



**GREEN
CLIMATE
FUND**

Meeting of the Board
17 – 20 October 2018
Manama, Bahrain
Provisional agenda item 7

GCF/B.21/Inf.09

25 September 2018

2018 Annual Report of the Independent Evaluation Unit

Summary

This 2018 Annual Report of the Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) reviews the IEU's activities and achievements for the period September 2017 to August 2018.

I. Introduction

1. This document is a report of the key activities and outcomes of the IEU over a 12-month period (September 2017 – August 2018). The objectives and key workplan activities of the IEU are presented in its annual and three-year work plan (see document GCF/B.19/07).
2. This document presents the “2018 Annual Report of the Independent Evaluation Unit” in annex I.

Annex I: 2018 Annual Report of the Independent Evaluation Unit

The 2018 Annual Report of the Independent Evaluation Unit is contained below.



GREEN
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Independent
Evaluation
Unit

MOVING AHEAD



ANNUAL REPORT

2018

TRUSTED EVIDENCE. INFORMED POLICIES. HIGH IMPACT.

INDEPENDENT EVALUATION UNIT

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GREEN CLIMATE FUND

INDEPENDENT EVALUATION UNIT

MOVING AHEAD

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

September 2017-August 2018

Independent
Evaluation
Unit



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MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF THE INDEPENDENT EVALUATION UNIT (IEU)

Dr. Jyotsna Puri (Jo)

The fundamental role that evaluation plays in the management of programmes and institutions is recognized almost universally across the international community. High-quality and timely evaluations that are trusted can help build transparent, reliable and strong institutions. At the IEU we believe we can help the GCF achieve this vision in a real and salient way. Ultimately good evaluations can help us answer simple but often elusive questions. Did GCF investments make a difference? For whom? How much? Why? Why not? What were the trade-offs? What can be done to make us faster, smarter, better?

At the GCF, answering these questions is widely recognized as an important task that the Fund's Board has set for the IEU. Overall, the IEU's activities as laid out in this annual report, including developing the GCF's evaluation policy, mean the Fund's climate change interventions will learn from past lessons and early mistakes, continually improve, and effectively deliver successful climate change adaptation and mitigation outcomes. This Annual Report summarizes the IEU's key activities in 2018 and provides a snapshot of the unit's achievements in only its first full year of operation.

I am deeply honoured to be entrusted with the opportunity to lead the IEU. Over the past year, the IEU has grown from being a two-person office to a thriving fifteen-person unit (including consultants and interns). This year, the IEU will deliver two evaluations to the Board and soon be able to showcase learning from our evidence gap-maps. Our partnerships have grown by leaps and bounds, and this is testimony to the IEU's overall reputation for high-quality work and engagement.

The IEU's success during this period would not have been possible without the support of the GCF Board and Secretariat, and many organizations and institutions it engages with on an almost daily basis. The IEU and I thank all of them and look forward to moving ahead with more productive collaborations in 2019 and beyond.

Onward and upward.



MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS OF THE GREEN CLIMATE FUND BOARD (GCF)

Paul Oquist and Lennart Båge

The IEU plays a key role within the GCF. With its overall mandate to inform decision-making by the Board and identify and disseminate lessons learned, it contributes significantly to guiding the Fund and its stakeholders as a learning institution and in providing strategic guidance. The IEU is also charged with conducting independent evaluations of the Fund's performance and results, and objectively assessing its effectiveness and efficiency. In doing so it fulfils an important aim of the GCF, while also ensuring the Fund's work is transparent to the world at large and to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in particular.

In its vision for the IEU, the GCF Board foresaw a cutting-edge institution that would help the Fund assess and measure how well the GCF manages its funding and how well it delivers on its promised outcomes. It also envisaged a unit that would help the Fund be a learning institution. The IEU's emphasis on ensuring engagement and capacity strengthening underscores this learning function and ensures that evaluations don't rest untouched in filing cabinets but are active instruments for real-time learning.

During its first year of operation, the IEU has shown its value to the Fund. Its work on evaluating the GCF's results management framework and Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme and on assessing the GCF's capability to effect transformational change, is ensuring that the GCF remains at the forefront of global investment to combat climate change. In undertaking evidence reviews and in focusing on measurement and learning the IEU is pushing the frontiers of evaluation practice.

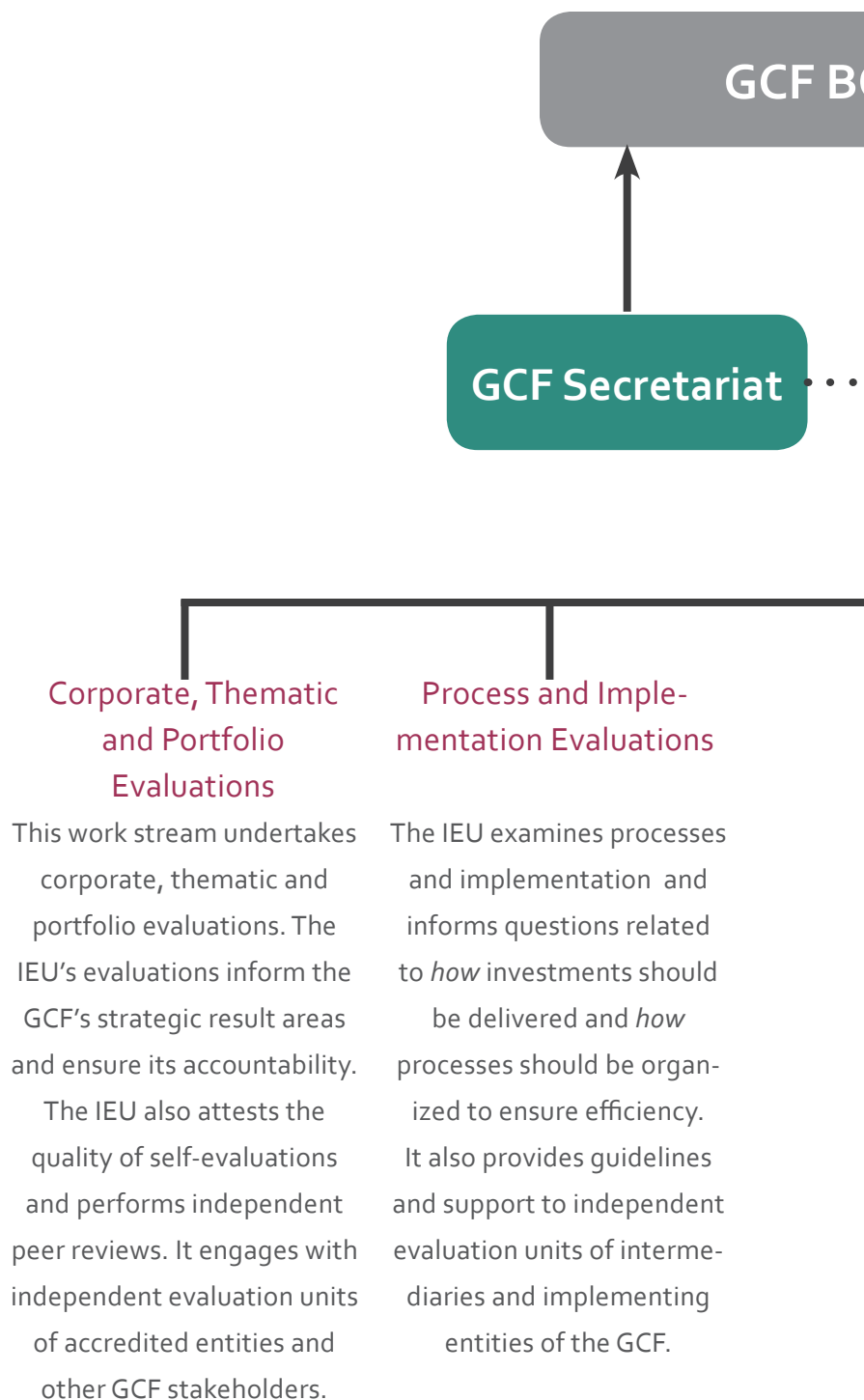
As the Fund grows, the role of evaluations will become more important. Indeed, their role in ensuring that climate action embraces communities, gender equality and social inclusion cannot be overstated. We hope the IEU will continue to push the Fund to be transparent, impactful and a learning institution. Its achievements in the short time it has been operating are impressive and bode well for the GCF's future.

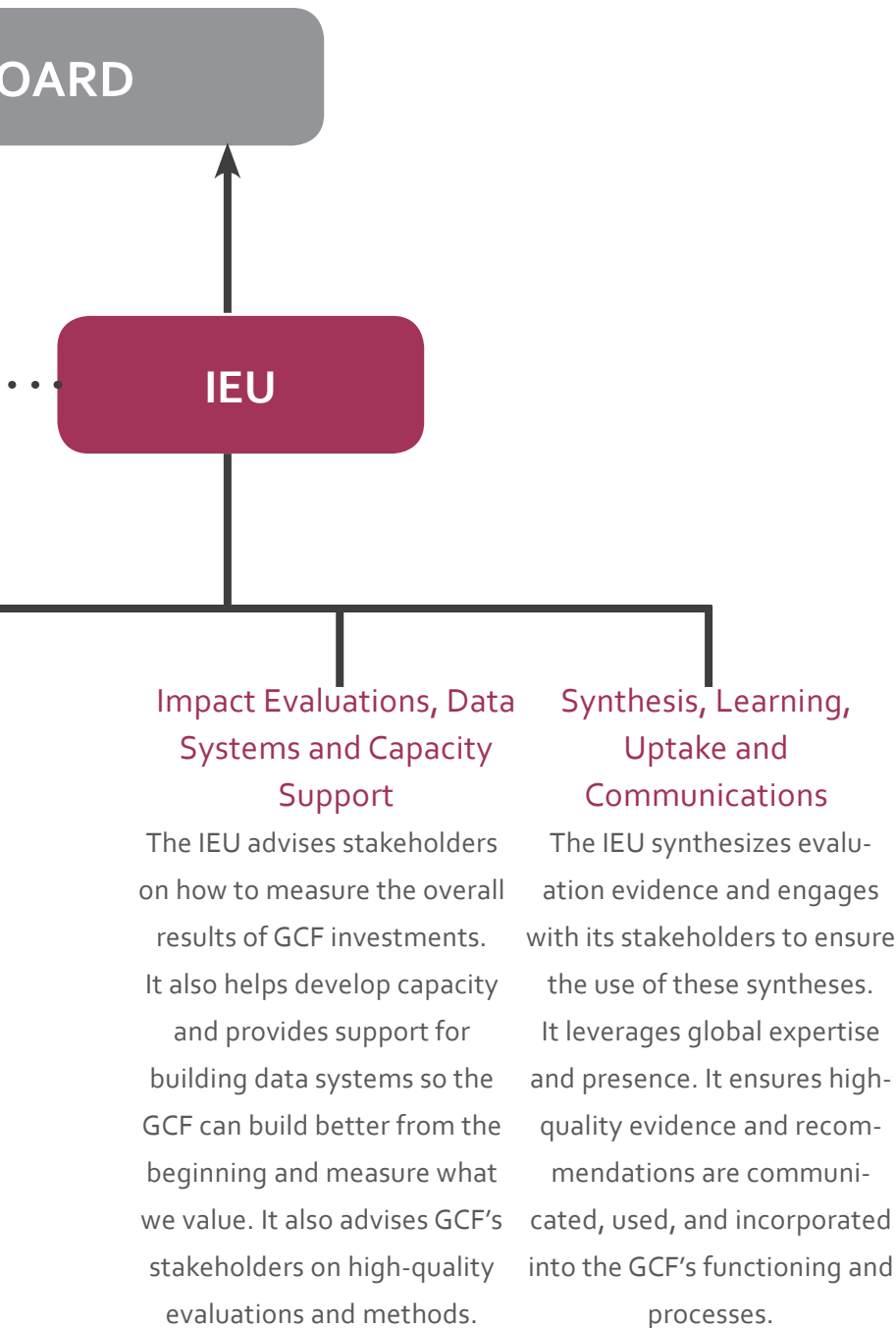
THE IEU

IEU's Objectives

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

- Inform decision-making by the Board and identify and disseminate lessons learned, contribute to guiding the Fund and its stakeholders as a learning institution, and provide strategic guidance to the Board.
- Conduct periodic independent evaluations of the Fund's performance in order to provide an objective assessment of the Fund's results and the effectiveness and efficiency of its activities.
- Provide evaluation reports to the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC for the purpose of periodically reviewing the financial mechanism of the Convention.





IEU's work streams

The IEU provides objective assessments of the performance and results of the GCF, including its funded activities and their effectiveness and efficiency. The unit's mandate is to evaluate, review and assess, and to support decision-making by the Board.

The IEU fulfils this mandate through four work streams: (i) Corporate, Thematic and Portfolio Evaluations; (ii) Process and Implementation Evaluations; (iii) Impact Evaluations, Data Systems and Capacity Support; and (iv) Synthesis, Learning, Uptake and Communications.

GOALS AND ACHIEVEMENTS





Build the IEU and complete staffing

Since its inception in March 2017, the IEU has worked intensely to ensure it is adequately staffed so it can deliver its work plan, including its overall learning and accountability objectives. Today, with a Songdo-based team of professional international staff members, experienced consultants and a group of well-qualified interns, the IEU is ensuring it is delivering high-quality, timely evaluations and learning outcomes as outlined in its 2018 workplan.

PROGRESS

In September 2017, the IEU team had two staff members and four interns. Since then, the IEU has appointed an Evaluation Advisor and two Principal Evaluation Officers. It has also hired a communications consultant, two consultants to assist with evaluation data systems and several interns.

The IEU team, in June 2018, Songdo, South Korea.





The IEU conducts a planning retreat to discuss ongoing evaluations, June 2018, Songdo, South Korea.

At the end of 2018, the IEU's Songdo-based team will total more than 12 and include an Evaluation Specialist, a Branding and Content Marketing Communications Consultant and several highly-qualified interns. The team supports the IEU's evaluations, examines and benchmarks evidence, produces approach papers, builds the IEU's databases, researches state-of-the-art methods, produces evidence reviews, supports capacity-building and develops training and communication products.

By the end of 2018, the IEU will deliver three evalu-

ation outputs: an evaluation of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme (RPSP), a review of the Results Management Framework (RMF), and the Learning-Oriented Real-Time Impact Assessment (LORTA) programme. While working on these, the IEU's staff focus continuously on internal learning and development to ensure that the IEU's work and products are state-of-the-art. The IEU regularly schedules internal learning sessions that are focused on staff and peer learning and include (fun!) discussions on important subjects related to climate change and evaluation, while learning from other disciplines.

Deliver high-quality evaluations

Independent review of the GCF's Results Management Framework (RMF)

Reviewing the RMF involved close consultations with GCF Secretariat staff and Board members, as well as consultations with national designated authorities (NDAs), civil society organizations (CSOs), and private and public sector representatives in Kenya, Rwanda, Viet Nam, the Pacific and Mongolia.

At the nineteenth meeting of the Board (B.19), the GCF Board requested the IEU to review the GCF's Results Management Framework. The mandate for this review is in the IEU's Terms of Reference, which states that "taking into account international experience, and in light of the results of its evaluations, the IEU will make recommendations to improve the Fund's performance indicators and its results management framework."

PROGRESS

The IEU's review of the RMF will be submitted to the Board at B.21. The review has been informed by country evaluation missions, interviews with key stakeholders including accredited entities (AEs), direct access entities (DAEs) and Secretariat staff; a comparison with other agencies; a review of records and documents; and an analysis of a database of GCF's projects.



An anti-flood construction project funded by the GCF and visited by the review team, July 2018, Viet Nam.



IEU's Principal Evaluation Officer Andreas Reumann and Liza Ottlakan work with Viet Nam's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, July 2018.

Independent evaluation of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme (RPSP)

Created in 2014, the RPSP is an important initiative of the GCF. The RPSP aims to enhance country ownership and access to the GCF. It is expected to help strengthen the institutional capacities of NDAs, focal points and DAEs and to help agencies efficiently engage with the Fund.

At B.19, the GCF Board requested the IEU to independently evaluate the RPSP. It requested the

evaluation to: (i) assess the effectiveness and the extent to which RPSP processes are fulfilling its intended objectives, and the objectives of country ownership, and (ii) review approaches in the implementation of the RPSP and make recommendations for improving alignment with the objectives of the programme; and recommend gains in effectiveness, efficiency, country ownership and sustained impact.



IEU's Pamela U. Juarez (2nd from right) meets with the Secretariat of the Planning for Economic and Social Development, an NDA, July 2018, Paraguay.



IEU's Evaluation Advisor Roberto La Rovere (middle) and consultant Ansgar Eussner work with NDA representatives, July 2018, Senegal.

The IEU's evaluation of RPSP is assessing how well its processes are fulfilling the GCF's intended aims and the aim of country ownership.

PROGRESS

The IEU will submit the RPSP evaluation report to the Board at B.21. Its evaluation has included a range of activities:

- A retrospective analysis of the RPSP's theory of change.
- A review of key documents.
- Key informant interviews.
- Discussions with critical focus groups.
- Analyses of specific case studies for process tracing.
- Online surveys and webinars.
- Meta-analyses and benchmarking of international experience.

Learning-Oriented Real-Time Impact Assessment (LORTA) programme

By embedding LORTA into GCF-funded activities, project and programme managers will be able to rigorously measure their outcomes. Importantly, LORTA will measure the attributable causal change resulting from GCF's investments.

At B.19, the GCF Board approved the IEU's LORTA programme to support learning and measurement within the GCF. LORTA employs state-of-the-art, rigorous, theory-based counterfactual methods to measure change and to mainstream real-time learning into the GCF's approved funding proposals. The objectives of LORTA are as follows:

- Measure the overall change of the GCF's funded projects and enhance learning.
- Understand and measure results at different points in theories of change.
- Set up data systems to measure the GCF's contribution to catalysing a paradigm shift and achieving impacts at scale.
- Embed real-time impact evaluations into funded activities so GCF programme managers can quickly access data on the quality of their implementation and likely impact.
- Build capacity in projects to design high-quality data sets for overall impact measurement.



The LORTA 'design' workshop held attracted enthusiastic participants from around the world, July 2018, Thailand.

PROGRESS

The LORTA programme has undertaken a range of activities:

- Conducted initial consultations with the Secretariat and AEs on projects suitable for impact evaluation, based on their theories of change, existing evidence and potential for scale.
- Developed an approach paper and a supplementary brief on LORTA.
- Selected the Center for Evaluation and Development (C4ED), at the University of Mannheim, to be the IEU's academic and implementing partner to roll out LORTA.
- Hosted a two-and-a-half-day 'design' workshop in July 2018 in Bangkok for shortlisted projects that included staff from AEs, NDAs, GCF project team representatives, CSOs, and the GCF Secretariat staff.

“The mix of presentations, group work, the pairing of groups within groups, having experts available at the group table and in the room, having access to various GCF people were all good!”

“Interesting to interact with teams who are about to launch projects and to have the chance to use evaluation methods”

Participant feedback at the LORTA design workshop, July 2018, Thailand.

An evaluation policy for the GCF

At B.19, the GCF Board requested the IEU to prepare an evaluation policy for the GCF. The policy will establish principles, criteria, roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders involved in the implementation of the policy and allows for activities to build evaluation capacity into the GCF's partnerships. The key principles of credibility, measurement, utility and independence are underscored in the policy with a focus on ensuring impartiality, transparency, relevance and quality.

The policy reflects best practices in the field of evaluation while also addressing content and concerns relevant to the GCF.

Two key processes for developing the GCF's policy include extensive consultations with target stakeholders and reviews of the experiences of other relevant organizations. The policy is cognizant of the GCF's unique context and also the early stage of the evolution of the organization, where learning is clearly a key objective. These attributes are all emphasized in the policy.



Rice terraces, Sapa, Viet Nam.

The GCF's evaluation policy will define key principles such as credibility, measurement, independence and utility. It will clarify the evaluation roles and responsibilities of partners involved in projects as well as the IEU's role and its functions, such as evaluating, ensuring learning and managing knowledge in useful ways.

PROGRESS

The IEU's development of an evaluation policy has included a range of activities:

- Consulting DAE representatives at the GCF Structured Dialogues in Africa and Asia and the B.20, including at two B.20 side-events that addressed policy issues.
- Organizing IEU-led webinars to ensure feedback.
- Conducting a survey of comparator organizations and their independent units including their experiences with implementing their evaluation policy.
- Consulting with the global evaluation community.
- Developing communication products including online videos to disseminate and explain key principles.
- Producing an approach paper that is also available on the IEU's website.

The evaluation policy will be submitted to the Board in 2019.



Evidence gap-maps and learning papers

In 2018, the IEU started work on three global evidence reviews and a review of complexity science-related methods. It is also currently completing a working paper that analyses the quality of the GCF's funding proposals. The IEU's work in this area demonstrates its commitment to learning, synthesizing knowledge and using state-of-the-art methods, with a view to providing strategic guidance to the GCF Board, the Secretariat and the global climate change community overall.

CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION: AN EVIDENCE GAP-MAP

In collaboration with the German Institute for Development Evaluation (DEval), the IEU is working on an evidence gap-map that examines high-quality evidence in adaptation. An approach paper lays out the scope and methods for an evidence review including its inclusion and exclusion criteria. A draft will be available at the end of 2018, and the gap-map will be published in June 2019.

FORESTRY RELATED INTERVENTIONS: AN EVIDENCE GAP-MAP

The IEU and the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) are collaborating to develop and update an evidence gap-map on forestry-related interventions. The review will take stock of global evidence on REDD+ programmes and related interventions that aim to increase forest cover with co-benefits for livelihoods, health, agricultural productivity, food security and greenhouse gas emissions.



TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE: AN EVIDENCE GAP-MAP AND SYSTEM-ATIC REVIEW

The IEU and the Learning and Evaluation Initiative of the Climate Investment Funds (CIF) are working together to map and meta-analyse multi-sector evidence on transformational change. The gap-map examines evidence that measures key attributes of transformational change, including 'large-scale change' (scale), 'big change' (depth), 'systemic change' (individual behaviour change) and 'long-lasting and sustained change'. The evidence gap-map will address such sectors as agriculture, energy, disaster risk reduction and public health. C4ED is supporting the IEU and CIF, and the final product is due in 2019. An initial IEU learning paper on this topic is published on the IEU's website.

COMPLEXITY SCIENCE AND EVALUATION FOR CLIMATE CHANGE: A LEARNING PAPER

The IEU is working with an academic from the University of Bristol to produce a learning paper on complexity science and its application to climate change and evaluation. This paper builds on existing complexity research in the IEU to examine its applicability in improving the design and evaluation of the GCF's projects and programmes. The paper will contain an overview of complexity science theories, a sectoral overview as related to complexity science theories, the implications of complexity science for project design, and the implications of complexity science for evaluation. It will be available in 2019.



Engagement, capacity-building and communications

Engagement and capacity-building

Through its active strategy on engagement and capacity-building, the IEU is leveraging important actors in the global community to ensure high-quality evaluation practice, expertise and geographic presence. Its capacity assessment work in 2018 has identified key needs regarding evalu-

ation. Key learning needs that were identified are learning about theories of change; knowing how to measure and manage investment criteria and results; developing techniques for critical appraisal; tracking implementation fidelity; and estimating cost-effectiveness.

IEU's Principal Evaluation Officer Dr. Solomon Asfaw signs an MoU between the IEU and the government of Antigua and Barbuda, July 2018, Antigua and Barbuda.



Dr. Jo Puri, Head of the IEU, signs an MoU between the IEU and the German Institute for Development Evaluation (DEval), September 2018, Germany.





The IEU uses a participatory approach in one of its workshops, May 2018, South Korea.

PROGRESS

The IEU's progress in engagement and capacity-building has included a range of activities:

- Establishing formal and informal working agreements with a large number of international development entities, key among them being partnership agreements with CIF, ICIMOD, DEval, FAO's Office of Evaluation, CIFOR, Incheon National University and Seoul National University (see Appendix 2).
- Working with GCF Secretariat staff to strengthen clauses and understanding related to evaluation and ensuring that this is reflected in its Accreditation Master Agreements.
- Providing peer review inputs to the Caribbean Development Bank's assessment of climate programming in the region and to WFP on its review of its strategy on resilience.
- Co-hosting a multi-agency learning workshop on evidence in the Forestry and REDD+ sector, together with Norad's Independent Evaluation Office, GEF's Independent Evaluation Office and UNEP's Evaluation Office.
- Co-organizing and supporting training workshops on evaluation and techniques in Kenya (organized by the International Centre for Evaluation and Development), the annual meetings of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Week, Asian Evaluation Week, CIF's Transformational Change Learning Partnership, the IDEAS annual conference on development evaluation, IFAD's Evaluation Office and UNDP's Independent Evaluation Office.
- Participating in discussions on evaluation policies and independence at Wilton Park and presenting papers at the Athens University of Economics and Business, and at the International Conference for Agricultural Economists.

Communications

The IEU's communications strategy advocates for implementing more and better evaluations, increasing global understanding of the importance of evaluating climate change activities, building the capacity of the GCF and its partners to better undertake evaluations, producing high-quality evidence, building the credibility of GCF-funded activities and enhancing global awareness of the IEU's evaluation activities.

The IEU's first learning paper.



A flyer for an IEU event.



PROGRESS

The IEU's communications have included a range of activities and outputs:

- Development of its own website (ieu.greenclimate.fund).
- A quarterly printed newsletter and an e-newsletter.
- A range of communication products such as flyers, brochures, information briefs and posters targeting dissemination at key events.
- Videos to assist stakeholders new to evaluation.
- A regularly updated blog site that features experts from around the world.
- Monthly IEU lunch talks that have become widely recognized as an opportunity to engage with experts from around the world on topics related to climate change, evaluation and methods.

The IEU's new website.





The 11th IEU Lunch Talk with Dr. David Molden, Director General of the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, April 2018, Songdo, South Korea.

Communication materials from the IEU.



APPENDICES





Appendix 1:

IEU's budget and expenditure in 2018

Category	Budget	Actual**	Commitment
Staff costs*	1,583,667	528,623	-
Consultants/Intern costs	492,200	300,591	29,400
Travel	183,000	50,985	16,655
Professional services	630,000	74,420	344,941
Other operating costs	65,000	33,334	-
Total	2,953,867	987,953	390,996

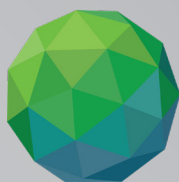
* Staff costs were approved in interim by the GCF Board in Decision GCF/B.18/16.

** Actual expenditure is calculated from January to July 2018.

Appendix 2:

IEU's partners and collaborators

Baastel	<i>The Art and Science of Management Promoting Sustainable Development</i>	INU	<i>Incheon National University</i>
C4ED	<i>Center for Evaluation and Development</i>	Norad	<i>Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation</i>
CDB	<i>Caribbean Development Bank</i>	North-western	<i>Northwestern University</i>
CIF	<i>Climate Investment Funds</i>	OED-FAO	<i>Office of Evaluation (OED)-Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations</i>
CIFOR	<i>Center for International Forestry Research</i>	SNU	<i>Seoul National University</i>
DEval	<i>German Institute for Development Evaluation</i>	UConn	<i>University of Connecticut</i>
ECG	<i>Evaluation Cooperation Group</i>	UN DESA	<i>United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs</i>
EES	<i>European Evaluation Society</i>	UNDP	<i>United Nations Development Programme</i>
GDN	<i>Global Development Network</i>	UNEG	<i>United Nations Evaluation Group</i>
GEF	<i>Global Environment Facility</i>	UNEP	<i>United Nations Environmental Programme</i>
GoA&B	<i>Government of Antigua and Barbuda</i>	UNFCCC	<i>United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change</i>
ICED	<i>International Centre for Evaluation and Development</i>	UNISDR	<i>United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction</i>
ICIMOD	<i>International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development</i>	Univer-salia	<i>Universalia Management Group</i>
IDEAS	<i>International Development Evaluation Association</i>	WB	<i>World Bank</i>
IFAD	<i>International Fund for Agricultural Development</i>	WFP	<i>World Food Programme</i>
		Yonsei	<i>Yonsei University</i>



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