the country programme for addressing climate change is more than just a programme for engaging with the GCF, but also a programme for engaging with other multilateral and bilateral financiers of climate finance</p>	MA/B; CS	D, I, S
Effectiveness of programme	To what extent has the RPSP been effective in delivering results, as per the activity and outcome	How have readiness grants enabled NDAs/FPs to lead effective intra-governmental coordination mechanisms, including the establishment of the no-objection procedure?	<p>Evidence that NDA identified coherence challenges (i.e. duplication, conflict, or synergy between country programme/NAP and one or more existing country policies).</p> <p>Evidence that NDA interacted with relevant experts/stakeholders about such challenges.</p>	TOC-A (Figure 10, N1), PT, CS, M	D, I, S

CRITERIA	KEY QUESTIONS	SUB-QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	ANALYSES	DATA SOURCES
	priorities of the Programme?		Evidence that win-win solutions emerged from that interaction.		
		To what extent have readiness grants enabled NDAs/ FPs to effectively engage stakeholders in consultative processes, including the preparation of coherent country programmes?	<p>Evidence that supported NDAs, AEs, and DAEs have attempted to attract relevant country stakeholders in their planning and programming processes</p> <p>Evidence that relevant stakeholders participated in such processes</p> <p>Evidence that relevant stakeholders voiced their interests in such processes</p> <p>Evidence that planning and programming processes took stock of stakeholders' interests</p> <p>Evidence that stakeholders are satisfied in their participation and willing to participate again</p>	TOC-A (Figure 10, N2), CS, PT, M	D, I, S
		How effective has readiness technical assistance been in enabling nominated candidates to achieve accreditation as DAEs?	<p>Evidence that Readiness support has contributed to establishing and upgrading accreditation</p> <p>Evidence that Readiness support has contributed to pipeline development for DAEs</p>	TOC-A (Figure 10, N3), CS,	Db, D, I, S
		How effectively has the RPSP supported information-sharing and experience-sharing events and processes contributing to the ability of countries and DAEs to engage effectively with the GCF?	<p>Evidence of information-sharing and experience-sharing events and processes targeted at relevant stakeholders in RPSP supported countries</p> <p>Evidence that such events and processes created learning opportunities for concerned stakeholders</p>	TOC-A (Figure 10, N4), CS, PT, M	Db, D, I, S

CRITERIA	KEY QUESTIONS	SUB-QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	ANALYSES	DATA SOURCES
			Evidence that concerned stakeholders learned Evidence that concerned stakeholders were able to disseminate their learning		
		How effective have readiness grants been in enabling countries to develop NAPs that build on existing country strategies and plans?	Evidence of NDA having acquired institutional capacity, know-how, and legitimacy Evidence of NDA's leadership in the process of developing strategic frameworks and country programmes Evidence of NDA's efforts at focusing strategic frameworks and country programmes on major resilience/adaptation challenges	TOC-A (Figure 11, N5), CS, PT, M	Db, D, I, S
		How effective has the RPSP been enabling NDAs/ FPs and AEs to develop concept notes and/or project proposals to access climate finance that address high-impact priorities identified in country programmes?	Evidence of supported DPs/AEs having acquired organizational capacity, know-how, and interest in GCF finance Evidence of supported DPs/AEs having contributed to developing NAPs and other adaptation planning processes Evidence that such plans and processes are in line with GCF criteria	TOC-A (Figure 12, N6), CS, PT, M	Db, D, I, S
		How effective has the RPSP been in enabling private sector engagement in country consultative processes, helping to improve the enabling environment for crowding-in private sector investments?	Evidence that supported NDAs, AEs, and DAEs have attempted to attract private sector stakeholders in their planning and programming processes Evidence that relevant private sector stakeholders responded to such attempts Evidence that such responses ended in deeper engagement	TOC-A (Figure 12, N7), CS, PT, M	Db, D, I, S
Unexpected Results	Is there any evidence of unexpected results of the		Possible, illustrative indicators Evidence of a displacement effect of the RPSP: Discouraging additional engagement with the	CS	D, I, S

CRITERIA	KEY QUESTIONS	SUB-QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	ANALYSES	DATA SOURCES
	RPSP, both positive and negative?		<p>GCF</p> <p>Extent to which there is a ToC, whether implicit or explicit, for the Programme that incorporates considerations of impact, sustainability and overall outcomes for the RPSP</p> <p>Extent to which integrity related topics are catered to in the proposals and implementation of readiness and preparatory work, at the country level</p>		
Country Ownership	To what extent is the RPSP contributing to heightening country ownership of GCF projects and programmes?	To what extent is country ownership encapsulated in the conceptual design and implementation of the RPSP?	Extent to which country ownership is defined, produced/promoted through the operationalization/ implementation of the RPSP at country level	TOC-A, CS	D, I, S
			Extent to/ways in which country ownership goes beyond a Letter of Non-Objection	TOC-A, CS	D, I, S
			Extent to which NDAs represent/coordinate the diverse stakeholders in-country	CS	D, I S
			Extent to which the capacities of NDAs have been strengthened (human, systems, procedures, etc), enabling countries to drive engagement with the GCF	TOC-A, CS	D, I, S
			Evidence that internal (e.g. linguistic – internal to RPSP) factors enable/hinder country ownership	CS	D, I
			Evidence that external (e.g. contextual, regional – external to RPSP) enable/hinder country ownership	CS	D, I

CRITERIA	KEY QUESTIONS	SUB-QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	ANALYSES	DATA SOURCES
Cross-Cutting Issues	To what extent has the RPSP integrated key cross-cutting issues, as per the priorities of the GCF?	To what extent is the RPSP advancing gender equity and inclusiveness?	<p>Evidence of alignment with the GCF gender policy</p> <p>Evidence of gender balance in representation of key representatives at stakeholder engagement events</p> <p>Evidence of alignment with international best practices on gender</p> <p>Evidence of barriers and facilitators that may support gender equity and social/economic inclusivity (including minority and vulnerable groups)</p>	TOC-A, CS	D, I, S
		To what extent is the RPSP in line with the environmental safeguards policy?	Evidence of alignment with the GCF environmental and social safeguards policy	TOC-A, CS	D, I, S
Innovativeness	To what extent is the RPSP contributing to / enabling a paradigm shift towards low-emission and climate-resilient development pathways?		<p>Evidence that the RPSP implementation processes and procedures reflect new and state-of-the-art thinking</p> <p>Evidence that climate change adaptation and mitigation has been enshrined in countries' political agendas, legislation and policies</p> <p>Evidence of improved access of countries to climate finance</p> <p>Evidence that the private sector has been mobilized and stays involved</p> <p>Evidence of paradigm shift in countries</p> <p>Evidence that RPSP fosters cross-sectoral approaches</p>	MA/B, CS	D, I, S
Impact	What is the likelihood of sustained impact of the RPSP?		<p>Evidence that RPSP enables lasting access to climate finance and promotes a paradigm shift</p> <p>Evidence that NDAs and AEs have developed RPSP requests together</p> <p>Evidence that countries have been empowered to deliver projects, as per stakeholder</p>	CS, PT	D, I, S

CRITERIA	KEY QUESTIONS	SUB-QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	ANALYSES	DATA SOURCES
			perceptions Evidence of contextually appropriate interventions with strong buy-in from diverse sectors and groups		
Potential for Building Scale	To what extent can RPSP activities can be scaled up in other locations within the country or replicated in other countries?		Extent to which approaches/good/innovative practices in one location are reproduced and adapted elsewhere Perceived potential of this being the case	TOC-A, MA/B, CS	D, I, S

Efficiency	To what extent are RPS <i>processes</i> efficient?		<p>Extent to which readiness opportunities are communicated widely to relevant stakeholders</p> <p>Evidence that the “GCF Guidebook – Accessing the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme” is providing adequate guidance for accessing Readiness support (e.g. clarity of guidance, linguistic accessibility)</p> <p>Extent to which the NDA governance model is appropriate for the effective delivery of RPS Support</p> <p>Complementarity of 4 operational divisions (DCP, DMA, PSF, OPM) in delivery of RPS</p> <p>Inclusiveness of the RWG of GCF Units (Finance, OPM, ORMC, etc.)</p> <p>Extent to which Risk Assessment is appropriately informing readiness requests</p> <p>Evidence of the timely contribution of RAs</p> <p>Evidence and significance of bottlenecks in RPS processes (e.g. legal process, grant agreement development)</p> <p>Adequacy of/changes in speed with which readiness requests are handled, throughout the process (extremes, averages, comparative 2016 and 2018, with lapse-time analysis)</p> <p>Evidence that Framework Agreements have increased efficiencies in the RPS process (e.g. legal matters)</p> <p>Extent to which the RPS has built and benefited from economies of scale stemming from developing standardized packages</p> <p>Extent to which RPS templates cover the need for country ownership, quality and timeliness</p> <p>Value of FMCA support to smaller AEs in contributing to RPS support requests</p> <p>Value of Readiness support in pre-</p>	TOC-A, MA/B, CS, PT	I, S, Db
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CRITERIA	KEY QUESTIONS	SUB-QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	ANALYSES	DATA SOURCES
			<p>accreditation period (e.g. work of PwC)</p> <p>Efficiency of the RPSP identification, review, and approval mechanisms in relation to comparator organizations</p> <p>Effect of the recent engagement of UNOPS for reviewing requests</p> <p>Extent to which the RPSP learns and adapts its processes</p> <p>Extent to which shift from 2-year to 1-year grants contributed to the timely delivery of Readiness support</p>		

APPENDIX III: LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED

NO.	NAME	POSITION	ORGANIZATION
1.	Alpha Kaloga	Regional Advisor for Africa	GCF
2.	Ariyaratne Hewage	Consultant, Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment	Sri Lanka Administrative Service
3.	Ayman Shashly	Board Member (Saudi Arabia)	GCF – Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources (Saudi Arabia)
4.	Azimuddin Bin Bahari	Board Member Alternate (Malaysia)	GCF
5.	Baatar Chuluunkhuu	Managing Officer for Climate Finance and National Communications to UNFCCC	Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Government of Mongolia
6.	Baptiste Gaydon	Operations Assistant Consultant	Division of Country Programming (DCP), GCF
7.	Binu Parthan	Asia Adviser – Readiness Programme	GCF
8.	Christopher Head	Private Sector Specialist	CIF
9.	Christopher Howe	Director Projects	IUCN
10.	Claudia Croce	GCF Coordinator	World Bank
11.	Clifford Polycarp	Deputy Director and Head of Programming,	Division of Country Programming (DCP), GCF
12.	Cristiano F. Mandra	Senior DRR Advisor	World Food Programme
13.	Cristina Dengal	Knowledge Management Officer	Adaptation Fund
14.	Dennis Mutschler	Project Director, Climate Finance Readiness Programme	GIZ
15.	Diane McFadzien	Country Dialogue Specialist	Country Programming Division, GCF
16.	Ellysar Baroudy	GCF Coordinator	FCPF
17.	Ermira Fida	Senior Programme Officer, Coordinator, GCF	Corporate Services Division, UNEP
18.	Eugina Kim	Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist & GCF Liaison	Climate Finance Team, KDB Bank (Republic of Korea)
19.	Farayi Madziwa	Readiness Programme Officer	Adaptation Fund
20.	Florence Richard	Regional Advisor for Africa	GCF
21.	Hang Thi Thanh Pham	Senior Resilience Officer, Climate Change and Resilience	FAO
22.	Helen Magata	CSO Observer in the Board	Tebtebba Foundation
23.	Hla Maung Thein	Director General	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, Government of Myanmar
24.	Ibrahim Pam	Head of Independent Integrity Unit	GCF

NO.	NAME	POSITION	ORGANIZATION
25.	Jahan Chowdhury	Country Engagement Director, NDC Partnership	NDC Partnership
26.	Jason Spensley	Senior Specialist, Project Preparation and Adaptation Planning	Country Programming Division, GCF
27.	Javier Manzanares	Deputy Executive Director	GCF
28.	Jessica Jacob	Country Dialogue Specialist	Division of Country Programming (DCP), GCF
29.	Jiwoo Choi	Head of Financial Institutions and Structured Finance	Private Sector Facility (PSF), GCF
30.	Jonathan Caldicott	Senior Financial Officer	World Bank
31.	Jonathan Duwyn	Programme Officer	UNEP
32.	Juan Chang	Forest & Land Use Officer	Division of Mitigation and Adaptation (DMA), GCF
33.	Kenneth Barden	Compliance Specialist	Office of Risk Management and Compliance (ORMC), GCF
34.	Kurt Lonsway	Vice President, Green Climate Fund Agency	Conservation International
35.	Lalanath de Silva	Head, Independent Readiness Mechanism	GCF
36.	Linus Ikpyo Hong	Portfolio Analyst	Portfolio Management Unit (PMU), GCF
37.	Margaret Kim	Head, Green Climate Fund Liaison, Office of the Director General	Global Green Growth Institute
38.	Mark Jerome	Office of Internal Audit	GCF
39.	Mohammad Fawad Hayat	Director of Climate Finance Unit	Secretary Ministry of Climate Change, Pakistan
40.	Moon Herrick	REDD+ Administrative Assistant Consultant	Division of Mitigation and Adaptation (DMA), GCF
41.	Mozaharul Alam	Regional Coordinator, Climate Change	UNEP
42.	Namsrai Tserenbat	Member of Parliament	Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Government of Mongolia
43.	Noor Ullah	Global Head of Agriculture	Acumen Pakistan
44.	Paul Horowitz	Strategic Planning Consultant to the Deputy Executive Director	GCF
45.	Pham Hoang Mai	Director General	Department of Science, Education Natural Resources and Environment, Vietnam
46.	Ralph E. H. Sims	Panel Member – Climate Change Mitigation	Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel, GEF/UNEP
47.	Rashid Bajwa	CEO	National Rural Support Programme, Pakistan

NO.	NAME	POSITION	ORGANIZATION
48.	Rasmi Hamzeh	Executive Director	Jordan Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Fund
49.	Simon Whitehouse	Fund Manager	FCPF
50.	Sohail Malik	Head of Portfolio Management	Portfolio Management Unit (PMU), GCF
51.	Stephanie Kwan	Senior Accredited Entities Specialist	Division of Country Programming (DCP), GCF
52.	Stephen Gold	Climate Finance	UNDP
53.	Steven Chung	Enterprise Risk Senior Specialist ORMC	Office of Risk Management and Compliance (ORMC), GCF
54.	Sudhir Sharma	Programme Officer, Climate Change Mitigation	Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, UNEP
55.	Sunimal Jayathunga	Director, Climate Change	Ministry of Environment, Government of Sri Lanka
56.	Sylvie Chow	Credit Risk Specialist	Office of Risk Management and Compliance (ORMC), GCF
57.	Tony van Engelen	Chief Technical Officer, Climate Fund Manager/ FMO	Climate Fund Managers
58.	William Ehlers	Coordinator for Country Relations	GEF
59.	Yewon Kim	Readiness Programme Assistant Consultant	Portfolio Management Unit (PMU), GCF
60.	Zamba Batjargal	Special Envoy of Mongolia for Climate Change	Government of Mongolia

APPENDIX IV: LIST OF DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

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APPENDIX V: THEORY OF CHANGE²⁵

Theory of Change and Theory-based Evaluation

The evaluation TOR include the development of a ToC of the RPSP. The evaluation team has been developing such a ToC through a series of successive versions during the inception phase and will continue to do so throughout the evaluation process. The development of this first submitted version is part of the inception phase.

The GCF Secretariat (and in particular the DCP and OPM) has recently done some work regarding the ToC of the RPSP. In the present version of the ToC, we strived to be consistent with these early works and build upon them, also drawing upon available RPSP documentation and strategic GCF documentation. During the inception phase and until the end of the evaluation, the ToC fundamentally remains a set of assumptions to be examined and tested.

Beyond the inception phase, the next phase is devoted to collecting, managing and subsequently analysing data. At this stage, the ToC will be tested based on a range of available data. Testing assumptions is the very principle of a Theory-based Evaluation (TBE). Subsequent versions of the ToC will include some findings from our field-based tests. The pilot country visit will increase our level of understanding and will enable us to develop an improved version of the ToC. Later on, we expect to learn much from the analysis of the additional seven country studies and to produce a yet better version of the ToC, to be included in the final report.

In comparison with previous GCF Secretariat works, our approach to developing the ToC follows some specific principles:

- Instead of a logframe-like presentation, our ToC takes the form of causal chains made of boxes and arrows. This will facilitate the use of the ToC as a support for our TBE, an approach that consists of testing causal assumptions in a systematic manner.
- At each level of change, we have established a provisional list of major external factors, which will serve as a guide for information gathering and analysis. These lists will be revised and refined in subsequent versions of the ToC.
- As far as possible, we have described the changes (boxes) in the form of observable facts, such as “who does what” or “what does change for whom”.
- Finally, all boxes are referred to as changes, not as outputs or different kinds of outcomes.

The next sections present our understanding of:

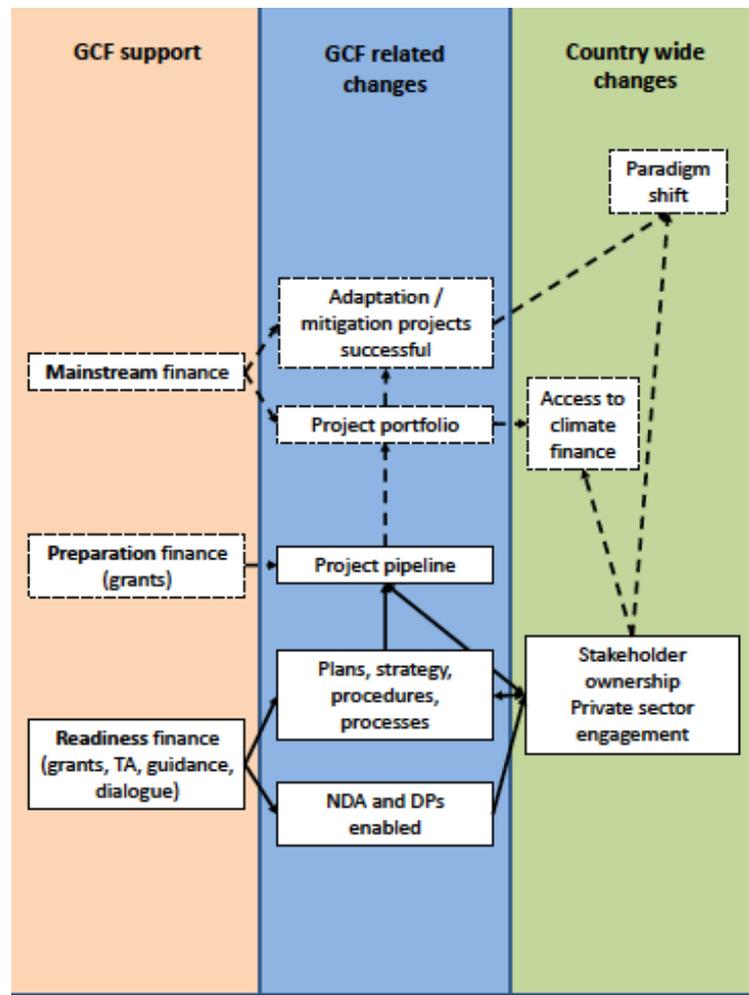
- RPSP in a broad context;
- Implementation of the RPSP; and
- ToC, including programme logic and external factors.

RPSP in a Broad Context

²⁵ This Theory of Change (ToC) has been developed during the inception phase of the evaluation and reflects the evaluation team’s understanding of the RPSP up to 27 June 2018. Feedback subsequently received by the evaluation team about the RPSP as a whole and the ToC in particular will be integrated into a revised ToC to be included in the Draft and Final Reports being prepared. Thus, as a work in progress, this ToC should be reviewed with caution, given it does not integrate some of the DCP’s latest thinking on this matter.

A ToC articulates a series of interrelated changes expected to derive from a given intervention through a series of causal chains. In Figure 7, we present GCF support in the left column (orange) and expected changes in the two other columns: GCF-related changes (blue) and country-wide changes (green). GCF provides recipient countries with three types of support: readiness, preparation and mainstream (from bottom to top). Our evaluation covers readiness only (bottom), as per the RPSP.

Figure 7 Levels of change



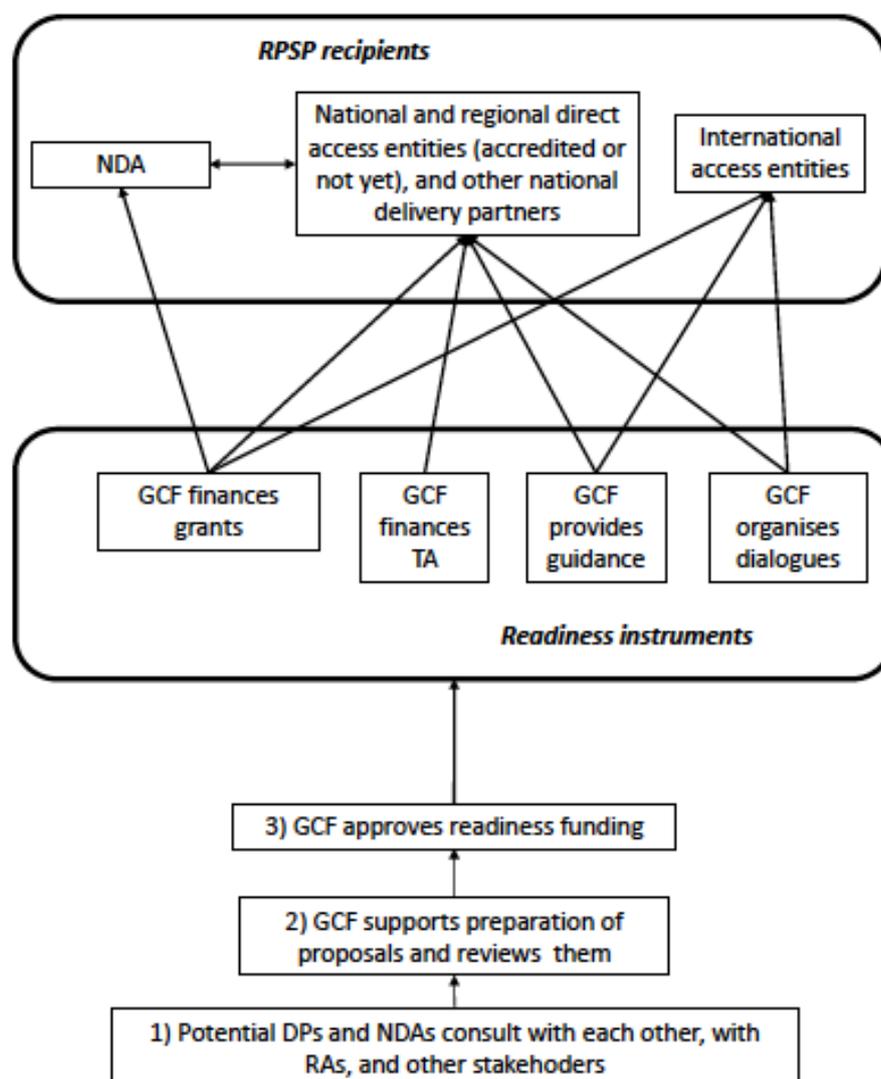
GCF finance is mainly provided in the form of grants (though it provides grants, loans, equities and guarantees). In the central column (blue), we show what grant recipients propose and aspire to achieve while submitting their proposals. To a certain extent, we could say that changes in the central column are what GCF essentially finances. In principle, what you finance with your money is not an assumption, but something that is practically invested, with risks taken, in a transactional relationship, with aspired-to effects and outcomes. However, the relationship between what is aspired to, what is invested and the final result cannot be taken for granted.

RPSP Implementation

In Figure 8, we describe the implementation of the RPSP in a simplified manner by focusing on instruments and recipients. The main instrument consists of providing recipients with financial resources, primarily in the form of readiness grants. However, grants are not just money since the process of approving grants includes early contacts, advice and reviews. Readiness activities also include guidance, technical assistance and the organization of dialogues.

In an increasing proportion, GCF implements readiness activities in an indirect manner – for example, by contracting out technical assistance to DPs or delegating reviews.

Figure 8 Programme implementation: an overview



In Table 8, we present our understanding of the recipients of Readiness support. The first line relates to the NDA/FP, which is more than just a recipient as it coordinates other recipients in the country. Other recipients are called DPs. There are four sub-categories of DPs: IAE, aDAE, nDAE, and other DPs (oDP) that do not seek accreditation. All accredited DPs may receive readiness finance and work in RPSP areas of activities after clearance by the NDA, as may some international agencies that do not seek accreditation, such as the Global Green Growth Institute or Carbon Trust.

Table 8 Recipients of readiness finance

CATEGORIES			LEVEL	MAY RECEIVE READINESS FINANCE	MAY SUBMIT READINESS PROPOSALS	MAY SUBMIT MAINSTREAM PROPOSALS
National Designated Authority (NDA)/Focal Point (FP)			National	Yes	Yes	Yes
Delivery partner (DP)	Accredited Entity	International Accredited Entity (IAE)	International	Yes	Through NDA	Yes

	Accredited Direct Access Entity (aDAE)	National, regional, sub-national	Yes	Through NDA	Yes
	Nominated Direct Access Entity (nDAE)	National, regional, sub-national	Yes	Through NDA	Yes
	Other Delivery Partner (oDP)	International/regional/national	Yes	Through NDA	Yes

The following are the six approved RPSF-funded standard activities:²⁶

1. Establishment of non-objection procedures;
2. National stakeholders engagement processes;
3. DAEs capacities (including accreditation) and pipelines;
4. Strategic frameworks, including country programmes and pipeline development;
5. Private sector engagement and mobilization; and
6. NAPs and/or other adaptation planning processes.

These reflect intended outcomes rather than readiness activities per se. Moreover, they reflect outcomes that are located at different levels of the ToC. In Table 9, we explain how the six areas of support can be retrieved in the following series of figures, which elicit the ToC.

Table 9 Areas of support and intended changes

INTENDED ACTIVITIES	FIGURE	INTENDED CHANGE PRODUCED
Establishment of non-objection procedures	Figure 10	NDA is coordinating effectively in all projects
National stakeholders engagement processes	Figure 10	Stakeholder concerns are considered and their “buy in” for future actions is achieved
DAEs capacities (including accreditation) and pipelines	Figure 10	DAEs are enabled to develop and implement efficiently and reliably projects and country ownership is increased
Strategic frameworks, including country programmes and pipeline development	Figure 12	NDA develops country programme, with assistance by the various DPs/AEs/DAEs
Private sector engagement and mobilization	Figure 12	Stakeholder involvement increases, and private sector financing and technical capacities are pulled in
National Adaptation Planning (NAPs) and/or other adaptation planning processes	Figure 11	DPs strengthen adaptation planning processes, in coordination with NDAs

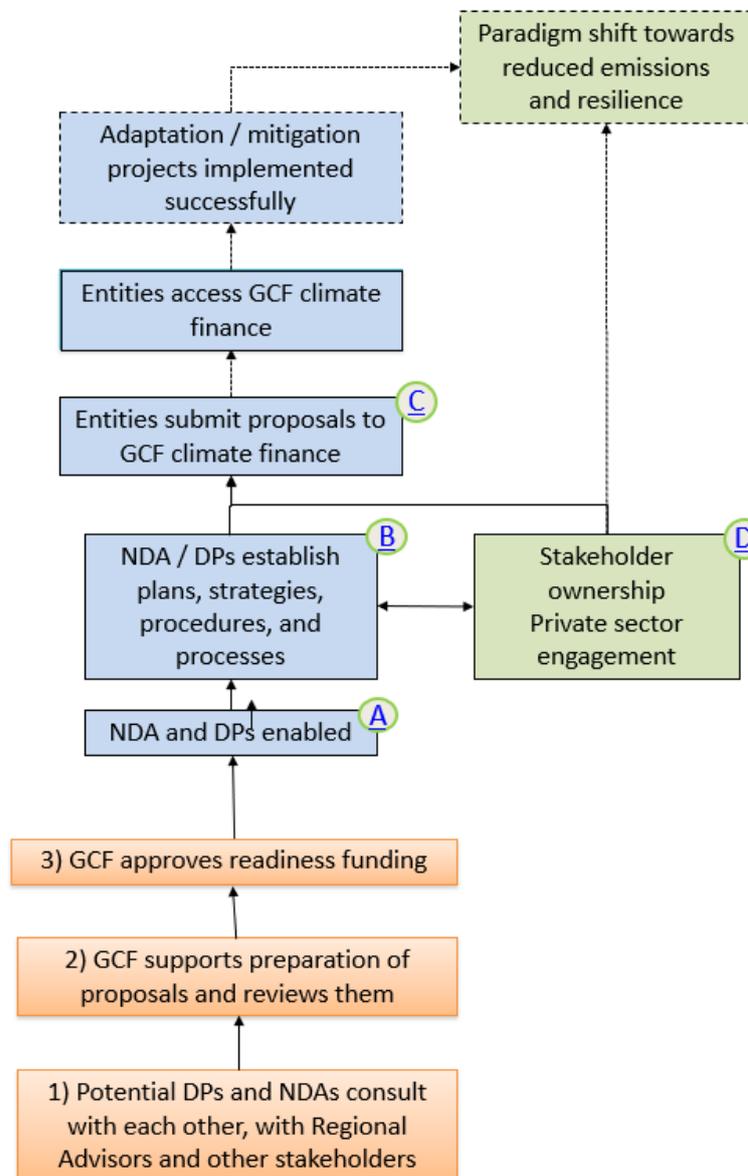
Other documents also mention support for private sector participation and for stakeholder coordination. Again, we understand that these are intended outcomes rather than activities per se, at least as far as Readiness support is considered. Moreover, we assume that these outcomes stand further along in the logical chains – that is, GCF readiness activities → enable NDA and DPs to establish mechanisms → which leads to stakeholder coordination and private sector participation.

Overview of the Theory of Change

²⁶ These are the six standard activities approved as per the RPSF: progress report, Annex III, in document GCF/B.19/15/Rev.01 of 9 February 2018.

As discussed in the main report, in Figure 9, we propose an overview of the programme logic, which summarizes the main causal chains connecting GFC readiness finance (bottom) to RPSP objectives (middle), and the overall GCF aim (top). Solid lines delineate the ToC that is being developed. Colours refer to Figure 7. As far as possible, boxes explain what is assumed to change for whom. For instance, we have translated “access to climate finance” into “Entities access GCF climate finance”.

Figure 9 Programme logic: an overview



For this first overview of the ToC, we have made a deliberate simplification effort, but the richness of the details can be retrieved in the following pages. The programme logic includes several levels of boxes and arrows (see levels A to D in Figure 9). Commonly, the intermediary boxes are known as outcomes, while the lower boxes are referred to as outputs. Since we are speaking of a “theory of change”, we understand these boxes to denote “changes”.

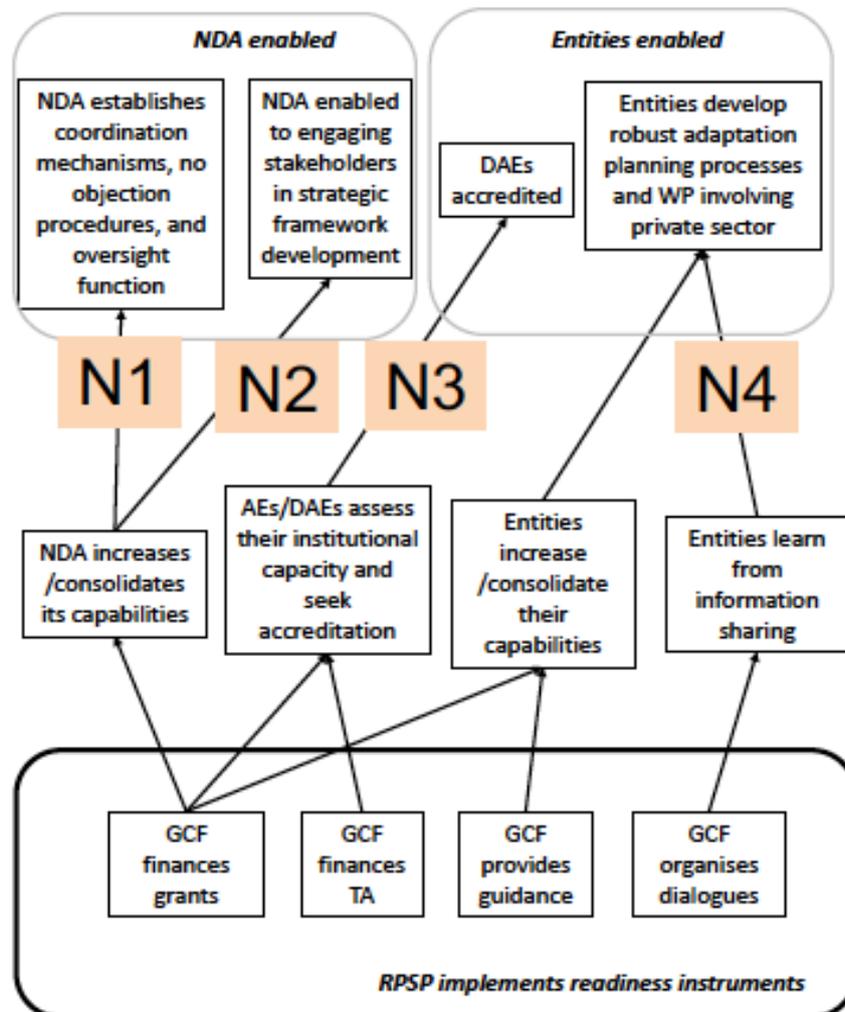
Programme logic is just one part of the ToC. Another important part relates to “external” factors – that is, other causes that are not under programme control and that may contribute to expected changes, either positively or negatively. In the vocabulary of log frames, these are called “conditions and risks”. We have started to list major external factors in the following pages. At this stage of the evaluation process, this is a tentative list, which will be finalized only in the final report.

Capacity Building (Level A)

Programme logic

Figure 10 looks like Figure 8 as regards to readiness instruments at the bottom. Boxes at the top indicate the expected changes for recipients of GCF readiness finance.

Figure 10 Changes at level A



In accordance with GCF definitions (GCF Investment Framework p.29), strong NDA and DAEs are part of strengthening country ownership.

The coloured boxes (N1 to N4) refer to a major learning need. They are part of the seven areas that we propose to investigate through an in-depth cause-and-effect analysis.

Issues of interest for the evaluation

Some parts of Figure 10 might deserve particular attention during the evaluation:

- Quality at entry of the readiness proposals and the extent to which the GCF helps entities enhance that quality
- Good diagnostic work
- Addressing critical bottlenecks
- Adaptively addressing evolving challenges

- Learning from information sharing
- Sustainability of developed capacities
- ...

GCF challenges

Several important points apply to all or part of the boxes and arrows in a transversal manner:

- Early contacts with entities
- Complementarity/synergy with Readiness support provided by other donors
- ...

External factors and alternative explanations

- Institutional/organizational (in)stability
- Key staff (un)stable
- Other readiness donors compete/cooperate
- In-country stakeholders +/- supportive/resistant
- In-country delivery partners +/- available
- Strong/weak capacity pre-existing
- Language barrier +/- difficult to manage
- ...

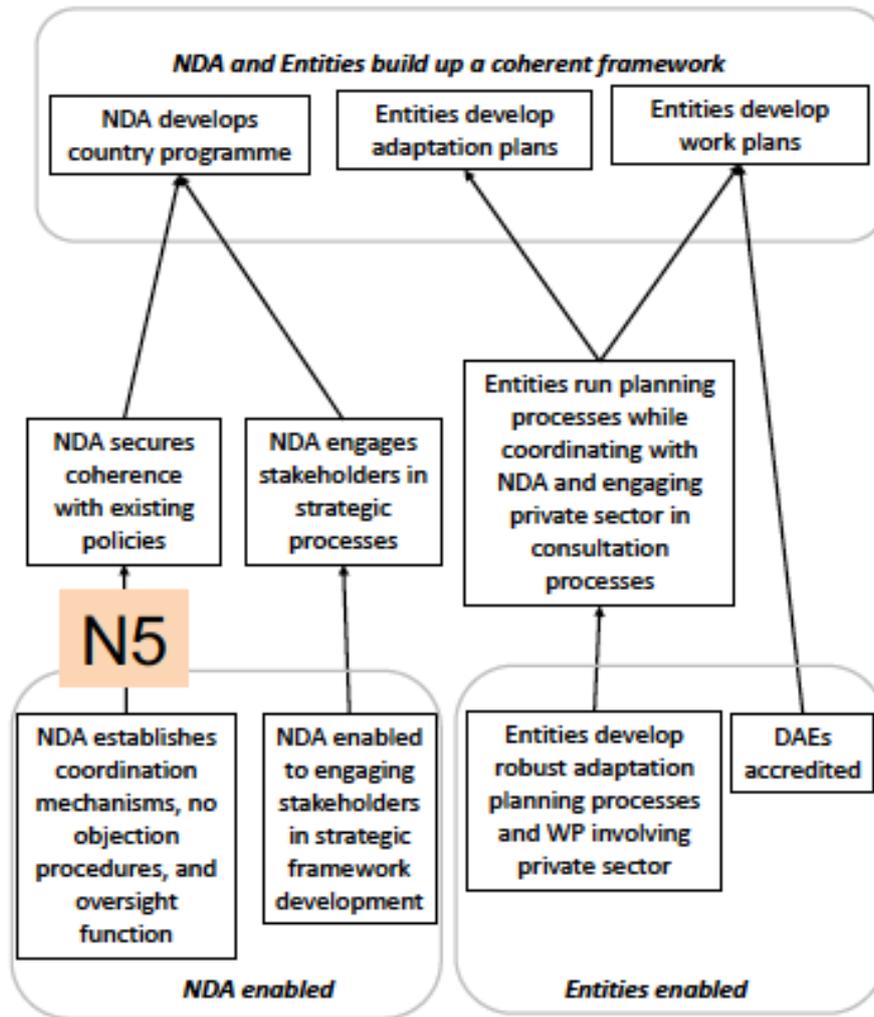
Coherent Framework (Level B)

Programme logic

In Figure 11, we highlight the expected achievements of NDAs and DPs in terms of building a coherent set of processes, procedures, plans and strategies for future adaptation/resilience investments in the country.

At this level, there are strong expectations that an NDA plays its coordinating role and succeeds in focusing on high-impact priorities and coherence with existing policies. Entities are also expected to engage the private sector in consultation processes.

Figure 11 Change at level B



In accordance with the GCF Investment Framework (p. 29), the existence of a national climate strategy (i.e. country programme) is part of “country ownership”. The same applies to coherence with existing policies and the engagement of stakeholders.

The coloured box (N5) refers to one of the seven major learning needs that we propose to investigate through an in-depth cause-and-effect analysis.

Issues of interest for the evaluation

Some parts of Figure 11 are of interest for the evaluation:

- Quality of strategy and country programme
- Quality of adaptation plans
- Coherence of strategy/country programme with existing policies
- ...

GCF challenges

Several important points apply to all or part of the boxes and arrows in a transversal manner and do not appear in the figure:

- NDA is expected to (1) engage stakeholders in discussing country programmes and (2) focus on high-impact priorities. However, the outcome of stakeholder participation tends to be a shopping list rather than a strategy.
- Country programmes and NAPs are expected to be aligned with GCF criteria.
- ...

External factors and alternative explanations

At this level we identify the following external factors:

- National resources +/- supplied
- Relevant stakeholders cooperate with +/- good will
- Good consultants +/- available
- In-country stakeholders do +/- green washing
- ...

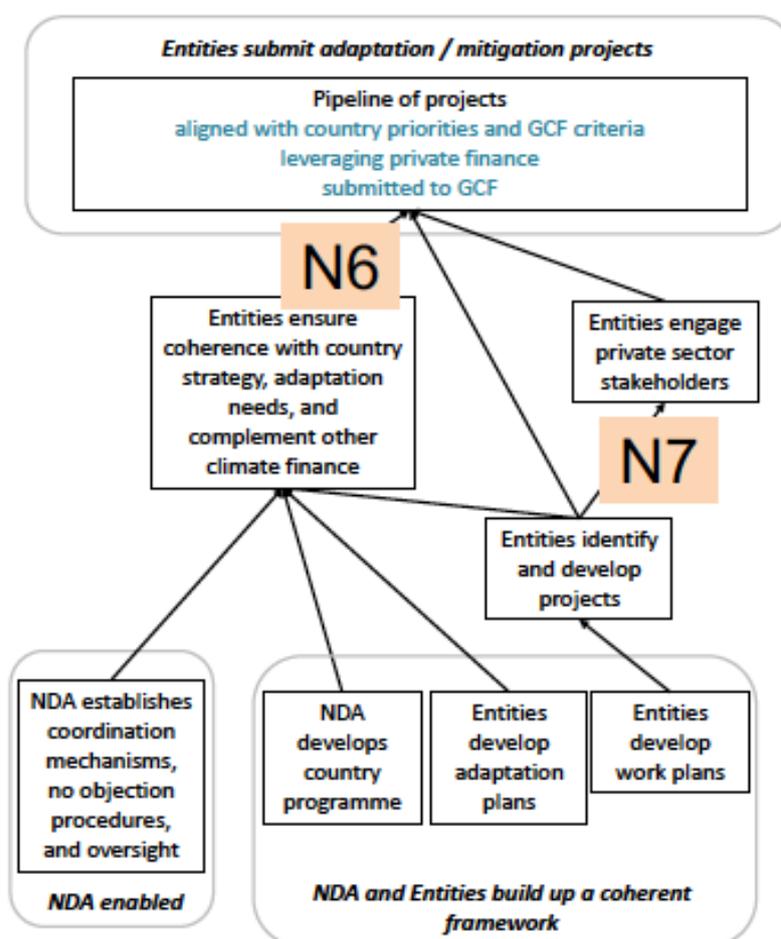
Pipeline of Project (Level C)

Programme logic

In Figure 12 we highlight the expected creation of a valuable pipeline of adaptation, resilience and mitigation projects in the country. GCF may support project development in these areas through the Project Preparation Facility (PPF), which is not part of our evaluation.

Projects are expected to target high-impact priorities, to be coherent with existing policies, to be aligned with GCF criteria, to complement other climate finance, and to attract private sector finance.

Figure 12 Change at level C



The coloured boxes (N6 and N7) refer to the areas that we propose to investigate through an in-depth cause-and-effect analysis.

Issues of interest for the evaluation

Some parts of Figure 12 are of interest for the evaluation:

- Mobilization of national experts/institutions for pipeline development
- Alignment of projects with country priorities
- Alignment of projects with GCF criteria
- Leverage of private sector finance, including from national partners
- ...

GCF challenges

Private sector involvement requires a stable economic and legal environment as well as effective and participatory coordination with stakeholders. In some countries, this might require a review of national policies.

Coordination with different international agencies can be difficult, as competing interests might sometimes be involved. Involving international agencies and consultants might be perceived as contrary to or at odds with country ownership.

External factors and alternative explanations

At this level, we must keep in mind that country project proponents may benefit from Readiness support to a larger or lesser extent or even not at all, that Readiness support may be provided by GCF or other climate finance donors, and that proponents may submit projects to GCF or other climate finance donors. Hence, project proponents may access climate finance through multiple paths, GCF finance being just one of them.

As regards the private sector we identify the following external factor:

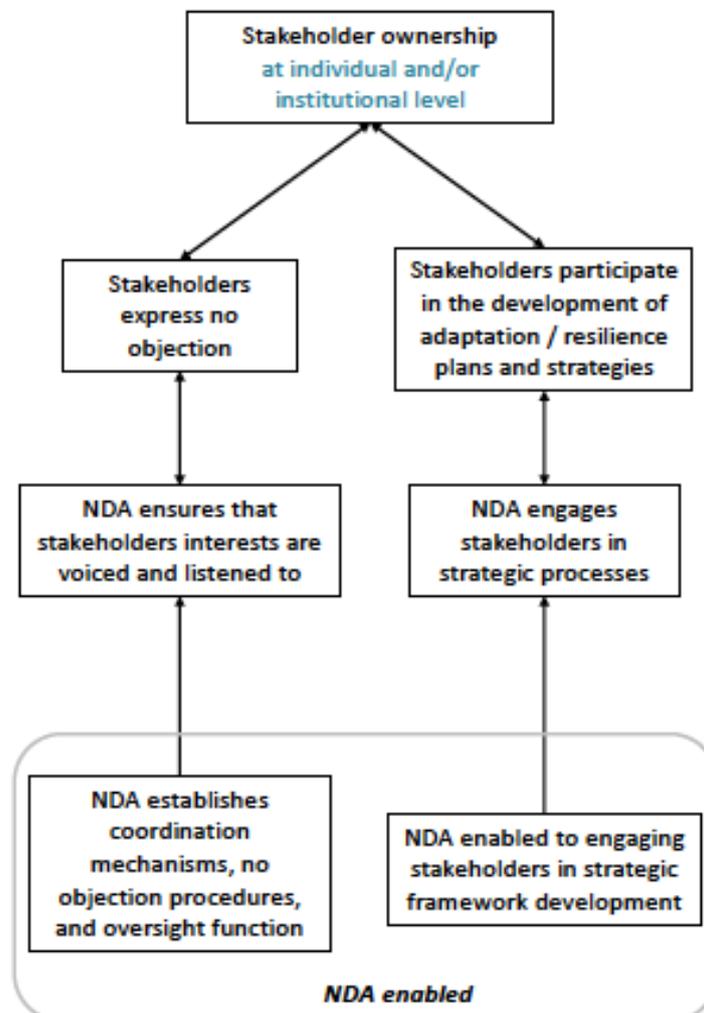
- Private sector participation depends on economic and legal environment
- ...

Country and Stakeholder Ownership (Level D)

Programme logic

Figure 13 focuses on country and stakeholder ownership as far as it is expected to derive from their participation in the development of adaptation/resilience plans and mitigation strategies, and from their participation in the no-objection procedure. The concept of country ownership includes stakeholder ownership, a strong NDA, other functional national entities, resilience and mitigation strategies, and coherence with existing policies.

Figure 13 *Change at level D*



At this level, we focus on stakeholders who participate in the development of adaptation/resilience plans and strategies, or in no-objection procedures. The circle may include institutions, organizations and individuals who are part of the following list:

- NDA/FP
- DPs, accredited or not, national or international
- Coordinating ministries/offices
- Relevant sector ministries
- Regional/local authorities
- Relevant private sector firms
- Relevant CSOs
- Consultants
- Academia
- Media
- ...

Note that the figure includes two-sided arrows. In this case, causes and effects may be mutually reinforcing or weakening over time instead of working in a linear manner.

Issues of interest for the evaluation

Stakeholder ownership is a major issue, but special attention might be paid to the following:

- Relevance of consultations and invitations to participate
- Reasons for not inviting relevant stakeholders
- Depth of participation
- Lasting ownership
- ...

GCF challenges

- Enabling NDAs to engage stakeholders in win–win participation
- Role of regional advisors
- ...

External factors and alternative explanations

At this level, we identify the following external factors:

- Stakeholders face multiple priorities, shift focus and their interest wanes
- ...

Concluding Thoughts

The development of a ToC is an important component of this evaluation, which itself is theory-based. As a result, the evaluation team has developed a draft ToC early in the process, during the inception period. This is part of the ongoing effort for its development, and for it to inform the approaches pursued

throughout this evaluation. The current version is a draft that will see its detailed development throughout the evaluation process, until a final report is formally submitted in November 2018.

APPENDIX VI: PROCESS TRACING

A Tool for Learning

One of the main purposes of this evaluation is learning. As far as outcomes are concerned, learning is in fact challenging, since causal claims are usually fragile. Process Tracing (PT) will be used to draw reliable lessons about outcomes.²⁷

In this appendix, we explain and illustrate how we will apply PT in three steps: preparation, testing (including data collection, narratives and findings) and synthesis (lessons and generalization).

Step 1 – Preparation

This step is to be taken for each of the six causal assumptions being tested – that is, in each learning area. Let us describe a causal assumption as “A→B”. In the ToC, it is displayed as two boxes (A and B) connected by an arrow.

In this appendix, we illustrate the method with the first learning area: “Extent to which NDAs’ implementation of coordination mechanisms and no-objection procedures has secured coherence with existing country policies”. In the ToC, the corresponding causal assumption is visible in Figure 10 and is called N1 (zoom in the ToC). The content of both boxes is:

- Box A: NDA establishes coordination mechanisms, no-objection procedures, and oversight function
- Box B: NDA secures coherence with existing policies

First, we need to discuss and refine the definitions of boxes A and B in a precise enough manner as to make them observable. We do that as follows:

- Box A – We need to observe the extent to which coordination mechanisms and no-objection procedures were in place. We skip the issue of oversight function, which is not a relevant causal factor in this test.
- Arrow A→B: How can we assume that the NDA secures coherence with existing policies? We understand that this happens during the process of developing the country programme and the NAP when the NDA implements coordination mechanisms and no-objection procedures. In that process, the NDA may identify coherence challenges, i.e. duplication, conflict or synergy between country programme/NAP and one or more existing country policies. Then the NDA interacts with relevant experts/stakeholders and win-win solutions emerge from that interaction.
- Box B: In line with our understanding of arrow A→B, we consider that we may observe whether the NDA has secured coherence with existing policies if one or more coherence challenges were identified and win-win solutions were developed.

Second, we need to identify the preconditions for undertaking a PT test. In the above example, these preconditions are that:

- The NDA established a coordination mechanism and no-objection procedure (whether GCF readiness finance contributed or not to building that capacity is another matter, which is not part of testing the A→B assumption); and

²⁷ See Beach and Pedersen, 2013; Bennett and George, 1997; Centre for Development Impact, 2015; Oxfam, 2013; Buseti and Dente, 2017. See references in Appendix IV.

- The NDA implemented this mechanism/procedure in the process of preparing its country programme/NAP.

Third, we will develop a list of “predicted observations” for each causal assumption. Predicted observations are a core element of PT tests. In line with the vocabulary of PT, we qualify each prediction as unique (U) or certain (C). A predicted observation is unique if the fact of being observed cannot be explained by anything other than the causal assumption under test. A predicted observation is certain if it should be observed whenever the causal assumption works. In the example of coherence with existing policies, the list of predicted observations is as follows:

- The NDA as an institution or NDA staff as individuals have identified the coherence challenge [C];
- Identification occurred during or before the process of developing the country programme/NAP – not after [C];
- The NDA has taken some specific action to interact with relevant experts/stakeholders; interaction took place within the process of developing the country programme/NAP [C];
- A new solution/option emerged at the time of the interaction [C];
- The NDA and concerned experts/stakeholders state that the new solution/option emerged through the interaction [C, U]; and
- Emerging solutions/options are specific enough to the GCF and the concerned existing policy as to show that they have not just been taken “off the shelf” [U].

Step 2.1 – Data Collection

This step is to be taken for each of the eight country visits and, as far as possible, for each of the six learning areas. While preparing the country visit and during the first contacts in the country, we will check the pre-conditions and figure out which learning areas can be investigated or not during the visit.

At the beginning of each interview/meeting in the country, we will assess whether the informant(s) have a good enough knowledge of the learning areas. For instance, the area of “coherence with existing policies” may be worth discussing with the Ministry of Energy and not with a multilateral donor organization. Interviews with relevant informants will cover up to three areas of learning with about 10 minutes per area. Altogether, areas of learning may take up to 50 per cent of the discussion time with several interviewees.

Continuing the example of coherence with existing policies (“Extent to which NDAs’ implementation of coordination mechanisms and no-objection procedures has secured coherence with existing country policies”), in this instance we would ask questions such as the following: According to you, which country policies interfere the most with the country programme/NAP? What are the main coherence challenges (duplications/conflicts/synergies) between these country policies and the country programme/NAP? Were these challenges identified/discussed during the process of developing/implementing the country programme/NAP? When, by whom, with which outcome? Which role has NDA played in that story?

Discussion will be constantly refocused with an aim to develop no more than one narrative per learning area and per interview. Using again the example of coherence with existing policies, we might develop a narrative about a projected new energy savings regulation to be passed within the next two years. Coherence could thus be an issue if some GCF-supported energy saving projects would benefit from being launched after this reform is passed.

Once a narrative has been developed, the informants will be asked to tell their own version of the story if their knowledge is sufficient. This will ensure triangulation. If a narrative is developed at the end of the country visit, a few email interactions might be necessary after the country visit to cross-check information.

Step 2.2 – Narratives

The narratives will be finalized upon the team’s return from country visits in the form of text boxes of about one third to half of a page as part of the country case study. The text will tell a story in a chronological manner, but the story should contain our understanding of the occurrence of boxes A and B and that of the predicted observations.

In our example of coherence with existing policies, the narrative might look as follows:

The NDA established its coordination and no-objection procedures in June 2016, and the latter was revised in May 2017. The NDA started to develop a country programme in January 2017. The process included two rounds of formal consultations in May and November 2017.

As early as 2016, NDA staff was aware of potential coherence challenges in relation to the country’s energy policy. Therefore, they invited the Ministry of Energy to both rounds of formal consultations, and they had several informal contacts with that Ministry in between consultations.

At the second round of consultations, the Ministry unveiled a new energy savings regulation project to be passed within the next two years. This created a coherence challenge because some of the projects foreseen in the country programme would benefit from being launched after the reform had been passed.

In recent months, the NDA has screened the contents of the country programme and strived to categorize projects into two groups: (1) projects that could be launched immediately under some conditions and (2) projects that should be delayed until the reform had been passed.

Also, in recent months, the Ministry of Energy issued a working document aimed at raising the reform in the political agenda. This working document mentioned the process of coordination in relation to climate finance.

We are not yet able to show a real-life example of a narrative prepared in the context of a PT analysis. PT is a new item in the evaluators’ toolbox, and we are not aware of any previous large-scale utilization undertaken in the same way we will use it.

Step 2.3 – Findings

Each narrative will be used for testing a causal assumption and more precisely for testing boxes A and B and the list of predicted observations. In the example of coherence with existing policies, we may look at the narrative and say that:

- NDA was strong enough for playing its coordination role;
- The NDA implemented the coordination mechanisms in such a way that the coherence challenge with an existing policy was identified in time and that a win–win solution was found;
- In this instance, the causal assumption is fully confirmed; and
- Moreover, all predicted observations are actually observed in the story; hence, the finding is highly credible.

Step 3.1 – Lessons

We expect to collect between 3 and 8 narratives per country – that is, about 40 narratives across all visited countries, and about 5 to 7 narratives in each learning area. But is that number sufficient for producing a useful and credible synthesis?

The answer is yes, because our approach is qualitative in nature. Our narratives are like very short case studies. In an ideal world with no time constraints, a qualitative research project would proceed through many successive case studies, each study testing the same assumption(s) in various contexts. The context would be as different as possible from all previous ones. Each case study would generate new learning. At some point, the marginal learning would become small and not worth the cost of an additional case study. This is known as the redundancy point. Usually, this point is reached after 5 to 10 case studies. Therefore, we consider that the number of narratives will be sufficient for drawing a synthesis for each learning area. The main limitation of our method comes from the limited time devoted to collecting data on each narrative.

In each learning area, our synthesis will involve a careful comparison between relevant narratives. Far from producing any kind of “average” picture, we will try to understand why the ToC worked better in some countries than in others. This will enable us to better understand how Readiness support produces its outcomes and hopefully learn lessons and make recommendations.

Step 3.2 – Generalization

Many evaluators are familiar with the statistical approach to generalization, which builds on observed regularities in large representative samples. Here we speak of a different approach, which is called “analytical generalization” and which relies on the concept of “mechanism”. A mechanism is more than just a causal assumption like $A \rightarrow B$. It is a substantial explanation of how A is assumed to interfere with other contextual causes so as to generate B in some circumstances and not in others. It carries a concrete and in-depth understanding of causality, and at the same time it is an abstract piece of theory and has a general value since it is supposed to remain constant in various contexts. It may be retrieved in the ToC of multiple policies or programmes at multiple levels.

In some learning areas, our synthesis might end in a causal explanation looking like a mechanism. In that case, we will make a connection with the body of knowledge that has been accumulated through other studies or evaluations about that mechanism. This will increase the general value of the lessons learned through our evaluation.

Here we show an example of a mechanism called “peer-to-peer learning”. That mechanism can be found in several policy areas, often in multilateral organizations – for example, mutual learning across EU Member States and peer-to-peer learning in MLF regional networks. It may be of interest in the case of our first learning area: “extent to which individual and collective Readiness dialogues have contributed to information-sharing, experience-sharing and learning”.

The peer-to-peer learning mechanism works as follows:

- Participants transfer/share their experience (formally and informally);
- They draw lessons from their exchanges and these lessons are new for them; and
- They accept the lessons learned and plan to implement them.

The mechanism may work or not, depending on the following factors (list not exhaustive):

- Participants have the appropriate working level (capable to learn);
- Participants have a diverse enough knowledge (nature and degree);
- Subjects vary over time;

- The moderator is good;
- Participants come prepared;
- Any language barrier is managed;
- There is spontaneity, absence of censorship and informal exchanges; and
- Participants have the capacity/legitimacy to disseminate lessons in their organization.

To the extent possible, this evaluation will generate learning about the mechanisms at play in ways that speak to the RPSP as a whole.

APPENDIX VII: READINESS ACTIVITIES

The following are indicative lists of activities to be included in the Readiness Programme.

From Annex XVI of the Eighth Meeting Report

Activity 1: Establishing and strengthening national designated authorities (NDAs) or focal points

- Strengthening institutional capacities so that the NDA or focal point can effectively fulfil its role;
- Convening stakeholders to identify appropriate NDA or focal point arrangements;
- Supporting ongoing engagement of stakeholders at national and sub-national level, including government; civil society and private sector actors;
- Engaging and holding dialogue with existing and prospective implementing entities (IEs)/intermediaries;
- Extracting lessons learned from other countries (including through exchange visits, workshops, etc.);
- Supporting the appropriate oversight of Fund activities at the country level; and
- Developing and disseminating informational and awareness-raising materials.

Activity 2: Strategic frameworks, including the preparation of country programmes

- Developing a country programme that identifies strategic priorities for engagement with the Fund, disseminating information and engaging stakeholders in the country programme; and
- Identifying strategic investment priorities and taking stock of existing strategies, policies, and needs assessments, including low-emission development strategies, Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions, National Adaptation Plans, and National Adaptation Programs of Action.

Activity 3: Selection of intermediaries or implementing entities and support for accreditation

- Raising awareness of the Fund's accreditation process, fiduciary standards and environmental and social safeguards (ESS);
- Understanding the roles of existing institutions and identifying potential IEs and intermediaries;
- Conducting an institutional gap analysis of potential applicants against the fiduciary standards and ESS;
- Developing and implementing a personalized readiness and preparatory support plan that will support applicant institutions to address identified gaps in order to comply with the fiduciary standards and ESS (may include development of new policies and procedures); and
- Enabling lesson-learning from other institutions that have been through similar accreditation processes.

Activity 4: Initial pipelines of programme and project proposals

- Identification of programmes and projects that advance national priorities and align with the results management framework of the Fund, including support for ensuring appropriate enabling investment conditions for specific projects or programmes;
- Project and/or programme preparation;

- Risk assessments including technical, institutional, operational, financial, social and environmental components; and
- Identification of programme and project level indicators aligned with the results management framework of the Fund, and support for the monitoring and evaluation of impacts.

Activity 5: Information sharing, experience exchange and learning

- Conducting regional workshops with NDAs or focal points, existing and potential IEs, civil society and other stakeholders to raise awareness of the emerging modalities of the Fund and opportunities to engage;
- Convening of stakeholders at a regional level to share lessons and experiences from their readiness activities; and
- Distilling lessons from experience of readiness programming to support practical implementation at country level and facilitating access to these knowledge products and those of other actors in the international climate finance space (e.g. through online platforms, webinars, etc.).

From Annex XVIII: Up-dated list of indicative activities eligible for Readiness and Preparatory Support

Source: *Readiness and Preparatory Support Guidebook, Version 3.0, 15 June 2017 (from Annex VII, B.13)*

Please note that these are indicative examples of activities for consideration. Countries are encouraged to formulate their activities based on their specific needs and as consistent with the objective of the GCF Readiness Programme. This list will be expanded and refined over time, based on learning and experience captured.

Establishing and strengthening national designated authorities or focal points

- Enabling NDA coordination mechanisms with AEs to identify and prioritize national priorities for country programming;
- Strengthening institutional capacities so that the NDA or focal point can effectively fulfil its role;
- Developing national arrangements for promotion, consideration and facilitation of funding proposals;
- Funding for training of NDA or focal point staff members in areas relevant to the objectives of the GCF such as project and programme development, international procurement, accounting, oversight, planning and monitoring and evaluation processes;
- Supporting the ongoing engagement of stakeholders at national and subnational levels, including government, civil society and private sector actors;
- Engaging in and holding dialogues with existing and prospective AEs;
- Extracting lessons learned from other countries (including through exchange visits, workshops, etc.);
- Supporting the appropriate oversight of GCF activities at the national level; and
- Developing and disseminating informational and awareness-raising materials.

Strategic frameworks, including the preparation of country programmes

- Developing a country programme that identifies strategic priorities for engagement with the GCF, disseminating information and engaging stakeholders in the country programme;
- Identifying strategic investment priorities and taking stock of existing strategies, policies, and needs assessments, including intended nationally determined contributions, low-emission development strategies, nationally appropriate mitigation actions, national adaptation plans, and national adaptation programmes of action;
- Identifying programmes and projects that advance national priorities and align with the results management framework of the GCF, including support for ensuring an appropriate enabling environment for projects or programmes;
- Developing tools, methods and templates to scale up successful models through programmatic approaches and across geographies;
- In the context of country programmes, formulating concept notes, drawing on intended nationally determined contributions and other climate strategies and plans;
- Activities that would crowd in private and capital market financing for the implementation of country programmes; including providing institutional support to enhance the efficiency of the procurement and tendering processes; and
- Enabling private sector participation, including by supporting the preparation of preliminary studies, tender documents or advisory services for the establishment of public-private partnerships.

Support for accreditation and accredited direct access entities

- Raising awareness of the GCF accreditation process, fiduciary standards and environmental and social safeguards (ESS);
- Understanding the roles of existing institutions and identifying potential accredited entities;
- Conducting an institutional gap analysis of potential applicants against the fiduciary standards and ESS;
- Developing and implementing a personalized readiness and preparatory support plan that will support applicant institutions to address identified gaps to comply with the fiduciary standards and ESS (may include the development of new policies and procedures);
- Enabling lesson-learning from other institutions that have been through similar accreditation processes; and
- Building the capacity of accredited direct access entities in relation to the GCF activities, in areas such as

ESS, the GCF gender policy and action plan, and monitoring and evaluation

- Formulation of national adaptation plans and/or other adaptation planning processes

Countries are encouraged to indicate specific activities of direct relevance to adaptation planning, based on national context.

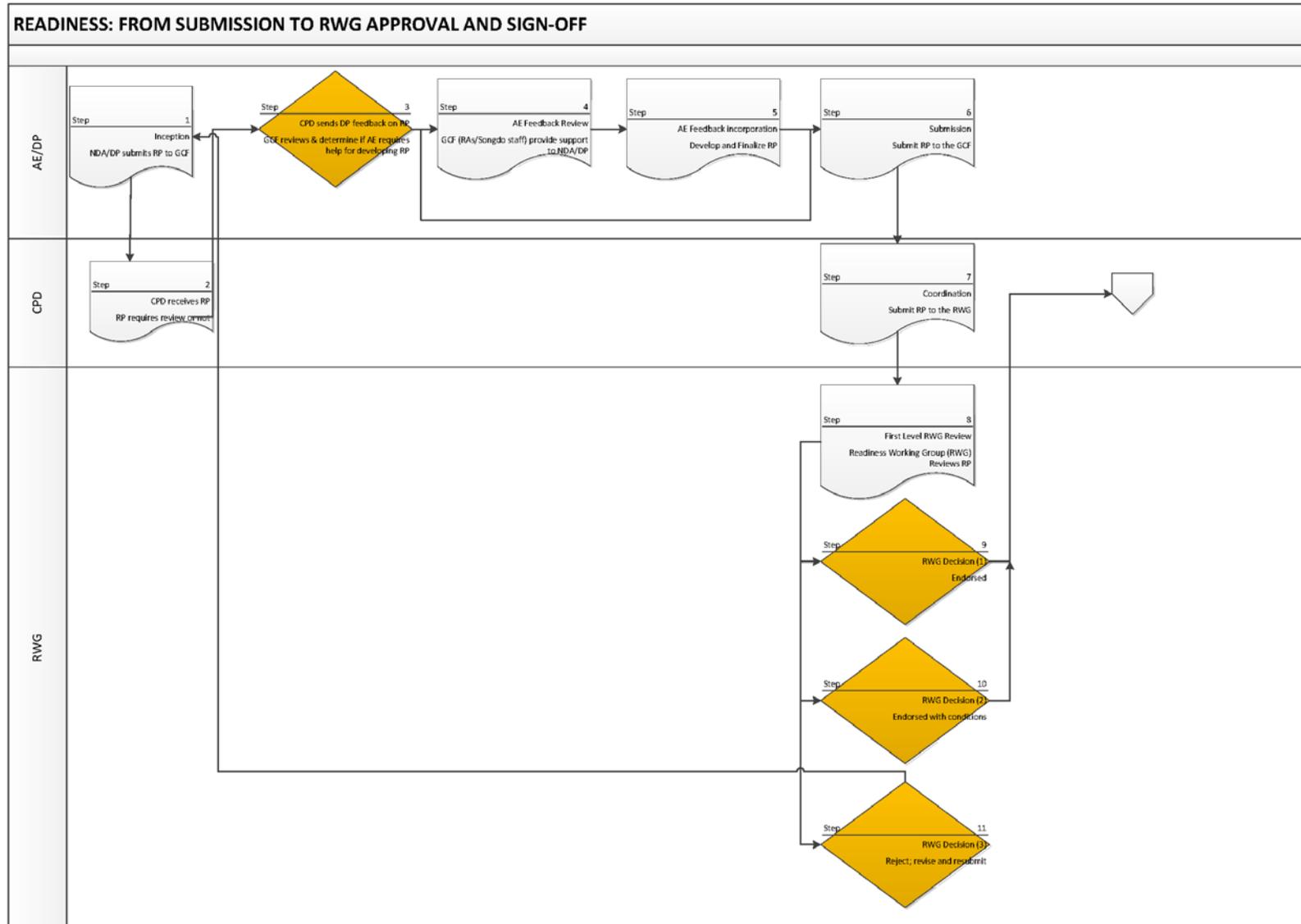
APPENDIX VIII: RPSP IMPROVEMENT MEASURES OF THE SECRETARIAT

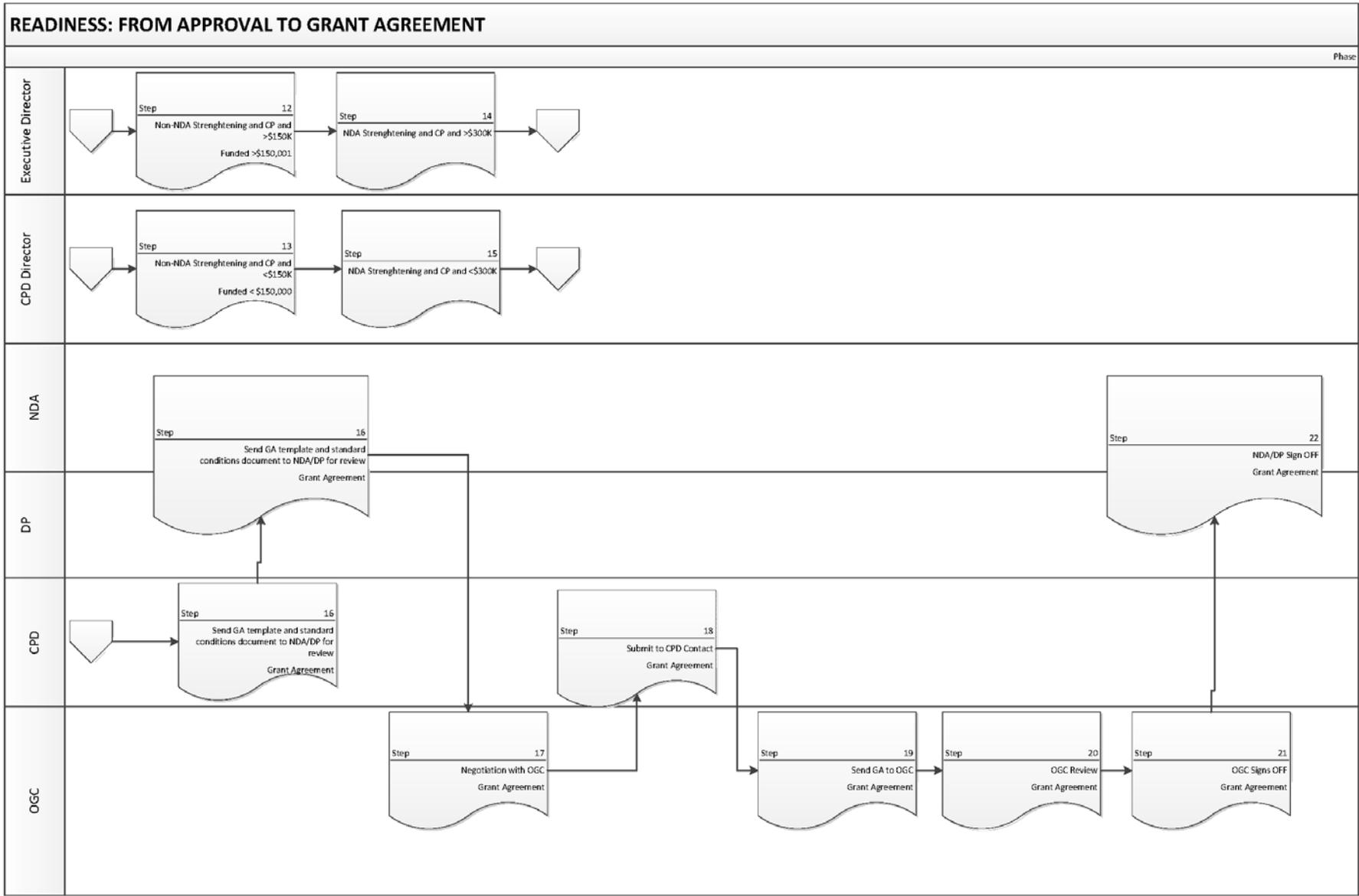
Annex XVI to Meeting Report on B.19:

List of the measures being implemented by the Secretariat to improve the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme

1. Develop a theory of change that better clarifies the outcomes and results of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme (hereinafter referred to as the Readiness Programme), in alignment with a unified vision of the Programme.
2. Assess the feasibility of potential modalities of ex ante payments with robust ex post monitoring to directly support national designated authorities (NDAs)/focal points, considering the policy and legal implications and risk mitigation measures.
3. Propose revisions and/or improvements to the Readiness Programme to address the evolving and increasingly ambitious needs of countries and entities, taking into account the outcomes of independent evaluation of the Readiness Programme.
4. Strengthen guidelines to facilitate the accessibility of countries to readiness resources. This may include:
 - (a) Improving clarity of readiness application processes (e.g. proposal review and approval criteria) and timelines;
 - (b) Evaluating options to further streamline the readiness application process;
 - (c) Sharing concrete examples of good practices;
 - (d) Further reviewing the readiness guidebook and associated templates, in alignment with any improvement proposed to the readiness framework and access modalities (e.g. updating the Readiness Programme's guidelines based on the new theory of change);
 - (e) Translating the readiness guidebook into additional languages and ensuring more consistent communications and guidelines in multiple languages, including through up-to-date video presentations in multiple languages, where feasible;
 - (f) Strengthening the capacity of the Secretariat, including regional advisors, to improve support and outreach, and to strengthen regional presence;
 - (g) Providing technical/advisory support from the Secretariat, including through more regular in-country engagement, with a view to strengthening the capacity of technical experts at the national level to support countries' delivery of appropriate readiness results;
 - (h) Considering options to formally organize regional networks of NDAs and support their operation through regionally based expertise; and
 - (i) Enhancing knowledge-sharing and placing greater emphasis on peer-to-peer learning.

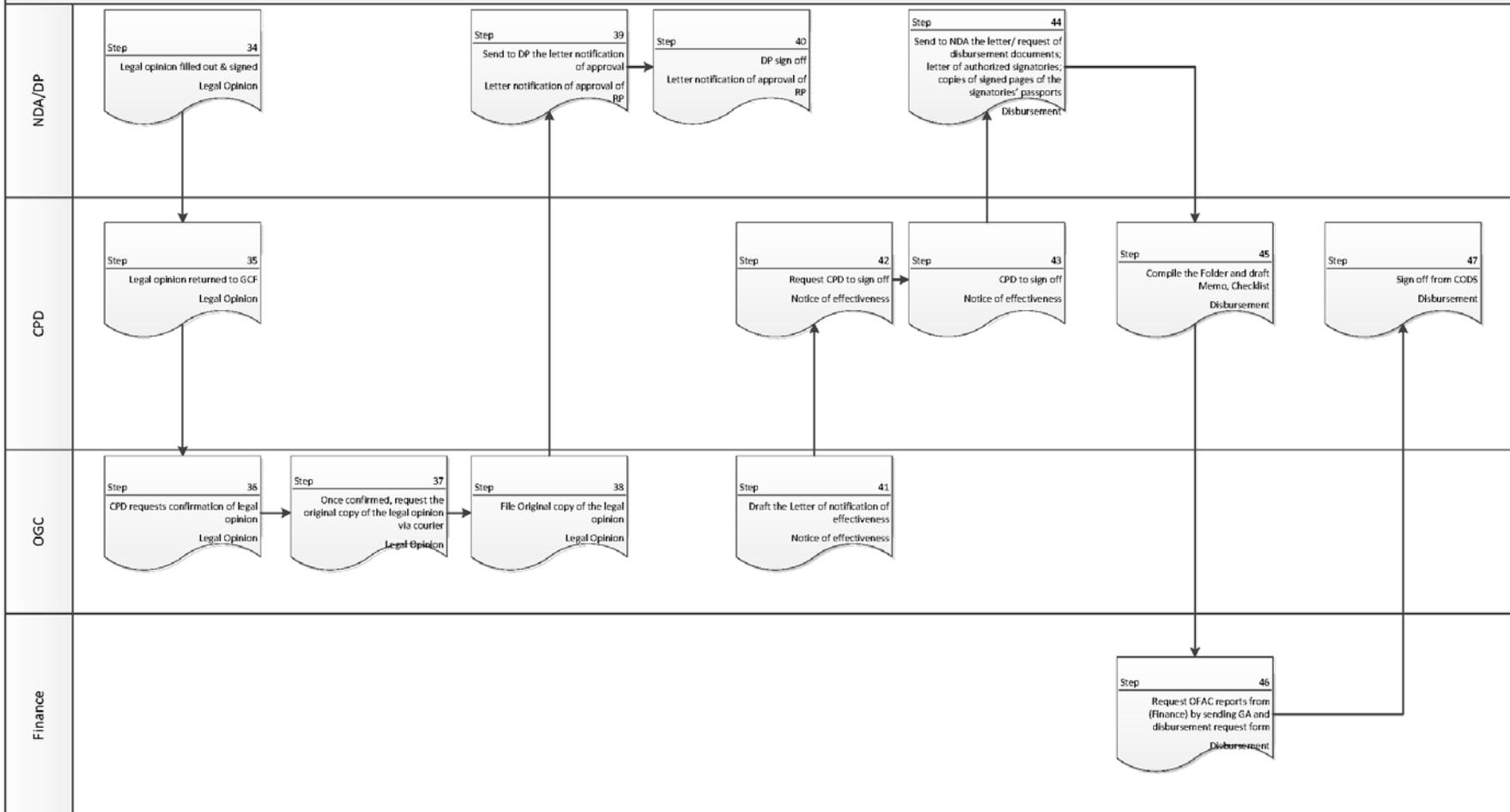
APPENDIX IX: RPSG GRANTS PROCESS MAPS (18 JULY 2017)

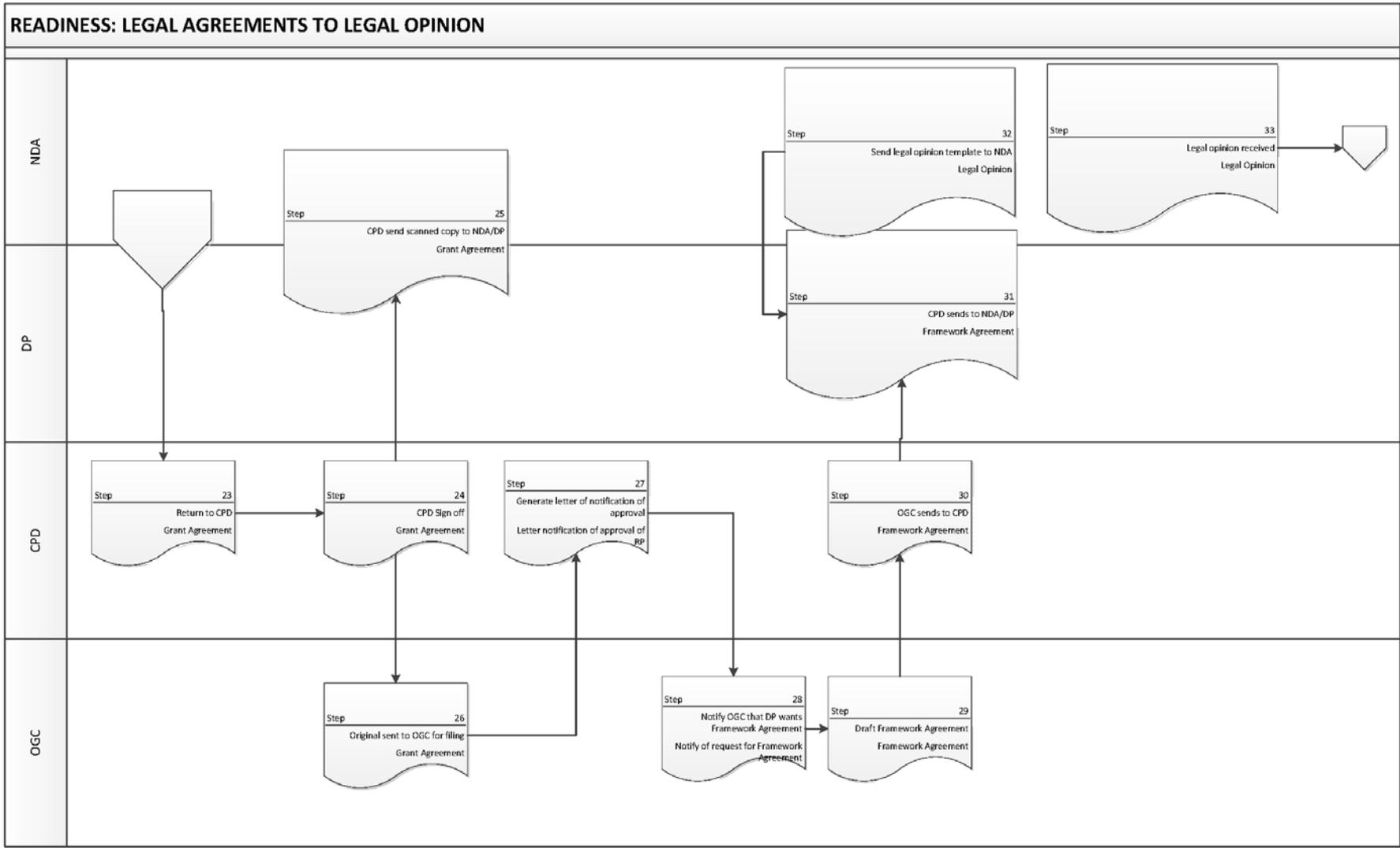


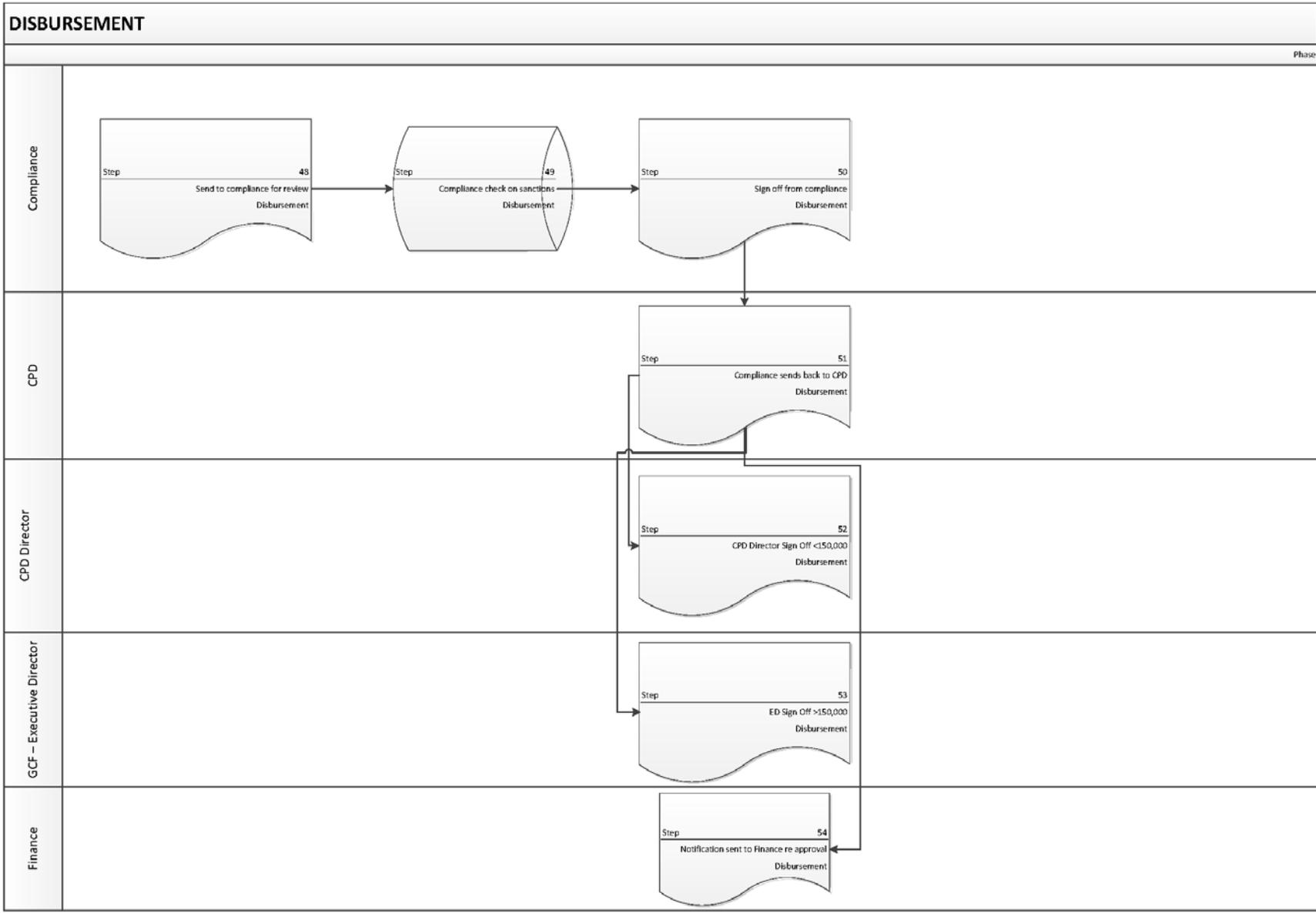


READINESS: LEGAL OPINION TO NOTICE OF EFFECTIVENESS TO DISBURSEMENT

Phase







APPENDIX X: TERMS OF REFERENCE



Meeting of the Board
26 February – 1 March 2018
Songdo, Incheon, Republic of Korea
Provisional agenda item 29

GCF/B.19/43

16 March 2018

Decisions of the Board – nineteenth meeting of the Board, 26 February – 1 March 2018

Annex XVII: Terms of Reference for the Independent Evaluation of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme

I. Aim

- (a) In July 2017, the GCF Board in decision B.17/07 requested the Independent Evaluation Unit of the GCF to undertake the independent evaluation of its Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme (RPSP).
- (b) This document lays out the terms of reference for the independent evaluation of the RPSP. This includes a brief background (Section II), evaluation objectives and criteria (Section III), and methods and timeline (Section IV) for the independent evaluation.

II. Background

- (a) The Governing Instrument of the GCF states:
 - 40. The Fund will provide resources for readiness and preparatory activities and technical assistance, such as the preparation or strengthening of low-emission development strategies or plans, NAMAs, NAPs, NAPAs and for in-country institutional strengthening, including the strengthening of capacities for country coordination and to meet fiduciary principles and standards and environmental and social safeguards, in order to enable countries to directly access the Fund.*
- (b) The objectives of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme are specified as:¹
 - (i) *Supporting the NDA or focal point in accordance with decision B.08/10, to engage with regional, national and sub-national government, civil society and private sector stakeholders with regard to the priorities of the Fund, taking a gender sensitive approach;*
 - (ii) *Developing strategic frameworks for national engagement with the Fund (including country programmes, in accordance with decision B.08/10 and decision B.07/03 (initial proposal approval process), building on existing strategies and plans, including low-emission development strategies, Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions, National Adaptation Plans, and National Adaptation Programmes of Action. Annex XVII provides initial general guidelines for the preparation of country programmes;*
 - (iii) *Enabling regional, national and sub-national institutions to meet the accreditation standards of the Fund, including for the fast-track accreditation process in coordination with the NDA or focal point; and*
 - (iv) *Supporting the development of initial pipelines of programme and project proposals, including the identification of appropriate financial instruments, that are aligned with the objectives and initial investment framework of the Fund and that will support a paradigm shift to low-emission and climate-resilient development;*
- (c) The GCF Board has emphatically reaffirmed that

¹ Decision B.08/11

...Fund-related readiness and preparatory support is a strategic priority for the Fund to enhance country ownership and access during the early stages of its operationalization, and may help countries to meet the Fund's objectives;

- (d) A Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme is being administered by the GCF to provide resources for strengthening the institutional capacities of NDAs or focal points and direct access entities to efficiently engage with the Fund. Resources may be provided in the form of grants or technical assistance. All developing countries can access the RPSP and the Fund aims for a floor of 50 per cent of readiness support allocation to particularly vulnerable countries, including least developed countries (LDCs), small island developing states (SIDS) and African States.²
- (e) The RPSP provides (i) Up to US\$ 1 million per country per year. Of this amount, NDAs or focal points may request up to US\$ 300,000 per year to help establish or strengthen a NDA or focal point to deliver on the Fund's requirements. (ii) Up to US\$ 3 million per country for formulating adaptation plans. Within these funding caps, countries may submit multiple proposals over multiple years. Multiple proposals (including for adaptation planning) may be implemented within country by delivery partners, who may or may not be direct access or international accredited entities (see Annex III for an overview of the Readiness and Preparatory Support process). Guidance to countries requires that proposals requesting readiness support must be aligned with the Fund's Environmental and Social Safeguards and its Gender Policy. All readiness funding requests need to be initiated by developing country focal points or NDAs although funding itself may be managed by the delivery partner.
- (f) The Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme has undergone several changes since it was first approved by the GCF Board. Modalities for Readiness and Preparatory support were adopted by the GCF Board at its 5th meeting. Indeed, the RPSP is a very important programme. Understanding the effectiveness, and efficiency of the programme is a strategic need for the Board as it decides upon new allocations in 2018. This evaluation will also contribute to informing the GCF's replenishment when the current replenishment period ends. Annex II presents a listing of different and relevant Board decisions relevant to the Readiness and Preparatory Support Program.
- (g) A few of these decisions are especially significant: at the 8th meeting of the Board, an indicative list of activities eligible for direct support for National Designated Authorities (NDA) was approved. This indicative list has witnessed revisions and amendments subsequently at the 13th meeting of the Board (see Annex III for a list of indicative activities). At its 10th meeting, the GCF Board affirmed that the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme is a mechanism to enhance country ownership.
- (h) The Conference of Parties (COP) has also noted the importance of the Readiness and Preparatory support programme and has requested the GCF secretariat to provide updates on several topics:
- Takes note of the progress achieved to date in the implementation of the readiness and preparatory support programme of the Green Climate Fund and stresses the importance of improving the approval process and timely disbursement of readiness resources to facilitate readiness programme implementation pursuant to Green Climate Fund Board decision B.11/04" (UNFCCC decision 7/CP.21, paragraph 17, Linked with UNFCCC decision 7/CP.20, paragraph 12)*
- (i) As of the 23rd of June 2017, a total of US\$ 80 million had been approved by the Board for the program and of this, US\$ 34.3 million had been committed with 87% of this

²The Readiness Guidelines, June 2017, Version 3.

committed for grants or technical assistance and the remaining spent on events such as structured dialogues, regional workshops and other readiness events, NDA visits and in-kind support to countries and direct access entities. US\$ 6.03 million has so far been disbursed in this program with the highest amount being approved for NDA strengthening and building country programmes.

- (j) As of May 2017, the GCF had engaged with 105 countries on 165 readiness requests. Of these nearly 60% (98) were for NDA strengthening and for advice on building country programmes and most requests are submitted from Africa, followed by the Asia Pacific. Of the approved readiness requests, 55% had entered the implementation stage.
- (k) The Readiness and Preparatory Support programme is expected to have five overall activity areas.³ These include (i) Strengthening country capacity; (ii) Engaging stakeholders in consultative processes; (iii) Realizing direct access; (iv) Providing access to finance; (v) Mobilizing the private sector.

III. Evaluation objectives and criteria

- (a) The Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme has been in implementation for approximately two years. Its portfolio is young and a considerable amount of this initial effort has been spent in formulating processes and procedures for the programme while also learning from experiences on the ground.
- (b) Recognizing this, the Independent Evaluation of the Readiness and Preparatory Support programme will be a learning-oriented assessment.

The objectives of the Independent Evaluation are to:

- (i) Assess the effectiveness of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme and assess the extent to which RPSP processes are fulfilling the intended objectives of the RPSP as contained in decision B.08/11 paragraph (i) as well as the objectives of country ownership⁴;
- (ii) Review approaches in the implementation of the Readiness and Preparatory Support programme with a view to making recommendations for improved alignment with the objectives of the RPSP; and recommend gains in effectiveness, efficiency, country ownership and sustained impact.
- (c) Since the RPSP has been changing rapidly, its different phases will be assessed during this evaluation. These phases are (i) the design and planning stage; (ii) the implementation phase; and (iii) the expected results from the programme.
- (d) The Independent Evaluation of the Readiness and Support Programme will use the evaluation criteria established by the GCF Board for the IEU.⁵ These include (relevance of) mandate; effectiveness of programme and processes; efficiency of processes; sustained impact, coherence in climate finance delivery; gender equity and inclusiveness; innovation and potential for paradigm shift; country ownership, potential for building scale and unexpected results (positive and negative).

³ The Readiness Guidebook articulates these and indicates that 'These are based on GCF Board decisions B.08/10/Annexes XII, XIII, XIV; B.08/10, Annex I; B.12/30/Annex I.'

⁴ As contained in decision B.10/10 paragraph (c) and (f) and the Guidelines for Enhanced Country Ownership and Country Drivenness decision B.17/21, annex XX

⁵ See Decision B.06/09

- (e) The evaluation will analyse these criteria customized to the RPSP. During the inception phase, questions will be parsed and sharpened. These questions will be finalized during the inception phase of this evaluation (see Section IV).
- (f) The Independent Evaluation of the RPSP will review trends with respect to constitution of the Readiness portfolio, changes in mandate, process, portfolio type, disbursement rates, processing times and implementation structures and procedures as well as impacts on final beneficiaries, country work programmes and GCF pipeline development.

IV. Methods and timeline

- (a) The Head of the Independent Evaluation Unit will be supported by an external team and a staff member to deliver this evaluation. An external team will be brought on through a procurement process following secretariat rules.
- (b) The timeline of the evaluation is divided into three phases:
 - (i) **Inception period (April 2018):** This will begin as soon as the team has been put in place. The team will parse the important questions that will be answered in the evaluation. The inception report will present the results from the initial consultations and retrospective theory of change exercise, fine-tune questions of the overall evaluation and contain protocols for the online perception survey and subsequent field visits, the protocols for process tracing and the protocols for focus groups and stakeholder conversations, organized by respondent type. The inception report will revisit the findings of the initial review, including an independent analysis by Dalberg Global Development Advisors, and also identify key stakeholders to be interviewed and will lay out the plan for country visits, and in-depth case studies for process tracing, while ensuring representativeness of the sample. It will include an explicit discussion of how case study countries were selected, which will strive to be representative of the portfolio while being cognizant of time and budget. Data from the proposals received by the secretariat will also be input into a database. A scoring scheme will also be devised and an evaluation matrix that maps questions asked of the evaluation to tools and methods of verification will be put together. Last but not least, the inception period will finalize the protocol for the portfolio analysis.
 - (ii) **Main evaluation phase (May-June 2018):** The second phase will be the main phase of the evaluation. The following activities will be undertaken: Expert interviews, Secretariat interviews, NDA interviews, delivery partner and FP interviews, interviews with Board members and alternate Board members, and with civil society organization (CSO) groups, focus group discussions as required, an online perception survey, process tracing and field visits (8-10) for identified cases and an analysis of the documentation and the readiness portfolio. Methods will be triangulated to ensure that inferences are robust. Documentation and evaluations of similar other programmes will also be reviewed for the meta-analysis and benchmarking element of this evaluation.
 - (iii) **Evaluation report (July 2018):** During the last phase of the evaluation period, a draft of the evaluation will be prepared. This will also contain a technical annex to discuss methods used for the evaluation. It will also provide recommendations for strengthening the RPSP going forward based on the findings of the evaluation. A draft will be circulated to the Executive Director and

key members of the CPD team including regional advisers. The final report of the evaluation with the technical annex will be presented to the Board.

- (c) The methods and tools for this evaluation will include:
- **A retrospective theory of change analysis** will help map the extent to which planned and actual activities are contributing to the overall vision of the Programme. It will also examine key changes during implementation and possible learning by the RPSP team. This will take place during the inception phase of the evaluation timeline.
 - **Review of key documents** including a mapping of all guidance to key criteria for the evaluation. The evaluation will review decisions from the GCF Board that are related to the RPSP including those that have implications for the RPSP (but may not be directly related to RPSP), guidelines, administrative processes, management structures and the results framework for the programme including policy documents, guidance documents, proposals, progress reports, board documents and any in-house or other assessments that may have been undertaken. The team will also review any strategy documents and the findings of the initial review of the RPSP.
 - **Key informant interviews:** Key stakeholders including experts, selected stakeholders at the GCF Board, representatives of other agencies that are doing similar work, selected country stakeholders including but not restricted to NDAs, delivery partners and focal points, members of the Readiness Working Group, members of the RPSP team and others inside and outside GCF. The readiness coordination mechanism will also be assessed. Inputs from other agencies will also be sought while considering that other agencies are also likely to have their own interests in mind while providing inputs.
 - **Focus group discussions** at key events such as scheduled structured dialogues or specific events held for accredited or to be accredited entities.
 - **Online perception survey:** The online perception survey will be directed at NDAs, focal points, delivery partners, CSOs and other stakeholders. It will seek to get an overview of the perception of the Readiness and Preparatory Support programme and will be confidential. A qualitative analysis will be undertaken of the comments in the responses and special or outlier comments will be followed up on, with follow up conversations for clarifications and explanation.
 - **Site visits and specific case studies for process tracing.** Specific countries will be identified for site visits and for process tracing specific questions that the evaluation team may want to address. Countries/cases will be chosen to ensure that there is adequate representativeness especially for stage of engagement with RPSP as well as country groups (SIDS, LDCs, Africa, others) and that each case has specific questions it will address. Site visits will also involve engagements with delivery partners (international and national) and potential delivery partners to document experiences related to effectiveness, relevance, coherence and country ownership. Since there are multiple delivery partners, this will also include a comparison of processes by different delivery partners. Since there are several challenges to making this comparison and drawing inferences, such as not having sufficient sample sizes to make robust conclusions, this comparison will be restricted to the main delivery partners. The method for selecting country case studies and delivery partners will be laid out in the inception report.
 - **Benchmarking and meta-analysis of international experiences.** Several organizations have similar programmes as the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme. These include GEF, UNDP, UNEP, GIZ, the Multilateral Fund (for the implementation of the Montreal Protocol) and others. This part of the evaluation will

collect and analyse evaluations of these programmes and engage with staff and leads of these programmes to understand key challenges and strengths.

- (d) The evaluation report will present the background, methods, timeline and present key inferences. Inferences will be made using mixed methods and will triangulate using the approaches laid above. The evaluation report will also list all documents consulted, sources of information requested and those made available, list all the people consulted and the protocols used.
- (e) The overall timeline for the evaluation is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Timeline for the Independent Evaluation of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme

Main Deliverables and Processes	Mar. '18	Apr. '18	May '18	Jun. '18	Jul. '18
Selection/contracting evaluation team	X				
Scoping field visit(s)		X			
Retrospective theory of change analysis		X			
Inception Report		X			
Presentation of progress report		X			
Stakeholder consultations/ Focus Groups/ Interviews		X	X		
Documentation review & portfolio analysis		X	X		
Perception online survey		X	X		
Meta-analysis		X	X		
Case studies/process tracing & site visits		X	X		
Quality at entry review		X			
Data analysis		X	X		
Presentation of key facts from Evaluation				X	
First draft report			X	X	
Final independent evaluation report					X

Annex XVIII: List of Indicative Activities eligible for Readiness and Preparatory Support

Source: Readiness and Preparatory Support Guidebook, Version 3.0, 15 June 2017

Indicative list of activities that can be supported by the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme

Please note that these are indicative examples of activities for consideration. Countries are encouraged to formulate their activities based on their specific needs and as consistent with the objective of the GCF Readiness Programme. This list will be expanded and refined over time, based on learning and experience captured.

Establishing and strengthening national designated authorities or focal points

- Enabling national designated authority (NDA) coordination mechanisms with accredited entities to identify and prioritize national priorities for country programming;
- Strengthening institutional capacities so that the NDA or focal point can effectively fulfill its role;
- Developing national arrangements for promotion, consideration and facilitation of funding proposals;
- Funding for training of NDA or focal point staff members in areas relevant to the objectives of the GCF such as project and programme development, international procurement, accounting, oversight, planning and monitoring and evaluation processes;
- Supporting the ongoing engagement of stakeholders at national and subnational levels, including government, civil society and private sector actors;
- Engaging in and holding dialogues with existing and prospective accredited entities;
- Extracting lessons learned from other countries (including through exchange visits, workshops, etc.);
- Supporting the appropriate oversight of GCF activities at the national level; and
- Developing and disseminating informational and awareness-raising materials.

Strategic frameworks, including the preparation of country programmes

- Developing a country programme that identifies strategic priorities for engagement with the GCF, disseminating information and engaging stakeholders in the country programme;
- Identifying strategic investment priorities and taking stock of existing strategies, policies, and needs assessments, including intended nationally determined contributions, low-emission development strategies, nationally appropriate mitigation actions, national adaptation plans, and national adaptation programmes of action;
- Identifying programmes and projects that advance national priorities and align with the results management framework of the GCF, including support for ensuring an appropriate enabling environment for projects or programmes;
- Developing tools, methods and templates to scale up successful models through programmatic approaches and across geographies;
- In the context of country programmes, formulating concept notes, drawing on intended nationally determined contributions and other climate strategies and plans;
- Activities that would crowd in private and capital market financing for the implementation of country programmes; including providing institutional support to enhance the efficiency of the procurement and tendering processes; and
- Enabling private sector participation, including by supporting the preparation of preliminary studies, tender documents or advisory services for the establishment of public-private partnerships.

Support for accreditation and accredited direct access entities

- Raising awareness of the GCF accreditation process, fiduciary standards and environmental and social safeguards (ESS);
- Understanding the roles of existing institutions and identifying potential accredited entities;
- Conducting an institutional gap analysis of potential applicants against the fiduciary standards and ESS;
- Developing and implementing a personalized readiness and preparatory support plan that will support applicant institutions to address identified gaps to comply with the fiduciary standards and ESS (may include the development of new policies and procedures);
- Enabling lesson-learning from other institutions that have been through similar accreditation processes; and
- Building the capacity of accredited direct access entities in relation to the GCF activities, in areas such as ESS, the GCF gender policy and action plan, and monitoring and evaluation.

Formulation of national adaptation plans and/or other adaptation planning processes

- Countries are encouraged to indicate specific activities of direct relevance to adaptation planning, based on national context.

Annex XIX: An overview of the process for Readiness Support

Source: Adapted from Page 5 of *Readiness and Preparatory Support Guidebook, Version 3.0*,
15 June 2017



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