



GREEN
CLIMATE
FUND

Evaluation of the Outcomes and Impact- Level Results of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme

Evaluation Report

October 2024



EVALUATION OF THE OUTCOMES AND IMPACT-LEVEL RESULTS OF THE READINESS AND PREPARATORY SUPPORT PROGRAMME

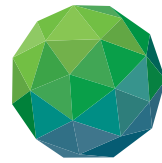
Evaluation Report

The views expressed in this information product are those of the author(s) and the GCF cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

All rights reserved
© Green Climate Fund
Published in October 2024

Green Climate Fund
Songdo Business District
175 Art Center-daero
Yeonsu-gu, Incheon 22004
Republic of Korea

+82 (0)32-458-6039
greenclimate.fund



GREEN
CLIMATE
FUND

Evaluation of the Outcomes and Impact- Level Results of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme

Evaluation Report

October 2024

PREFACE

I am pleased to present the report of the Evaluation of the Green Climate Fund's Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme. This is the first Secretariat-led evaluation, guided by the GCF Evaluation Policy. It provides the institution with an opportunity to reflect both on the Readiness Programme's relevance, effectiveness, coherence, impact, and sustainability, as well as on areas for improvement.

The Green Climate Fund's (GCF) Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme (RPSP or Readiness Programme), supports country-driven initiatives to strengthen their institutional capacities towards a transformational long-term climate action agenda. As of 31 December 2024, over \$645 million has been disbursed through 806 projects from the RPSP, covering 142 countries. Over the past decade since its inception in 2014, the Programme has supported critical country-led objectives such as capacity building, strategic framework development, national adaptation planning, pipeline development, and knowledge sharing.

The evaluation highlights that the investments made in countries through the RPSP have been instrumental in strengthening institutional capacity, developing strategic frameworks, and promoting country ownership of climate finance portfolios.

However, challenges persist, such as the need for streamlined processes, greater private sector engagement, and expanded support for building local expertise. Key recommendations include recognizing variations in countries' readiness levels, enhancing collaboration with the private sector and financial markets, providing targeted support to Direct Access Entities (DAEs), and ensuring the quality and coherence of concept notes developed through RPSP support.

This evaluation report is the result of a rigorous and collaborative effort across the GCF ecosystem. I extend my heartfelt thanks to the team from Arepo who led the evaluation. Their commitment to the delivery of a high-quality and analytically sound report is much appreciated. My gratitude also goes to the wide array of internal and external stakeholders, including colleagues in the GCF, National Designated Authorities (NDAs), Accredited Entities (AEs), Delivery Partners (DPs), and civil society representatives, whose invaluable inputs and active participation enriched the evaluation process.

This evaluation is particularly timely, as we look to the further implementation of the Readiness Programme, guided by the new Readiness Strategy adopted by the Board in 2023. It is heartening that the evaluation's major recommendations align with the new strategy. By addressing the gaps identified through this evaluation, we can ensure that the RPSP continues to empower countries to foster transformational change and mobilize climate finance effectively.

I encourage readers to engage deeply with this evaluation and its recommendations, using them as a springboard for collaboration and innovation in preparing countries 'to be ready' for more effective and sustainable climate actions.

Oscar A. Garcia

Director of Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
Green Climate Fund

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONTRIBUTORS

This evaluation report was produced by *Arepo GmbH* under the leadership, guidance, and review of the GCF Secretariat. *Arepo GmbH* was responsible for conducting the evaluation and preparing the report. The GCF Secretariat provided oversight, strategic direction, and quality assurance throughout the process.

Evaluation Team / Authors (Full Name)	GCF Secretariat (Full Name)
Christine Wörten	Oscar A. Garcia
Nora Schlagenwerth	Johann Elysee
Arne Hennig	Shahid Parwez
Melina Thomsen	Sokleang Kim
Susanne Kurowski	Elizabeth Njoki Mwangi
Karolin Kölling	Jihye Shin
Nathalie Benoit	
Alexandra Bussler	
Gisa Holzhausen	
Raban Brauner	
Paula Haerle	
Philipp Dettmer	

We also thank the peer reviewer panelists, Irene Karani, Firdaus Ara Hussain, and Aaron Zazueta for their insightful feedback and comments. We are also grateful to the local consultants, Patrick Karani, Gabriela López Sotomayor, Mutizwa Mukute, and Md. Shamsuddoha, for the nine country case studies that provided valuable input to this evaluation.

CONTENTS

Preface	III
Acknowledgement of Contributors	IV
List of acronyms	X
Executive Summary	XII
<hr/>	
1 Introduction	1
<hr/>	
1.1 The Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme	1
<hr/>	
1.2 The portfolio analysis	2
<hr/>	
2 Evaluation approach and methods	5
<hr/>	
2.1 Evaluation approach and methodology	5
<hr/>	
2.2 Theory of Change	7
<hr/>	
2.3 Limitations to the evaluation	8
<hr/>	
3 Findings discussion	11
<hr/>	
3.1 Overarching findings	11
<hr/>	
3.2 Findings against objectives	21
<hr/>	
4 Conclusions	39
<hr/>	
4.1 Conclusions regarding readiness and country needs	39
<hr/>	
4.2 Conclusions regarding the funding of the readiness needs through the RPSP	42
<hr/>	
4.3 Conclusions regarding the management of the RPSP	45

5 Recommendations	49
5.1 General recommendations	49
5.2 Structure of the RPSP	51
5.3 Scope of the activities to be funded under the RPSP	52
5.4 Management and knowledge management of the RPSP	54
Annex I. Bibliography	57
Annex II. List of documents for document analysis	58
Annex III. Overview of interviewees	60
Annex IV. Funding priorities and relevance of grants of case study countries	61
Annex V. Funding rule changes	65
Annex VI. Progress on outcomes across the portfolio	67
Annex VII. Overview of readiness support mechanisms	72
Annex VIII. Overview of GCF funded activities linked to GCF readiness funding	73
Annex IX. ToC from the RPSP Strategy 2019–2021	75
Annex X. Evaluation matrix	76
Annex XI. Coordination mechanisms in case study countries	80

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Overview of distribution of grants within the readiness portfolio	2
Figure 2	Number of grants and countries per region	3
Figure 3	Approved grants and funding amount per year	3
Figure 4	Logical chain of the RPSP	7
Figure 5	Reconstructed ToC	8
Figure 6	Extent to which strategic priorities have been effectively addressed by readiness projects – NDAs and FPs	12
Figure 7	Agreement with the statement: “The Readiness Programme support activities address key needs in the countries’ preparations for climate funding.”	14
Figure 8	Challenges limiting access to climate funding from GCF and other financiers	19
Figure 9	Agreement with the statement: “In the context of the Readiness Programme, the knowledge gained remains available over time.” – NDAs and FPs	20
Figure 10	Challenges limiting the sustainability of RPSP outcomes and impacts	21
Figure 11	Challenges to the effectiveness of capacity building	24
Figure 12	Regional distribution of readiness funded CNs in the GCF pipeline	32
Figure 13	Summarized ToC from the RPSP Strategy 2019–2021	75

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Selection of case study countries	6
Table 2	Grants targeting the private sector	12
Table 3	Number of approved grants for RPSP outputs focusing on coherence	15
Table 4	List of documents for document analysis	58
Table 5	Overview of interviews	60
Table 6	Funding priorities and relevance of grants of case study countries	61
Table 7	Funding rule changes	65
Table 8	Objective 1 – Absolute frequency of outcomes and progress rate of outputs	67
Table 9	Objective 2 – Absolute frequency of outcomes and progress rate of outputs	68
Table 10	Objective 3 – Absolute frequency of outcomes and progress rate of outputs	69
Table 11	Objective 4 – Absolute frequency of outcomes and progress rate of outputs	70
Table 12	Objective 5 – Absolute frequency of outcomes and progress rate of outputs	71
Table 13	Overview of readiness support by fund	72
Table 14	Overview of GCF funded activities linked to GCF readiness funding	73
Table 15	Evaluation matrix	76
Table 16	Coordination mechanisms of the case study countries	80

LIST OF ACRONYMS

Acronyms will be referred to throughout this document, including but not limited to:

ACRONYM	TERM
AAE	<i>Asesoramiento Ambiental Estratégico</i>
AE	Accredited Entity
AF	Adaptation Fund
BTR	Biennial Transparency Report
BUR	Biennial Update Report
CBIT	Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency
CIF	Climate Investment Funds
CN	Concept Note
COP	Conference of the Parties
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAE	Direct Access Entity
DP	Delivery Partner
EECA	Eastern Europe and Central Asia
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FP	Focal Point
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GGGI	Global Green Growth Institute
GHG	Greenhouse gas
IEU	Independent Evaluation Unit
iPMS	Integrated portfolio management system
IRMF	Integrated Results Management Framework
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
LDC	Least Developed Country

ACRONYM	TERM
LDCF	Least Developed Countries Fund
MRV	Measurement, Reporting, and Verification
NAMAs	Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NAPAs	National Adaptation Programmes of Action
NDA	National Designated Authority
NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
NIE	National Implementing Entity
ODL	Open Data Library
PPF	Project Preparation Facility
PPMS	Portfolio Performance Management System
PSO	Private Sector Organization
RPSP	Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme
RRMF	Readiness Results Management Framework
SAP	Simplified Approval Process
SCCF	Special Climate Change Fund
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
TA	Technical Assistance
ToC	Theory of Change
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
USD	United States Dollar

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Green Climate Fund's (GCF) Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme (RPSP) is a funding window mandated by the GCF Instrument to provide resources for readiness and preparatory activities in developing countries, to strengthen their institutional capacities, governance mechanisms, and planning and programming frameworks towards a transformational long-term climate action agenda. This evaluation of the RPSP assesses the outcomes and impact-level results with a focus on relevance, effectiveness, coherence, impact, and sustainability. The evaluation aims to provide actionable recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness and operationalization of the RPSP.

Since its operationalization in 2014, the RPSP has undergone significant evolution. Initially designed to build institutional capacities and governance frameworks in developing countries, the RPSP has expanded in scope and ambition. The Strategy 2019–2021, which was extended to 2023, focused on five key objectives: 1) capacity building, 2) development of strategic frameworks for climate finance, 3) support for national adaptation planning, 4) pipeline development for paradigm shifts, and 5) knowledge sharing. In 2022, the Readiness Result Management Framework (RRMF) was introduced as a tool to better assess the contributions of readiness grants towards these objectives.

Findings on relevance:

The RPSP succeeds in three of the four organizational strategic priorities from the GCF Updated Strategic Plan 2020–2023, namely strengthening country ownership, fostering a paradigm-shifting portfolio, and improving access to funds. It contributes less to the strategic priority on catalyzing private sector finance. There are limited offers for private sector stakeholders, and their need for readiness support is not reflected in the Readiness Strategy 2019–2021.

The evaluation finds that the readiness grants are strongly aligned with the national priorities identified by countries. National Designated Authorities (NDAs), Focal Points (FPs), Direct Access Entities (DAEs) and Delivery Partners (DPs) alike agreed that the RPSP addresses key needs. Gender considerations are embedded in the readiness framework, but gender is often insufficiently addressed in the grants.

Findings on effectiveness:

The overall effectiveness of the RPSP was high. The grants have largely achieved their intended results. Stakeholders have consistently highlighted the effectiveness of capacity building activities and support for adaptation planning. Outcomes regarding the effectiveness of strategic frameworks have been less conclusive. Challenges to effectiveness were found in the development of high-quality Concept Notes (CNs). The reliance on external consultants, who may partially lack context-specific knowledge, further intensified this issue.

Findings on coherence:

The RPSP demonstrates internal coherence. Its Theory of Change (ToC) logically links its objectives to create a clear pathway for achieving outcomes. In practice, the logical relationship between different objectives is often not leveraged or at least not optimized. Regarding external coherence, the evaluation examined the coherence of

the RPSP with other climate finance initiatives. The RPSP complements the efforts of other major funds, such as the Global Environment Facility, the Climate Investment Funds, and the Adaptation Fund, particularly in terms of building national capacities and supporting planning processes. Better coordination at the country level would be helpful to avoid overlaps and ensure efficient use of resources. Coordination challenges are more pronounced in countries where the NDA is not the focal point for other funds, which can lead to fragmented efforts and reduced effectiveness.

Findings on impact:

The RPSP has been impactful in building the preconditions for accessing climate finance on various steps along its logical chain: The building of capacity with NDAs and DAEs has led to some effective country programmes and strategic frameworks. In terms of direct impact on the last step of this logical chain, pipeline building, the RPSP has contributed to some degree to the mobilization of climate finance, particularly through the development of CNs and Funding Proposals. The evaluation found that out of over 300 CNs, only 41 were supported with RPSP grants as of January 2024. Furthermore, as of January 2024, two Funding Proposals supported by RPSP grants were in the GCF pipeline.

Thus, the RPSP has been impactful in enhancing capacities and planning processes. Attributing increased climate finance flows directly to the RPSP and specifically to grants that focus on CN development is methodologically challenging and likely underestimates the true impact. Yet, the complexity of GCF procedures and high transaction costs continue to pose significant barriers, particularly for countries with limited resources. The RPSP has not fully tapped into the potential of private sector engagement in scaling climate finance, due to its limited focus on financial sector reforms or mobilization of private investment.

Findings on sustainability:

The sustainability of the RPSP's outcomes is supported by the strengthened capacity of NDAs and DAEs and a focus on country-driven approaches. The involvement of diverse stakeholders is essential for sustaining the benefits of the RPSP over the long term. Formalized partnerships and robust coordination mechanisms, such as those established in Grenada and Moldova, are key for lasting positive outcomes.

Several risks to sustainability persist. High staff turnover of NDAs, particularly in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LCDs), threatens the preservation of institutional knowledge and ongoing stability and thus the sustainability of outcomes. Incomplete institutionalization of climate finance processes at the national level and the limited focus on replicating and scaling successful initiatives pose significant challenges to the long-term sustainability of the RPSP's outcomes.

Recommendations

The RPSP should develop a consistent multistage readiness concept to base the readiness support on. It should build on best practices and include a self-assessment tool for institutional capacity. On this basis, funding requests and approvals can be streamlined through standardization, leaving bespoke options open to accommodate individual country needs. The evaluation recommends structuring the support by stakeholders, rather than by readiness results. It encourages the strengthening of country programmes, sectoral frameworks, and knowledge management. The Readiness Knowledge Bank should be expanded. Finally, the RPSP should broaden its support to better align with the private sector related parts of the GCF mandate.

1 INTRODUCTION

This evaluation of the Green Climate Fund's (GCF) Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme (RPSP) has been the first Secretariat-led evaluation, guided by the GCF Evaluation Policy. The evaluation had two key purposes:

- Provide a credible assessment of the outcome and impact results of the RPSP portfolio against the Readiness Results Management Framework (RRMF) outcome and impact-level indicators to ensure accountability of GCF to the RPSP results and to continue informing the programming of the RPSP.
- Provide input and recommendations for further improvement of the RPSP effectiveness and operationalization of the RRMF (GCF, 2023c).

The evaluation adhered to the GCF Evaluation Policy in its application of evaluation criteria and standards (relevance, effectiveness, coherence, impact and sustainability, gender equality, innovativeness in results areas, replication and scalability, and unexpected results (GCF, 2021, p. 20, 2022b)). The purposes implied an emphasis on effectiveness, impact, coherence, relevance, and sustainability.

This evaluation assessed the effectiveness of the RPSP from its initiation (2014) to the cut-off date of 15 January 2024 and took a closer look at the RPSP Strategy 2019–2021 which was effective until December 2023. Since the inception of the RPSP, 634 readiness grants have been approved with USD 517 million approved and USD 355 million disbursed (in the period 2014 to 15 January 2024).

1.1 THE READINESS AND PREPARATORY SUPPORT PROGRAMME

The RPSP supports developing countries to strengthen their institutional capacities, governance mechanisms, and planning and programming frameworks towards a transformational long-term climate action agenda. It is stipulated by the Governing Instrument for GCF as seen in Paragraph 40 of the Governing Instrument:

"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." (GCF, 2011).

The RPSP was operationalized in 2014 with Board decision B.08/11. At the time of publication of this report (October 2024), the RPSP is in its third phase. Phase 1 was implemented from 2015 to 2018 and Phase 2 from 2019 to 2021 (extended to 2023). The phases are governed by strategies that build on each other and evolve with respect to the explicitness of the eligible objectives and indicators. An overview of the most important changes in the funding rules for the RPSP over time is presented in Annex V.

The RPSP has been the subject of several reviews by the Secretariat and two evaluations by the Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) of GCF. In phase 2 of the RPSP, starting in 2019, the scope of the readiness support has been broadened by the RPSP Strategy 2019–2021 (GCF/B.22/08) which the Board approved in 2019. The Readiness Strategy 2019–2021 was complemented by the RPSP Guidebook in 2020 and by the RRMF in

2022. The RRMF is a tool for measuring the results of the RPSP. It defines indicators for capturing how the readiness grants contribute to the five readiness objectives:

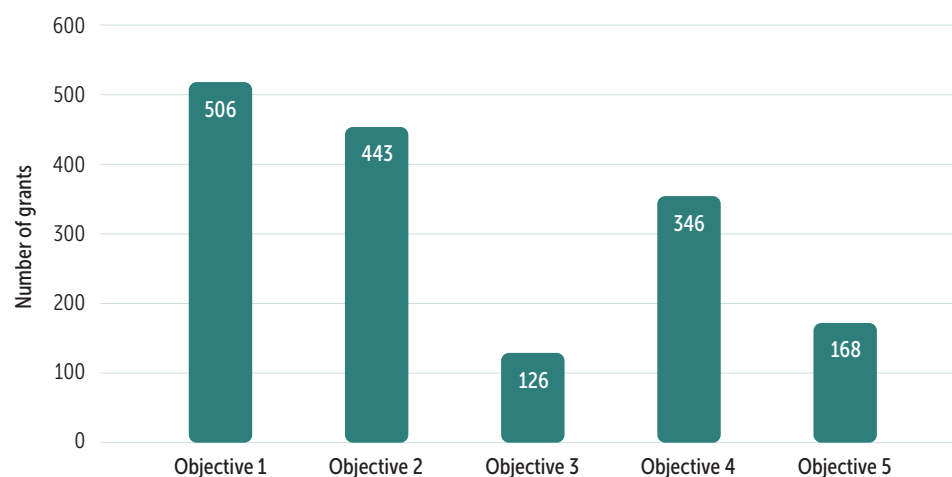
- **Objective 1:** Capacity building;
- **Objective 2:** Strategic frameworks;
- **Objective 3:** National adaptation plans and adaptation planning processes;
- **Objective 4:** Pipeline development; and
- **Objective 5:** Knowledge sharing and learning.

The GCF Executive Director approved the RRMF in February 2022 (GCF, no date b). Readiness grants approved before the implementation of the RRMF were retrofitted by indicators that comply with the RRMF. Board decision B.33/04 extended the implementation period of the Strategy 2019–2021 to include the period 2022–2023. Since 1 January 2024, the revised RPSP Strategy for 2024–2027 (GCF/B.37/17) has been effective.

1.2 THE PORTFOLIO ANALYSIS

As of 15 January 2024, the RPSP portfolio comprised 634 grants with 166 grants completed, 436 grants currently being disbursed and 32 grants in legal processing.¹ With this, the RPSP portfolio encompassed a grant volume of about USD 517 million in approved funding and USD 355 million in disbursed funding (69% disbursement rate). The distribution of grants per objective is presented in **Figure 1**, showing that the majority of grants are tackling objective 1 (capacity building).

FIGURE 1. OVERVIEW OF DISTRIBUTION OF GRANTS WITHIN THE READINESS PORTFOLIO

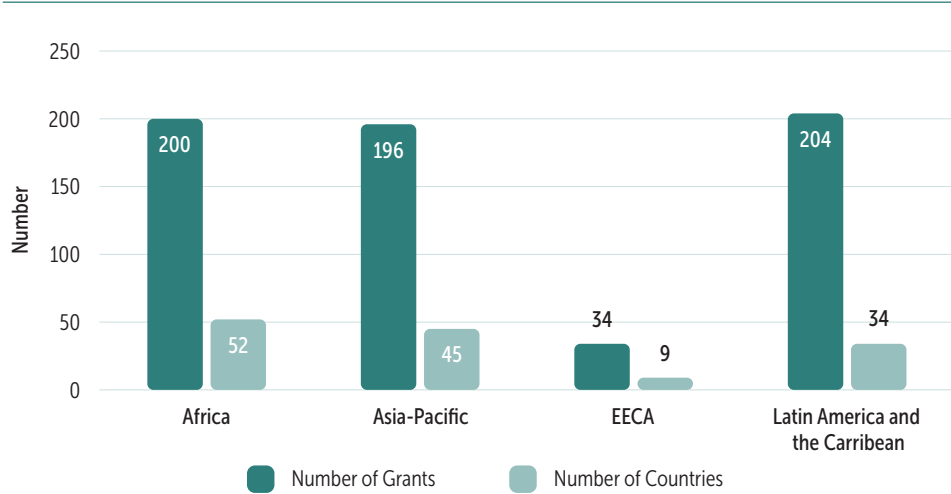


Source: GCF Secretariat; portfolio data (N = 634). Grants can target more than one objective.

Geographically, the regions Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean receive a similar number of grants. In the Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) region less grants are carried out (**Figure 2**).

¹ The analysis of findings refers to the GCF readiness portfolio with grants that had been approved between 1 May 2015 and 13 December 2023. The cut-off date was 15 January 2024.

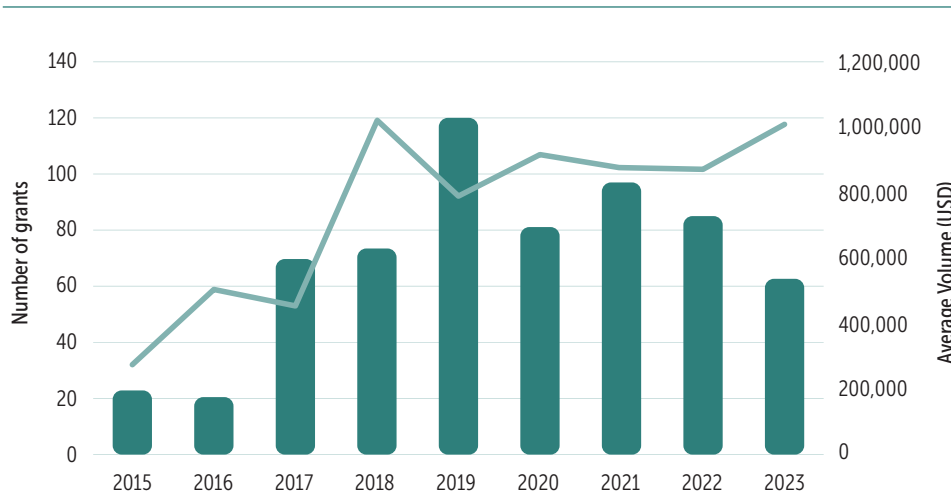
FIGURE 2. NUMBER OF GRANTS AND COUNTRIES PER REGION



Source: GCF Secretariat; portfolio data (N = 634).

Approval numbers exhibit a consistently positive trend (Figure 3) until 2019, with 120 grants approved in the peak year, and a low during the Covid period. While the number of newly approved grants is declining recently, there is a positive trend in the average volume of the approved grants over the years. The budget proposed for the three years of the RPSP Strategy 2019–2021 (GCF/B.22/08) was USD 377.5 million. USD 254 million have been approved and USD 185 million disbursed.

FIGURE 3. APPROVED GRANTS AND FUNDING AMOUNT PER YEAR



Source: GCF Secretariat; portfolio data (N = 634).

Most grants (around 76%) take between one and three years to be completed. The average grant duration across all grants is 28.8 months. Around 56% of all grants (354 grants) are implemented by international Accredited Entities. In comparison, national and regional entities implement around 13% each (80 grants). Another 13% (84 grants) were implemented by Delivery Partners (DPs) that were not accredited and 6% (36 grants) by National Designated Authorities (NDAs).

2 EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODS

2.1 EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The evaluation employs a theory-based approach and follows the GCF Evaluation Policy. The GCF Secretariat set the following five criteria to understand the impact and outcome of the RPSP: relevance, effectiveness, coherence, impact, and sustainability (GCF, 2021, p. 20, 2022b). The guiding questions for this evaluation were:

- **Relevance:** To what extent have the RPSP portfolio outcomes and impact responded to the country's climate readiness needs?
- **Effectiveness:** To what extent have the outcomes and impact of the RPSP portfolio been achieved? What are the contributing factors? How could these achievements be further optimized?
- **Coherence:** To what extent are the RPSP portfolio outcomes and impact achieved through complementarity and synergies with readiness and other technical assistance support of other institutions?
- **Impact:** To what extent have the RPSP supported countries achieved their resource mobilization for climate change actions?
- **Sustainability:** To what extent will the achieved outcomes and impact at the country-level continue or are likely to be sustained beyond RPSP support?

These questions were then operationalized within an evaluation matrix (**Table 15**) by the team. To comprehensively answer these questions, a multi-phased approach was employed.

As an initial step, the evaluation team reconstructed the ToC underpinning the RPSP (**Figure 5**). The rationale of the reconstruction was to clarify how the RPSP was intended to achieve its goals compared to how the programme works in practice (cf. sub-chapter 2.2).

A comprehensive document analysis was conducted to develop hypotheses for further exploration through an online survey administered to NDAs/Focal Points (FPs), DPs and Direct Access Entities (DAEs). Analyzed documents included prior evaluations and reviews, relevant strategies, and other pertinent materials (cf. Annex II for the list of documents).

The online survey itself encompassed general questions on the RPSP along with inquiries regarding outcome and impact achievement aligned with the RRMF. The survey request was sent to 423 individuals. The analysis of the questionnaire is based on a total of 155 questionnaires (71 completed and 54 non-completed questionnaires) which equals a response rate of 30%. Thus, inference of representative statements is possible to some extent.

To validate the survey findings, the evaluation team conducted online Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with GCF staff, NDAs, DPs, Global Environment Facility (GEF), Adaptation Fund (AF), United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)/Private Sector Organizations (PSOs) representatives to the GCF board. The interviewees were chosen by a purposive sampling to ensure a selection of individuals who could provide comprehensive information from the different stakeholder’s perspective. In total, the evaluation team interviewed 41 individuals (KIIs: 22; FGDs: 19 individuals, cf. Annex III), in addition to the interviews conducted in the context of the case studies.

Furthermore, a portfolio analysis of project monitoring data was conducted to get a better understanding of the implementation progress and achievements of the readiness portfolio. An examination of data related to CNs and Funding Proposal development within the readiness grants was undertaken. This was necessary for assessing the achievement of outcomes and impacts as CNs/Funding Proposals are defined in the ToC as the path to impact (funding flows).

A significant component of the evaluation offering valuable insights was the implementation of country studies and reviews. Five in-depth country studies with field visits and four desk-based country reviews were conducted. These studies served the purpose of triangulating results from the survey and document analysis while providing deeper understanding of persistent issues at the country level. The case studies described qualitative aspects and narratives, including typical barriers encountered at the country level alongside successful “readiness recipes” employed by participating countries. The selection of countries for these studies was guided by a set of criteria, including the maturity of the country’s portfolio (of readiness and funded activities²), regional distribution as reflected by the GCF regional desks, country classifications (SIDS, LDCs, non-LDCs), number of approved readiness grants, the gap between approved and disbursed funding and accreditation of DAEs in the country. Based on this, the countries presented in **Table 1** were chosen.

TABLE 1. SELECTION OF CASE STUDY COUNTRIES

TYPE	COUNTRY STUDY (REGIONAL DESK)	COUNTRY REVIEW (REGIONAL DESK)
SIDS	Grenada (Caribbean)	Cook Islands (Asia Pacific)
LDC	Bangladesh (South Asia)	Cambodia (Asia Pacific)
LDC	Rwanda (Africa 2)	Senegal (Africa 3)
Non-LDC	Peru (Latin America)	Moldova (EECA)
Non-LDC from Africa	Zimbabwe (Africa 1)	

Source: Evaluation team.

The data collection for this evaluation took place between January and June 2024. A panel of two senior evaluation experts and one senior readiness expert

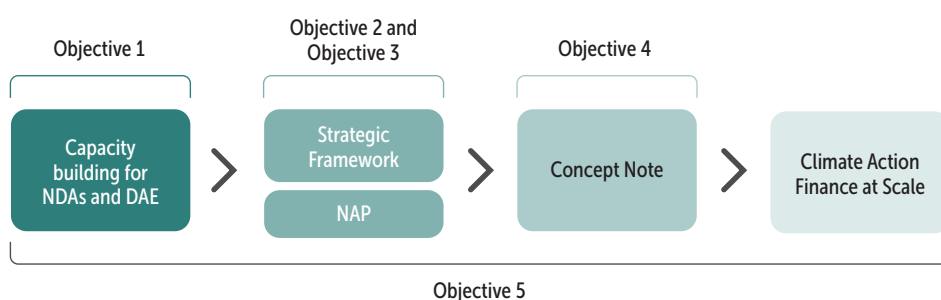
² *Funded activities is the GCF terminology for projects on adaptation, mitigation and cross-cutting projects. In the following, the term is used when the statement can be applied only to GCF projects. In many cases, however, readiness grants also help provide readiness for other climate action funding. In these cases, the terms “climate finance” or “climate action funding” are used. In some instances, these terms might be used even if the main relevance would be related to GCF’s funded activities only.*

reviewed the inception report and two versions of the draft evaluation report for methodological quality.

2.2 THEORY OF CHANGE

To understand whether implemented activities are optimally suited to leverage outcomes and impact, and to show whether and how they can be achieved more effectively, the evaluation inspected the logical chain from activities to outcomes and impact. **Figure 4** illustrates that the goal of the RPSP is to facilitate climate action finance for the countries at scale. For that, countries need to submit CNs and Funding Proposals to GCF. Funding for CN development is provided through objective 4 of the RPSP. CNs are based on country programmes and strategic (sectoral) frameworks, which are aligned with the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), National Adaptation Plans (NAP) and other national strategies and plans. The RPSP provides funding for country programmes and strategic frameworks under objective 2 and for NAPs under objective 3. Objective 1, strengthening the capacity of NDAs and DAEs, is the basis for this logical chain.

FIGURE 4. LOGICAL CHAIN OF THE RPSP



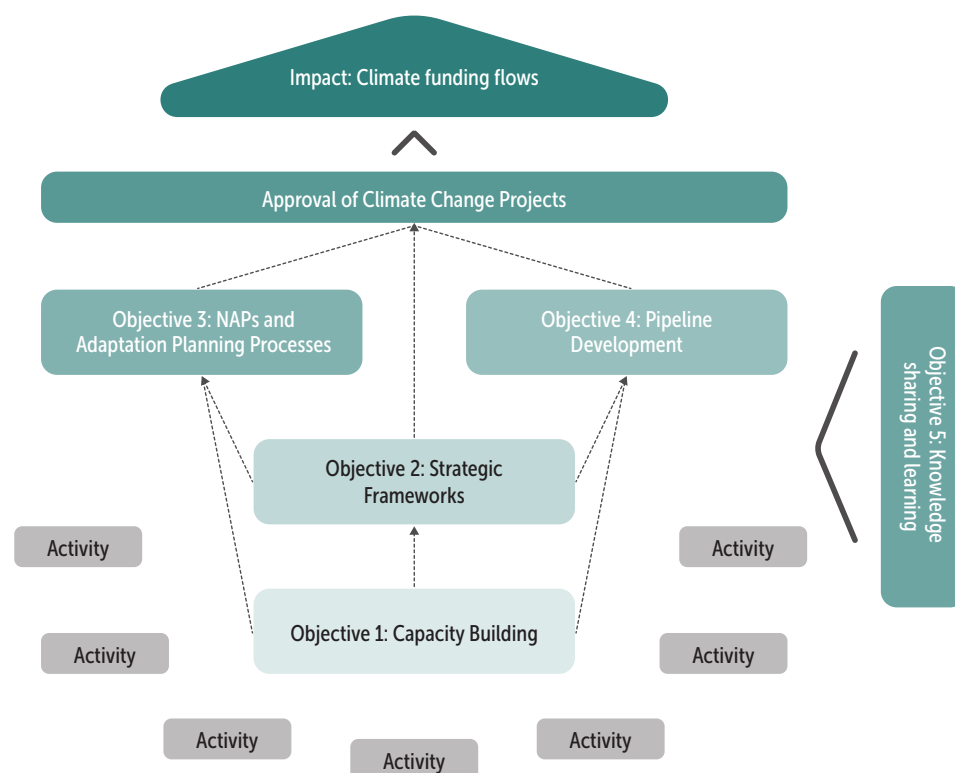
Source: Adapted from GCF (2019).

While in the logical chain the objectives of the RPSP build on each other (**Figure 4**), in practice, it is not obligatory for beneficiaries to apply for readiness grants in the order indicated by the number of the objective, i.e. from objective 1 to 5. In order to apply for a readiness grant for developing CNs (objective 4), for example, it is not required to demonstrate capacity (objective 1), or to demonstrate that a country programme or strategic framework prioritizes this activity (objective 2).

Different ToC diagrams have been used in different publications. In the Strategy 2019–2021 a ToC where objectives build on each other was introduced, but this is not what has been practically done (GCF, 2019, p. 23). It can be tracked through the timeline of the relevant documents how the logical chain underlying the original RPSP Strategy 2019–2021 has evolved from a set of building blocks to a set of opportunities to pick and choose from. The resulting practice looks more like **Figure 5**. The ToC that is used in IEU's recent evaluation (GCF, 2023a), for example, also does not reflect the internal logic of how the capacity building, strategic frameworks (including NAPs), and pipeline development build on each other anymore. Rather, it explicitly states that it does not or should not exist.³

³ Another difference between the ToC used for this evaluation and the ToC used in IEU's evaluation is that this evaluation sees the climate action finance at scale/funding flows as the impact of the RPSP, while IEU's evaluation sees the results of the climate action finance as the ultimate impact.

FIGURE 5. RECONSTRUCTED TOC



Source: Adapted from GCF (2019).

2.3 LIMITATIONS TO THE EVALUATION

The approach offers a robust framework for the evaluation to focus on the effectiveness of the programme and ensures the use of evidence-based methods. Still, this evaluation does not intend to claim representativeness and independence of the findings. This is, among other things, due to data limitations, the limited scope of the evaluation, and to the individual involvement of stakeholders which can be biased. In addition, the focus on successful country cases leads to a better understanding of success factors but not necessarily to an analysis of all barriers. The team tried to mitigate bias by using internal peer reviews.

One challenge that the evaluation faced is related to the monitoring of project outcomes. The RRMF was established in 2022. This means most grants have not been designed with a results framework that corresponds to the RRMF as the monitoring framework for the portfolio. This led to a significant number of data issues in the analysis of portfolio data. The portfolio data were not fully complete, partially because the RRMF had not been binding over the full period, and partially because the RRMF underwent slight revisions in the early years of the implementation of the framework. The data include retrofitted results of the individual projects. Some of the portfolio data (particularly regarding the progress of output indicators) had to be transferred manually from the GCF database, which is a potential cause for mistakes, despite quality assurance.

Another challenge relates to the assessment of CNs and Funding Proposals developed with readiness support. The evaluation team compared the CNs stored in the relevant GCF Secretariat database, the integrated portfolio management system (iPMS), with the two GCF Projects Pipeline tables (for both private and public sectors) to identify

projects developed with GCF readiness support that made it to the pipeline/Climate Investment Committee (CIC). This involved manually checking the titles and contents of all Funding Proposals and CNs to identify similarities. To determine which Funding Proposals and CN have progressed to funded activities funded by other entities like GEF, CIF, and AF, the team searched for similarities between the titles and contents of the GCF Pipeline tables and the project portfolios on these climate funds' websites. This approach had several limitations. Where the content and/or titles of projects changed significantly during their progression from a CN or Funding Proposal to funded activity, tracking all Funding Proposals and CNs and their pipeline development accurately was challenging or impossible. A validation with the country studies demonstrated the limits of this approach, when stakeholders pointed to projects in Peru that started as CNs under the RPSP and developed into funded activities. This was not traceable within GCF data using the approach described. There was information on the number of projects that reached CIC 2 and CIC 3 stages. However, the reliability of these figures seems uncertain as the results were not without contradictions. The reasons outlined above also made it difficult to identify which Funding Proposals and CNs have progressed to funded activities funded by other entities such as GEF, CIF, and AF. Therefore, some assessments are approximations or lower or upper bounds rather than exact figures.

The interpretation of survey results posed an additional challenge. The NDAs, DAEs and DPs that completed the survey are more likely to be entities that are engaged with the Secretariat which can lead to biased survey results. To address this bias, findings were triangulated with other evidence, for example from interviews and country studies.

Challenges were also faced by the team conducting the country studies: Data on the implementation stage of grants were at times inconsistent between the GCF database and the interviews with NDAs. As a tendency it seems that a higher number of grants were considered completed by NDAs than by GCF. The project timeline was initially very tight, leaving a small window in which the country visits had to be conducted. Timing these visits to the availability of NDAs was challenging. Given the complexity of evaluating GCF readiness, and the emphasis on maintaining high standardization for cross-country comparison, the studies were not always able to capture the nuances of each local context, particularly in larger nations. By providing support with background research, Arepo's back-office team tried to ease the workload on the consultants in preparing the country studies but the amount of data on the rich and mature readiness portfolio in the country cases was difficult to review in the given time.

3 FINDINGS DISCUSSION

In the following sub-chapters the overarching findings for each of the five evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, coherence, impact and sustainability) of the RPSP are discussed (sub- chapter 3.1). In the next sub-chapter (3.2), the findings for each of the five RPSP objectives are discussed. While the findings are presented against specific objectives, they are interconnected and often complement one another. The evaluation criterion impact, defined as climate funding flows,⁴ is only discussed in the overarching findings as it is not possible to distinguish between various objectives of the RPSP – according to the logical chain, the objectives follow each other logically – one objective’s impact is a good basis for the next activity. Therefore, they are discussed jointly in sub- chapter 3.1.4.

3.1 OVERARCHING FINDINGS

RELEVANCE

Alignment with GCF priorities

GCF, in its Updated Strategic Plan 2020–2023, formulated four strategic priorities for its overall programming: 1) strengthening country ownership of programming, 2) fostering a paradigm- shifting portfolio, 3) improving access to fund resources, and 4. catalyzing private sector finance at scale (GCF, 2020). The RPSP is aligned with three of the four strategic priorities, with less of a focus on catalyzing private sector activities.

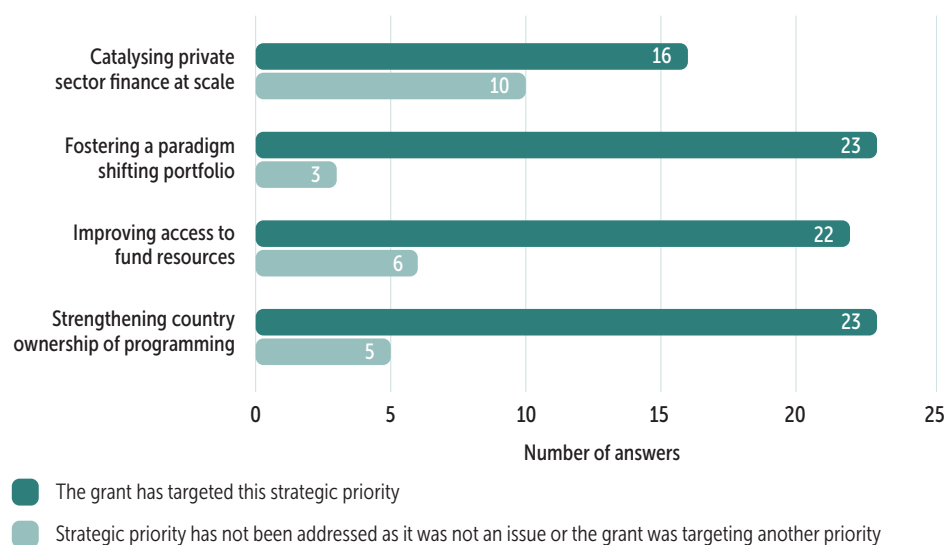
The causal logic of the programme (cf. sub-chapter 2.2) demonstrates the relevance of the RPSP for GCF as expressed in the four strategic priorities of the Updated Strategic Plan. Country ownership is the foundation of NDAs and DAEs formulating strategic frameworks, country work programmes and NAPs (objectives 2 and 3 of the RPSP) to express their priorities and needs, compiling them into transformational CNs and leveraging funding at scale. In the online survey, the majority of NDAs and FPs agreed that readiness grants address strengthening country ownership and fostering a paradigm shift (**Figure 5**). Similar results regarding strengthening country ownership were found in the case studies, e.g. of Peru, Senegal, Cook Islands, and Grenada. The case studies also confirm that limited NDA capacity is a barrier to full country ownership, which can be addressed by RPSP support under objective 1.

GCF priority 4, catalyzing private sector finance at scale, however, is not explicitly reflected in the causal logic. The RPSP has no specific objective for the private sector, and only three outcome indicators out of the 18 outcome indicators of the RRMF reflect outcomes or impacts relevant to the private sector. The survey also confirms that the RPSP is least relevant for catalyzing private sector finance at scale (**Figure 6**). 10 out of 26 respondents have not used it for this purpose. Among the (high performing) case studies, only six out of the nine countries have RPSP projects focusing on catalyzing private sector finance.⁵

⁴ This definition was agreed between the GCF Secretariat and the evaluation team.

⁵ No projects were identified in Moldova, Senegal, and Peru.

FIGURE 6. EXTENT TO WHICH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES HAVE BEEN EFFECTIVELY ADDRESSED BY READINESS PROJECTS – NDAS AND FPS⁶



Source: Online survey; no multiple selections possible per challenge (N = 28).

This concurs with evidence from previous assessments (GCF, 2023a, 2018a) and interviews with Secretariat staff and CSO/PSO representatives. GCF’s Private Sector Facility (PSF) is unique, but the RPSP does not prepare stakeholders for utilizing it with specific offerings. The important role of private funding, as well as the transformation of financial regulations in countries, is recognized in the RPSP Strategy 2019–2021 and the RRMF. But interviewees point out that this importance is not fully reflected in the implementation of readiness grants. For example, the strategy does not provide a specific objective for scaling up private sector activities or working on financial regulations. Such activities would be eligible under objectives 2 through 5, but due to the overall strong public sector emphasis, they are included in comparatively few grants (Table 2).⁷

TABLE 2. GRANTS TARGETING THE PRIVATE SECTOR

OUTCOME		OUTPUT	
OUTCOME DESCRIPTION	NO. OF GRANTS	OUTPUT DESCRIPTION	NO. OF GRANTS
Outcome 2.4: Strategies for transforming and attracting private sector investment for low emissions and resilience developed and being used.	151	Output 2.4.1: New business models incubated and/or innovative financial mechanisms and schemes created to increase low-emission and climate resilient investment.	48

⁶ NDAs and FPS in headings of figures indicate that this figure only considers answers from NDAs and FPS.

⁷ It deserves mention that grants can contribute to multiple outcomes and outputs. If 151 grants contribute to outcome 2.4, this does not necessarily mean that they have a very strong or exclusive focus on the private sector. Rather, the private sector aspect might be one among many aspects considered in that study or strategy.

OUTCOME		OUTPUT	
OUTCOME DESCRIPTION	NO. OF GRANTS	OUTPUT DESCRIPTION	NO. OF GRANTS
		Output 2.4.2: Strategies, roadmaps, studies and policy incentives completed to foster private financing for country programme implementation and/or low-emission climate resilient development.	129
Outcome 3.3: Private sector engagement in adaptation catalyzed.	68	Output 3.3.1: Strategies, policies, and incentives developed to foster private investment in adaptation solutions.	45
		Output 3.3.2: Assessments and knowledge products to inform the private sector on adaptation options and GCF finance developed.	25
		Output 3.3.3: Capacity building provided to the private sector on adaptation options.	35

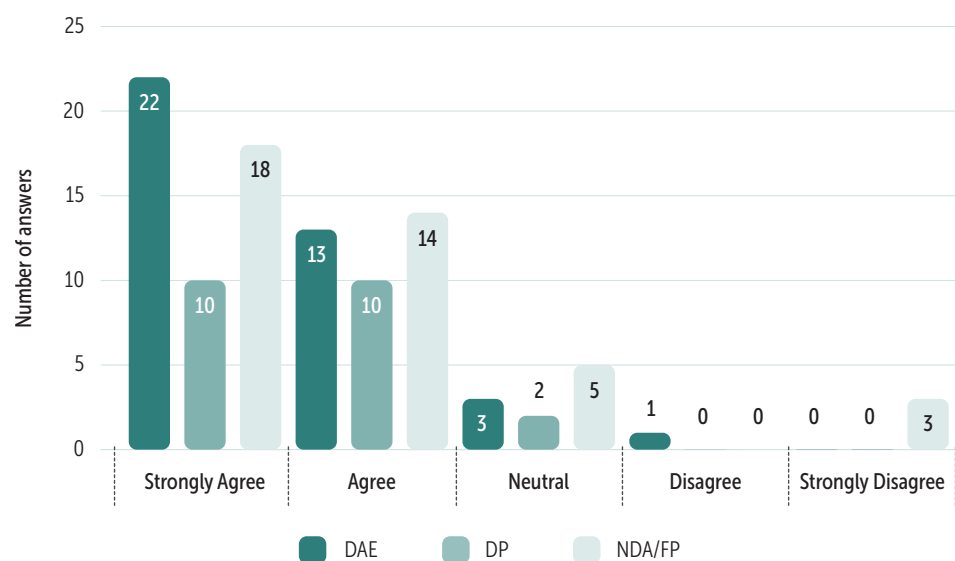
Source: GCF Secretariat; portfolio data (N = 634).

Alignment with country priorities and needs

Overall, there is strong alignment between GCF projects and national priorities and needs, which makes the RPSP overall very relevant. While the alignment is analyzed objective by objective in later sections, the survey demonstrates the general positive assessment by NDAs/FPs as well as DAEs and DPs that the RPSP addresses key needs (Figure 7). A strong majority (87 out of 101) either strongly agree (50) or agree (37) that the RPSP addresses their climate funding preparation needs. Only a small minority (4) disagree or strongly disagree.

The offering is also aligned with the needs that countries express in their NDCs. In the analysis of the NDCs from the nine country cases, several key funding priorities and needs could be outlined by each nation (0). All nine country studies found a strong alignment between RPSP grants and national priorities and needs. For example, the readiness projects in Bangladesh and Cook Islands exhibit a strong focus on adaptation, which is a main priority of both governments. A parallel can be found in the focus on energy and disaster recovery in the case of Zimbabwe.

FIGURE 7. AGREEMENT WITH THE STATEMENT: “THE READINESS PROGRAMME SUPPORT ACTIVITIES ADDRESS KEY NEEDS IN THE COUNTRIES’ PREPARATIONS FOR CLIMATE FUNDING.”



Source: Online survey; no multiple selections possible (N = 101).

Gender

The RPSP integrates gender equality into its strategy (GCF, 2019), aligning with GCF’s strategy and policies. Grant proposals require a gender analysis reviewed by GCF specialists.

A lack of local gender expertise was identified, with international DPs often failing to build such national capacity. Another point raised is that GCF and with that also the RPSP primarily collaborates with ministries of finance, planning, or environment. However, ministries of women and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) gender focal points are rarely included, despite their potential contribution.

EFFECTIVENESS

While notable progress was made on all objectives, stakeholders reported that they benefited a lot from capacity building activities (objective 1) and support on adaptation planning (objective 3), while progress for strategic framework development (objective 2) is relatively slow. Challenges regarding pipeline development (objective 4) persist; these were already found in an earlier assessment (GCF, 2023a). For more in-depth discussion on the effectiveness of each outcome please refer to sub-chapter 3.2.

There are overall challenges applying to grants under all objectives, like a lack of local experts and slow and bureaucratic processes within GCF approval procedures as well as high staff fluctuation at GCF that were mentioned in the survey and NDA interviews. Additionally, it was noted that GCF regional desks sometimes lack deep knowledge of their respective regions, limiting their effectiveness.

COHERENCE

Internal coherence of the RPSP according to documents

The RPSP is to some extent coherent with its ToC from the Strategy 2019–2021 (cf. 2.2). The objective formulations in the ToC in the original Readiness Strategy 2019–2021 (Annex IX) show the logical pathway to change and demonstrate how the objectives build on each other. The result of objective 1 is the input to objective 2 and so forth. An in-depth analysis of the ToC and its coherence can be found in sub-chapter 2.2.

Internal coherence at the country level

On the country level, there are a number of outputs that are funded by the RPSP to strengthen coherence: strong NDA coordination (output 1.1.2), including stakeholder coordination committees (1.3.2), country programmes, NAPs or strategic frameworks (objectives 2 and 3) as well as monitoring tools for the NDAs (cf. **Table 3**).

TABLE 3. NUMBER OF APPROVED GRANTS FOR RPSP OUTPUTS FOCUSING ON COHERENCE

OUTPUT NUMBER	OUTPUT DESCRIPTION	APPROVED GRANTS	PROGRESSED GRANTS
1.1.2	NDA mechanisms established or strengthened for interinstitutional coordination, including engagement with GCF and other climate funds.	172	100
1.3.2	Stakeholder engagement mechanisms established to support planning, programming and implementation of GCF funded activities.	164	72
2.1.1	Country programmes endorsed by GCF recipient country progress.	158	31
2.2.6	Sectorial strategic frameworks or associated plans developed.	123	48
2.4.2	Strategies, roadmaps, studies and policy incentives completed to foster private financing of country programme implementation and/or low-emissions climate resilient development.	129	75
3.1.1	National, sub-national and/or sectoral adaptation plans developed or updated.	93	18
3.1.3	Inter and intra institutional coordination and decision-making mechanisms established or strengthened.	79	43

OUTPUT NUMBER	OUTPUT DESCRIPTION	APPROVED GRANTS	PROGRESSED GRANTS
3.4.1	Mechanisms established to prioritize adaptation options based on objective criteria.	57	7
3.4.3	National systems developed for tracking adaptation national and international finance flows.	61	11
5.1.2	NDA/DAEs who have established processes, systems and/or platforms for identification of best practices, lessons learned and knowledge management.	57	28

Source: GCF Secretariat; portfolio data (N = 634).

The case studies confirm that the RPSP funds can be used to facilitate coherence on the country level. For example, in Grenada, Peru, Rwanda, Moldova, and Zimbabwe, NDAs established stakeholder committees to facilitate coherence within their climate finance portfolio. These committees enabled collaboration of diverse stakeholders, including various ministries, the private sector, as well as civil society organizations, which fostered synergy in accessing funds from multiple sources. For instance, Rwanda established a national technical committee that convenes as needed to support CN and proposal reviews. The Cook Islands and Grenada illustrate another approach countries use to build coherent climate finance readiness portfolios. They designed their GCF country programmes in a way that could be adaptable for use with other climate finance institutions.

Coherence-enhancing activities are popular among GCF grant recipients. Generally, coherence in the country is greater for projects that work towards outcome 2.2. **Table 3** shows that almost all countries utilize the coordination funding under objectives 1 and 2. However, the number of grants that have reported on their progress to GCF is still below 50%. It is traceable that more complex activities like the development of sectorial strategic frameworks take more time to show progress. Yet, 80% of NDAs/FPs responding to the survey reported that they have implemented at least one of the coherence-enhancing measures with the help of the RPSP and with that enabled better coordination of climate finance activities.

Coherence of RPSP with readiness support of other funds

The relationship between the GCF RPSP and other readiness and support facilities of GEF and AF was found to be complementary. GEF funds the reporting of countries to the UNFCCC through so-called Enabling Activities and a large platform for capacity building on transparency, the Capacity- building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT). Both are more focused on reporting to the convention than on national planning. Notably, close cooperation between these modalities does not appear to be a strategic priority for either of the readiness programmes, yet complementarity remains evident. Regarding the AF, interview data suggests that it identifies and addresses gaps not covered by GCF. This may be a potential consequence of the fact that not all NDAs are also the focal points for GEF and AF. AF actively seeks to avoid overlap and duplication with GCF initiatives through enhancements to its own (comparatively small) Readiness Programme and the organization of joint events.

Coherence of GCF readiness funding with readiness funding from other climate funds at country level

GCF readiness funding and readiness funding from other climate funds at the country level were used coherently. 29% of the survey respondents also received readiness funding from other funds. As GEF AEs reach all focal points to the UNFCCC, this seems to be a very low number. The country case studies provide more specific insights. Here, alignment between grants from various funding sources is good, and they are used in a complementary manner. Peru exemplifies this coherence where readiness funding from GEF, AF, and CIF synergistically enhanced capacity by cultivating technical expertise and establishing data collection frameworks. Similarly, recent readiness funding from AF in Zimbabwe was found to be likely guided by the national guidelines and priorities, which were established through the RPSP project (ZWE-RS-001). A systematic approach to grant alignment, while potentially existent, remains unsubstantiated by the data from the case studies.

IMPACT

Supported climate finance funding flows

The impact of the RPSP is defined as the flow of climate finance towards the countries, including funding from GCF, other climate financiers, co-financing and private sector investments. The impact of the readiness funding is achieved when countries successfully mobilize climate finance. Its contribution to that impact happens through the successful implementation of the objectives.

In the first step to reach the impact of climate funding flows, capacity needs to be built under objective 1. Overall, NDAs/FP as well as DAEs confirm that capacity building efforts enable them to fulfil their respective tasks regarding climate finance flows (cf. sub-chapter 3.2.1.2). Besides the enhanced capacities of NDAs (outcome 1.1), the RPSP has supported at least 14 DAEs (GCF, 2024c) in achieving accreditation (outcome 1.2), allowing them to participate in the GCF funding cycle and submit competitive proposals.⁸ This lays the foundation for objective 2. The more in-depth assessment in the country studies clarified that actual progress is better than indicated by these data.⁹ In all countries investigated, it was found that the RPSP successfully supported the countries to mobilize climate funding. In Peru, readiness support demonstrably enhanced the country's ability to mobilize climate finance. The survey also confirmed that readiness support equips countries with tools to mobilize global climate finance, including from GCF. 32 NDAs/FPs out of 39 responding to the survey find that readiness support contributes to their ability to mobilize climate funding within and beyond GCF funding.

The analysis of the case studies reveals that countries consistently find completed country programmes (outcome 2.1) helpful. CNs and Funding Proposals are, in the best case, linked to country priorities set in strategic frameworks. While this is the case in some countries, there is still room for improvement to have the optimal pre-conditions for a high impact of the RPSP (cf. sub-chapter 3.2.2.2).

The same applies to national adaptation planning (objective 3). By supporting NAP formulation and enhancing adaptation planning processes, the RPSP has demonstrably enabled countries to contribute to increased climate resilience, augment funding acquisition, and foster broader stakeholder participation. The survey underlined the

⁸ For this analysis, data from ODL on entities supported by readiness support and accredited DAEs have been compared.

⁹ Annex VIII lists the climate finance projects that were identified as linked to GCF readiness grants in the country case studies.

success of the RPSP in this regard: 15 out of 21 NDAs and FPs found that their NAPs guided adaptation planning. Only one NDA/FPs perceived limited or negligible impact, and four countries expressed uncertainty. These findings align with case study evidence.

With the effective implementation of objectives 2 and 3, countries should be in the position to develop quality CNs and Funding Proposals under objective 4 that lead to funding flows. Comparatively few of the products of objective 4 lead to the desired impact. By comparing CN titles and the GCF pipeline, the evaluation team identified 41 CNs (12.4% of the 331 CNs that had been developed with readiness support) and two Funding Proposals (9.5% of the 21 developed with readiness support) that are now in the active GCF pipeline (GCF, 2024a). This constitutes around 10% of the CNs in the GCF pipeline that originate from readiness funding. There is only one project in the readiness pipeline that is currently in the stage of CIC2 PPF endorsed.¹⁰ Very few additional projects based on readiness funding were identified in the case studies – these had changed title, region, approach, or implementation partner to the degree that they were not immediately recognizable (cf. sub-chapter 3.2.4.1.3). Projects like the GCF-funded Peruvian Amazon Eco Bio Business Facility and GCF-funded Building the Resilience of Wetlands are linked to GCF RPSP grants. In Grenada, a link can be made between GRD-RS-001 and the G-CREWS project.

The 41 CNs and two Funding Proposals that are currently in the GCF pipeline correspond to a total requested funding volume of more than USD 1.5 billion in potential GCF funded activities with traceable links to RPSP grants. Their actual contribution to climate finance funding flows remains uncertain because not all of these projects have been approved at this point.

Remaining challenges to accessing funding

The RPSP has successfully overcome some of its past challenges, but some aspects still make it hard for stakeholders to access climate finance – from GCF as well as from other climate finance sources. Specifically, **Figure 8** provides an overview of the challenges that have been identified in earlier studies and validated in this study. It highlights that accessing funding is not only difficult through GCF but through all climate finance mechanisms.

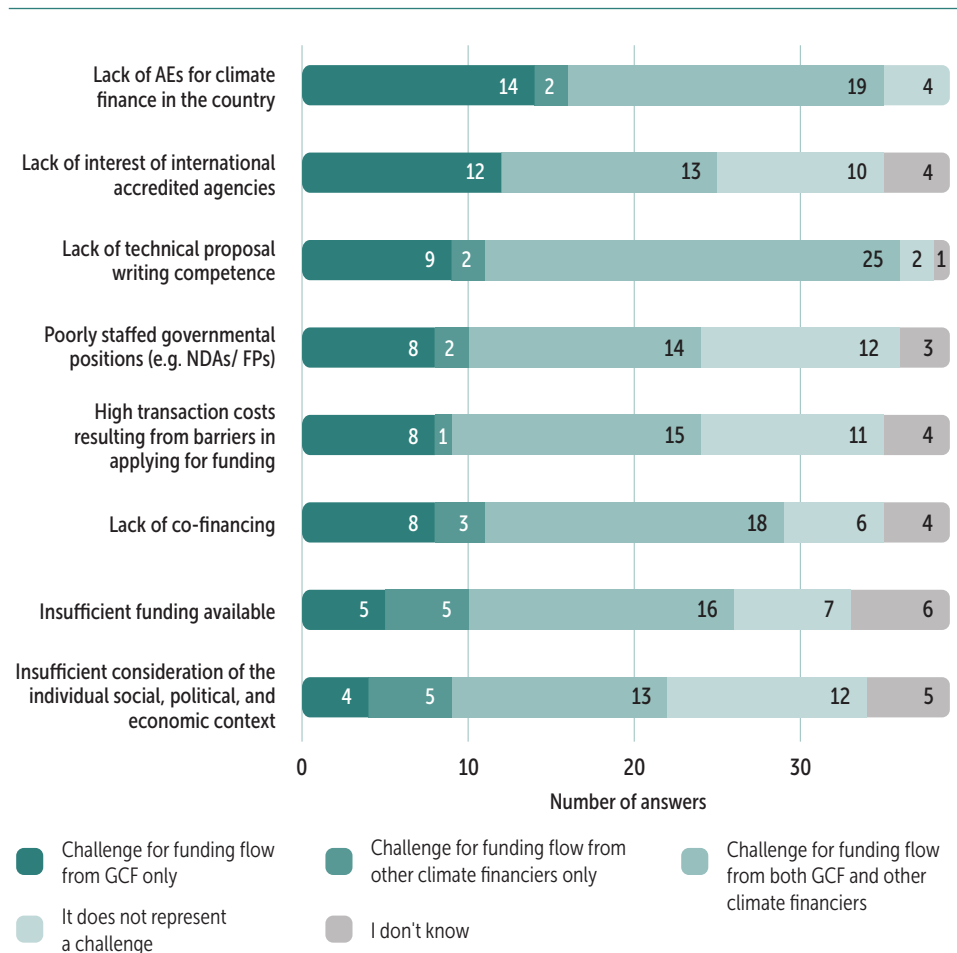
Challenges for accessing climate funds in general, and GCF funds specifically, can be attributed to limited Accredited Entities in the country, and a disinterest of international Accredited Entities. The unavailability of co-financing, a limitation on the overall level of funding, the level of technical competence necessary to write project proposals, and the lack of local implementation capacity, are challenges that impede accessing funding across the board. Furthermore, a lack in climate vulnerability data can be a hurdle to prove the impact of climate change and justify the climate rationale for the intended project.

Some challenges from the past, which were identified in previous evaluations, have already been successfully resolved (**Figure 8**). The survey also highlighted that the barriers of insufficient consideration of the local context, a lack of staff capacity at the NDAs and FPs, high transaction costs, and a lack of internationally Accredited Entities are not as prevalent as they might have been earlier.

¹⁰ It is important to mention that identifying projects in the pipeline originating from CNs and Funding Proposals was challenging due to significant changes in project content and titles during progression from concept to approval.

Write-in comments in the survey confirm that the complex application process still acts as a barrier, hindering many DAEs from fully accessing climate finance. This was also mentioned as a challenge in earlier assessments (GCF, 2018c). Both survey comments and interviews have also confirmed that readiness funding has encouraged additional partner interest and co-financing opportunities, and successful implementation has been observed to lead to increased climate finance awareness and stakeholder engagement. Financial constraints were also highlighted as key limitations. Several countries expressed challenges due to restricted national budgets and borrowing constraints, hindering the co-financing for projects.

FIGURE 8. CHALLENGES LIMITING ACCESS TO CLIMATE FUNDING FROM GCF AND OTHER FINANCIERS



Source: Online survey; one selection possible per challenge (N = 39).

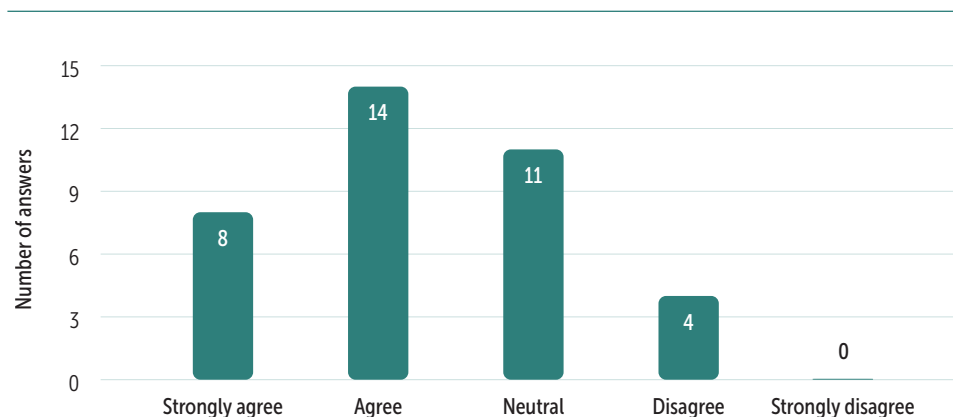
SUSTAINABILITY

Elements contributing to the sustainability of results

Evidence indicates that achieved outcomes and impact at the country-level are likely to be sustained beyond the RPSP support. By emphasizing country ownership, GCF empowers recipient countries to address their specific needs, fostering stakeholder buy-in and successful project implementation leading to sustained positive outcomes beyond the project implementation period. In this context, RPSP’s contribution to the capacity building of NDAs and other relevant stakeholders emerges as another driver

of continued progress. As **Figure 9** illustrates, most NDAs agree that the knowledge gained will remain available over time.

FIGURE 9. AGREEMENT WITH THE STATEMENT: “IN THE CONTEXT OF THE READINESS PROGRAMME, THE KNOWLEDGE GAINED REMAINS AVAILABLE OVER TIME.” – NDAS AND FPS



Source: Online survey; only one selection possible (N = 37).

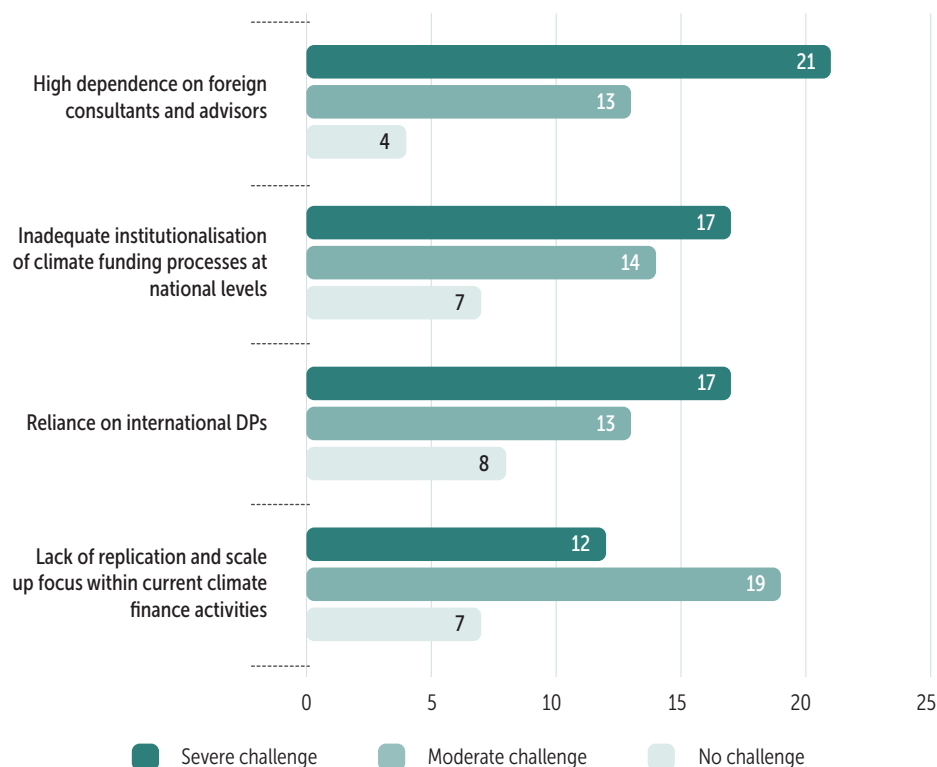
The case studies suggest that incorporating diverse stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society organizations, during project development contributes to a more sustainable impact. Notably, formalized partnerships (within government, private sector, and civil society) and robust coordination mechanisms that facilitate stakeholder collaboration (e.g. those established during GCF projects) are believed to promote lasting positive outcomes. The demonstrably positive influence of political coordination and commitment at higher governmental levels on the sustainability of GCF-funded projects highlights the importance of national government focus and long-term support. Similarly, strong guidance from GCF’s regional desk appears to be impacting project sustainability positively. Additionally, leveraging synergies with national development initiatives can contribute to enhanced sustainability.

Challenges to sustainability

Several factors challenging the sustainability of all RPSP results achieved on the country level persist. **Figure 10** displays the assessments by NDAs and FPs, regarding the prevalence of risk factors that endanger sustainability. The major challenge is the high dependence on foreign consultants and advisors: 21 survey respondents assessed it to be severely challenging, while 13 stated that it is moderately challenging. This was also identified as an issue by the NDAs and DAEs in all case study countries. Strengthening local DAEs is therefore a matter of enhancing sustainability. It would also tackle another factor mentioned in the survey, which is the uneasiness with the reliance on international DPs, found by 30 of 38 respondents to be a challenge to the sustainability of the RPSP outcomes.

The other two factors identified in **Figure 10** are inadequate institutionalization of climate funding processes at a national level, and the lack of focus on replication and scale-up. This relates to a finding in other areas of this evaluation – countries do not yet consistently utilize strategic frameworks and country work programmes as an instrument to enhance coherence and sustainability of RPSP outcomes and climate finance efforts.

FIGURE 10. CHALLENGES LIMITING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF RPSO OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS^{11, 12}



Source: Online survey; no multiple selections possible (N = 38).

3.2 FINDINGS AGAINST OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE 1: CAPACITY BUILDING

Objective 1 of the RPSO aims to build capacity by ensuring that GCF recipient countries and stakeholders establish the necessary human, technical, and institutional systems to fulfil their roles within GCF and enhance their ability to meet objectives (GCF, 2023b). Objective 1 has three outcomes:

1. Country NDAs or FPs and the network/system that enable them to fulfil their roles, responsibilities and policy requirements are operational and effective.
2. Direct access applicants and DAEs have established capacity to meet and maintain GCF accreditation standards, and the capacity to develop a pipeline of projects and effectively implement GCF funded activities.
3. Relevant country stakeholders (...) have established adequate capacity, systems and networks to support the planning, programming and implementation of GCF-funded activities.

¹¹ The survey has asked stakeholders to confirm or deny the existence of challenges that have been identified in earlier evaluations.

¹² The challenges named in this question are based on challenges named in the following five previous evaluations and reviews of the RPSO: the 2018 report by GCF/Dalberg, the 2018 review by the GCF Secretariat, the 2018 evaluation by IEU, the 2022 assessment report by Asesoramiento Ambiental Estratégico (AAE), and the 2023 evaluation by IEU.

Relevance of objective 1

ALIGNMENT OF OBJECTIVE 1 WITH GCF'S PRIORITIES

A total of 506 out of 634 grants have been allocated to capacity building, making objective 1 the most popular objective. Objective 1 also shows the highest progress rate among all objectives (cf. Annex VI).¹³ For the RPSP to meet the strategic priorities of GCF, objective 1 is of high relevance. Especially to strengthen country ownership, capacity building of NDAs and DAEs is needed.

ALIGNMENT OF OBJECTIVE 1 WITH COUNTRY PRIORITIES

The relevance of all three outcomes under this objective has been confirmed. Specifically, the capacity building support for NDAs and DAEs is relevant and responds to the countries' needs. NDAs confirm in additional interviews that there is a need for RPSP capacity building. In earlier evaluations, as well, the capacity of NDAs/FPs has consistently been described as lacking. A reason for that is that NDAs as civil servants are subject to staff rotation and therefore typically in the office for comparatively short periods of time. Building their capacity is a relevant, constant, and ongoing task (cf. sub-chapter 3.2.1.4).

The relevance of capacity building for DAEs has been highlighted consistently in all IEU evaluations that deal with the topic (GCF, 2018a, 2018b, 2023a). The RPSP portfolios in the country studies confirm that a focus on strengthening the capacities of DAEs is of high priority. In seven countries, a focus on DAEs was apparent in the project titles. Notably, projects in Rwanda (RWA-RS-005), Cook Islands (COK-RS-002), and Cambodia (KHM-RS-005) specifically addressed the (re-) accreditation process for DAEs. In contrast, projects in Bangladesh (BGD-RS-007), Grenada (GRD-RS-004), Peru and Senegal (both MUL-RS-002) prioritized initiatives that aimed to enhance DAEs' ability to access GCF resources. The benefits of having relevant stakeholders with sufficient capacity in the countries have been emphasized in the context of multi-stakeholder dialogues and are further discussed in sections 3.1.4.1 or 3.2.3, amongst others.

It is clear that successful implementation fosters some level of capacity development at any rate. Yet, interviews with stakeholders as well as earlier evaluations point to room for improvement. NDAs note that projects implemented by international DPs and regional projects might have a less strict alignment with their needs, which has also been highlighted by the LDC Evaluation (GCF, 2022c). One NDA reports that in regional readiness projects it is hard for one country to keep the same rhythm as other countries; another NDA emphasizes that the gained knowledge leaves the country with the international consultant once the projects is closed. In these cases, stakeholders found that often the capacity of non-resident consultants is expanded more than that of a local expert base, a factor which has shown up consistently as a barrier to accessing climate finance, but which is not tackled explicitly by readiness grants.

The case studies demonstrate that multistakeholder coordination mechanisms help improve access to and coordination of climate finance portfolios. However, in the RRMF, these contribute to both outcomes 1.1 and 1.3.

¹³ The "progress ratio" is defined as the number of grants targeting an objective divided by the number of grants that reported progress in the PPMS. The ratio is highest for objective 1 out of all objectives.

Effectiveness of objective 1

RPSP grants have effectively strengthened institutional capacities of NDAs (outcome 1.1) in areas such as national priority identification, mainstreaming guidance, local official capacity building, and streamlining accreditation processes (Zimbabwe, Peru, Senegal). Bangladesh's experience demonstrates how enhanced NDA capacity can benefit DAEs, DAE aspirants, and private sector stakeholders through an increased understanding of GCF funding modalities, accreditation, and project proposal requirements.

The majority of NDAs (31 out of 40) reported in the survey that their capacity to fulfil their role has been enhanced through the readiness support (outcome indicator 1.1.1). Additionally, 31 out of 40 NDAs/FPs found their NDA-level coordination mechanisms to be significantly or to some extent effective (outcome indicator 1.1.2). 32 out of 41 NDAs/FPs indicated that the policies, procedures, systems, and tools they use and have developed with the RPSP are effective (outcome indicator 1.1.3).

Challenges, emphasized in earlier evaluations as well, for the effectiveness of NDA's capacity building are the limited capacities of NDA staff to work on the RPSP and high turnover of NDA staff (GCF, 2018b, 2023a). This was highlighted by a wide range of stakeholders including the NDAs themselves, GCF Secretariat staff and civil society representatives.

The capacity building of DAEs is considered mostly effective (outcome 1.2). A strong majority of DAEs answering the online survey (40 out of 46) reported that their capacity was strengthened, with 22 indicating strong agreement and 18 agreeing. Only a small minority (6) disagreed or remained neutral. The survey reveals that the majority of DAEs (28 out of 38) find the RPSP effective in supporting accreditation efforts.

Overall, 85 organizations¹⁴ have been identified in the data available to the evaluation team as having received technical assistance or grant support to build capacity as DAEs. However, less than 50% of these grants reported on their progress under Output 1.2.1 to GCF (cf. Annex VI) and so the actual success rates are unclear.¹⁵

The nine country studies consistently demonstrated the RPSP's contribution to establishing multi-stakeholder governance structures (outcome 1.3). While many countries formed dedicated committees for RPSP-related discussions and interactions with other climate finance institutions, stakeholders in Cambodia and Moldova found the situations more challenging. An overview of established coordination mechanisms in the case study countries can be found in Annex XI.

The majority of DAEs answering the survey found that knowledge, capacity, networks and systems for planning, programming, and implementing GCF funded activities have been strengthened to a significant (21) or to some (16) extent. Five do not confirm a significant contribution (outcome indicator 1.3.1). Multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms are considered effective by 12 DAEs to a significant extent and by 21 to some extent. Seven DAEs find them effective to a limited or no extent (outcome indicator 1.3.2).

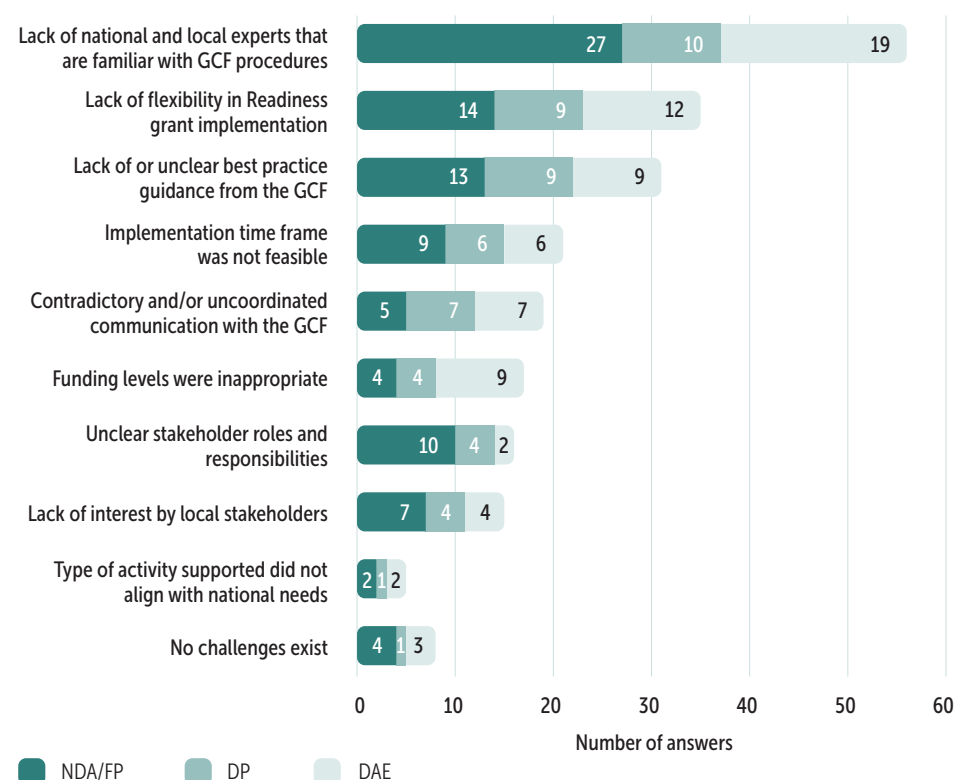
In addition to a high staff turnover in NDAs, the main challenge for the effectiveness of capacity building identified in both the survey (**Figure 11**) and KIIIs as well as the case studies is a lack of international and national experts that are familiar with GCF

¹⁴ This figure is reconstructed based on the countries and names of readiness grants. This is a minimum assessment.

¹⁵ Based on the available evidence it is not possible in this evaluation to assess outcome indicators 1.2.1 and 1.2.2 in more detail.

procedures. Stakeholders in the survey further identified GCF rules (the flexibility of implementation, duration period, funding levels, eligibility of activities) as challenges for effective capacity building. Effectiveness was also hampered by a lack of clarity about best practice, unclear stakeholder roles and responsibilities or lack of interest.

FIGURE 11. CHALLENGES TO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CAPACITY BUILDING



Source: Online survey; multiple selections possible (N = 101).

Coherence of objective 1

COHERENCE WITH OTHER FUNDS

The RPSP capacity building support for NDAs and DAEs is coherent with readiness programmes of other funds in the sense that all readiness support has a specific approach and seeks to avoid overlaps. Potential synergies or overlaps between the GCF RPSP objective 1 and the GEF EAs and CBIT exist mainly in strengthening the capacities of the NDAs and their coordination mechanisms. The main overlap with AF is in the support for DAE accreditation (outcome 1.2).

INTERNAL COHERENCE OF RPSP GRANTS UNDER OBJECTIVE 1

Internal coherence of RPSP grants is necessary and monitored through the approval process. Many countries receive several, often up to five, grants for the same outcomes on capacity building (outcomes 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3). Rwanda, for example, received six grants to support the development of NDA capacities, albeit with different priorities. The case studies did not identify double dipping. It is worth mentioning that 73 NDAs are also GEF focal points. Where the GCF NDA is simultaneously the GEF FP coherence is achieved more easily.

Sustainability of outcomes of objective 1 grants

The RPSP's contribution to capacity building of NDAs and other relevant stakeholders who are strengthened to assume their role emerges as a driver of continued progress. Formalized partnerships (within government, private sector, civil society) and robust coordination mechanisms that facilitate stakeholder collaboration (e.g. those established during GCF projects) are believed to promote lasting positive outcomes.

DAEs responding to the survey agree to a high degree (28 of 37) that knowledge gained remains available over time. Comments in the survey made by DAEs argue that the sustainability of knowledge depends on documentation of policies and procedures plus a robust governance framework and recurring training opportunities.

The primary issue regarding sustainability of capacity building lies in the context of the sustainability of capacity building efforts with the NDAs. In many countries, frequent changes of staff are caused by government rules on staff rotation, and regularly lead to a loss of accumulated expertise. Incoming staff require time and help to fully move into their new responsibilities, reestablish collaborative relationships with national and international partners, understand GCF, and build relationships with GCF Secretariat contacts. Write-in comments from the survey reveal that some NDAs are aware of this fact and ensure that knowledge built up through capacity building can be passed on. Some of the better performing case study countries, such as Peru, responded with institutional changes and systematic knowledge management. The NDA has a team of professionals with a good understanding of climate change-related issues, which strengthens the relationship and communication with GCF and national actors.

OBJECTIVE 2: STRATEGIC FRAMEWORKS

Objective 2 focuses on GCF recipient countries developing robust strategic frameworks to guide GCF investment in complementarity with other climate financiers. It has four outcomes:

1. GCF recipient countries have developed initial country programmes to guide GCF investment and programming of GCF Readiness and Preparatory Support resources.
2. GCF recipient countries have developed or enhanced strategic frameworks to address policy gaps, improve sectoral expertise, and enhance enabling environments for GCF programming.
3. Entity work programmes of accredited direct access entities have been developed, aligned with the priorities of the countries, including country programmes and GCF result areas.
4. Strategies for transforming and attracting private sector investment for low emissions and resilience have been developed and are in use.

Relevance of objective 2

443 out of the 634 RPSP grants in 126 different countries benefitted from the support under objective 2 for studies, country and sectoral plans.

RELEVANCE – ALIGNMENT WITH GCF'S PRIORITIES

In the reconstructed GCF RPSP ToC (**Figure 5**), objective 2, strategic frameworks, have crucial relevance for enabling the management of funding flows and transformation processes. All four priorities of the fund are aided by country programmes, strategic sectoral frameworks, entity work programmes and private sector strategies. This is confirmed by KIs that specifically emphasized that country programmes would

support a systematic approach to the climate transformation. The interviews also emphasized that private sector strategies are urgently needed to scale up private sector activities in the context of NDCs and climate finance. Sectoral strategic frameworks are important for defining the approach to transformation in the respective sectors followed by planning and prioritizing investment projects, including but not limited to climate finance so that funding can be scaled and the role of the private sector clearly understood (GCF strategic objectives 3 and 4).

RELEVANCE – ALIGNMENT WITH THE COUNTRIES' PRIORITIES

The relevance of objective 2 for countries and specifically NDAs is extremely high. Grants under this objective allow countries to translate NAPs, NDCs and sectoral policies into transformational climate finance pipelines. All NDAs in the case studies praise the strong alignment of this objective with their needs and confirm that grants under this objective are relevant to their ability to plan and schedule interventions.

Noteworthy in this context are the grants that allow countries to plan sectoral strategic frameworks. In combination with addressing policy gaps, improving sectoral expertise and enhancing an enabling environment, this goes beyond general stakeholder readiness and into sector programmes. Among the case study countries, Cambodia is utilizing this opportunity most decidedly by implementing a programme on capacity building and policy frameworks around electric mobility – comparable projects would be funded by GEF not under enabling activities but under climate action projects. The high relevance of outcome 2.2 is also seen in the high number of grant applications: 310 of the 447 grants that applied for funding under objective 2 are working on outcome 2.2, and more than 200 of these are working on sectoral studies or strategies.

Effectiveness of objective 2

80% of the NDAs/FPs answering the online survey, find that their country programmes are effective (outcome indicator 2.1.1). NDAs/FPs answering the survey mostly find strategic frameworks developed or enhanced with readiness support are used to address policy gaps to some extent (15 out of 31, seven agree to a significant extent, five to a limited extent and one to no extent (outcome indicator 2.2.1)).

14 out of 25 funded entity work programmes were aligned with country programmes and submitted to GCF (outcome indicator 2.3.1). To summarize based on DAEs answering the online survey, entity work programmes are to some extent effective. Around 70% of submitted CNs are aligned with priorities from the entity work programmes, and around 80% of the submitted Funding Proposals are aligned with priorities from the entity work programmes.

Out of 26 NDAs/FPs answering the survey, 16 find that sector policies and strategies have attracted private sector investments to some (14) or to a limited (two) extent. Six NDAs say that it happened to little or no extent and three answered that it had not happened yet but maybe in the future (outcome indicator 2.4.1).

Overall, the progress of achieved output indicators under objective 2 is relatively small and the second slowest of all objectives.

The comparatively low effectiveness of objective 2 may be attributed, in part, to its relative youth. The process of establishing country programmes and strategic frameworks and ensuring that they respond to national policies necessitates extensive consultations, which can contribute to lengthy implementation periods. Grants funding simpler activities, like studies, have a higher rate of completion than the strategic

frameworks or country work programmes. Other factors limiting the implementation speed gathered from the case studies include a dependence on international experts, travel and meeting restrictions due to the Covid-pandemic, but also the need to consult with a high number of stakeholders for country work programmes or strategic frameworks.

Coherence of objective 2

COHERENCE AT PROGRAMME LEVEL

Objective 2 is the missing link between capacity building for NDAs and achieving a comprehensive climate finance portfolio that responds to country priorities. This is unique among the UNFCCC climate finance mechanisms. However, country or entity work programmes are not requirements for GCF funding. This limits the coherence.

Coherence at the country level

Coherence at the country level is possible but not always enforced. The Cook Islands have consistently included objective 2 in four consecutive grant applications, highlighting in their proposals a broadening scope and increasing long-term orientation regarding outcome and output indicators. Other countries like Cambodia or Armenia utilize objective 2 on different levels of granularity and with different outcomes. Generally, coherence within a country is greater for projects that work towards outputs 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3, 2.2.4 and 2.2.6 than for 2.2.5 and 2.2.7.

Sustainability of outcomes of objective 2 grants

As objective 2 is mainly working on longer-term strategies, the sustainability of the outcomes upon successful implementation is high. Nevertheless, as these are mostly preparatory activities, their implementation typically requires follow-up. For example, country work programmes, sectoral strategies and private sector strategies often rely on a climate finance project to provide the funding for associated investments, and in fact their purpose is to prioritize and plan such follow-up. However, there are several cases and opportunities where the RPSP grant itself provides climate impact, e.g. through designing and implementing policy frameworks that require no additional external funding.

OBJECTIVE 3: NATIONAL ADAPTATION PLANS AND ADAPTATION PLANNING PROCESSES

Objective 3 focuses on supporting developing countries in adapting to the immediate and long-term impacts of climate change. The outcomes of objective 3 are:

1. Adaptation planning governance and institutional coordination strengthened;
2. Evidence produced to design adaptation solutions for maximum impact;
3. Private sector engagement in adaptation catalyzed; and
4. Adaptation finance increased.

Relevance of objective 3

The development and updating of NAPs (objective 3) were supported by a total of 126 grants.

ALIGNMENT WITH GCF'S OBJECTIVES

At the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) in 2015, GCF was requested to expedite support for the formulation of NAPs and the implementation of NAP-related programmes and projects (UNFCCC, no date). By channelling NAP assistance through its Readiness Programme, the GCF Secretariat can streamline the process, eliminating the need for board approval on a project-by-project basis. Given GCF's mandate to allocate at least 50% of its financing to adaptation projects, enhancing developing countries' capacity to access and implement these initiatives is paramount. Although only 18% (USD 11.9 million) of total readiness resources were spent on completed grants between 2014 and 2023, the proportion allocated to objective 3 grants has risen sharply to 42% since 2019 (grants approved or in progress). This trend underscores the growing significance and relevance of objective 3 within the RPSP.

The participation of local communities is also a matter of relevance. In a previous evaluation, it was noted that, "full country ownership requires appropriate participation in climate action by (...) local communities" (GCF, 2018a, p. 35).

ALIGNMENT WITH COUNTRY OBJECTIVES

Objective 3 is deemed highly relevant and is well aligned with country priorities and needs. Among the country studies, this was particularly evident for SIDS as well as for Bangladesh. The IEU Evaluations on LDCs, Africa and SIDS also consistently found that more attention needs to be devoted to adaptation planning and implementation. The development of adaptation plans, and associated planning processes, is a prioritized component of the NDCs in all case study countries. But according to the NAP tracking tool of the UNFCCC LDC Expert Group's NAP Central, only 58 (37%) developing countries have submitted a NAP (by August 2024), while the NAP formulation process of about half of the developing countries (48%) is still in progress, and at least six countries (4%) have not initiated the formulation of a NAP. The NAP process as well as the outcomes are frequently utilized to update and enhance the adaptation elements of the NDCs. This highlights the need to further support developing countries with the formulation and updating of NAPs. KKIs with stakeholders reinforced this finding, e.g. in the Cook Islands, where there was a strong call for GCF to increase their support to enhance adaptation planning capacity and develop a NAP. Zimbabwean stakeholders expressed positive feedback on the growing emphasis on objective 3.

Effectiveness of objective 3

Of the 57 NAPs of developing countries that have been submitted to the UNFCCC by 2024, 43 had a GCF NAP readiness support proposal approved ("NAP tracking tool", 2024) but 80% of the grants tackling NAPs directly were still under implementation (outcome indicator 3.1.1).

While 22% of respondents to the online survey indicated that the RPSP had not led to successful institutional adaptation coordination mechanisms, the majority reported positive outcomes from these efforts (outcome indicators 3.1.2 and 3.1.3). In Peru, inter-ministerial coordination, particularly between the Ministries of Economy and Finance and Environment, has improved. Moldova's projects MDA-RS-003-NAP-2 and MDA-RS-002 enhance coordination among stakeholders and facilitate joint planning. MDA-RS-002 also exemplifies successful local community integration into NAP planning. By facilitating technology identification suitable for the local context and fostering a vibrant online and offline community of practice for knowledge exchange, the project empowered farmers to contribute effectively to climate-smart agricultural adaptation strategies. Zimbabwean stakeholders commend the inclusivity and alignment of institutional adaptation mechanisms with national governance. While

3 FINDINGS DISCUSSION

these mechanisms are deemed effective due to the NDA's expertise and capacity-building initiatives, their implementation is hindered by resource constraints.¹⁶

The results for outcome indicator 3.4.1. show room for improvement: Of the 16 CNs that have been developed with readiness support with adaptation focus in the current GCF pipeline, only 2 are supported by RPSP NAP grants. The 16 CNs amount for USD 488 million (outcome indicator 3.4.2).

Overall, the evaluation shows that the mechanisms around NAPs are effective in some countries but do not yet perform as well in others. The share of the NDAs and FPs who found the effectiveness of these coordination mechanisms effective is quite high but leaves some room for improvement (5 out of 20 find it effective to a significant extent, 10 find it effective to some extent and 2 to a limited extent).

Coherence of objective 3

COHERENCE WITH OTHER FUNDS

In addition to GCF, the NAP process is supported by multiple climate funds, such as the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF), the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) and AF. Due to common guidance and thorough review processes, the support is coherent.

LDCF and SCCF are primarily dedicated to climate action projects but are also supporting NAP development, which occasionally intersects with RPSP activities. In total, LDCF has allocated more resources to the NAP process than GCF. These overlaps suggest a need for a more in-depth analysis of how these funds can enhance their synergy in the context of supporting countries regarding the development of adaptation planning and strategies. Given the growing urgency for strengthened adaptation planning and strategies, a more comprehensive examination of potential collaborations among the funds could yield valuable insights.

There is also coherence with the reporting to the Convention funded by GEF. For example, in the case of the Cook Islands, the GEF-project "First Biennial Transparency and Fourth National Communication Report (BTR1/NC4)" addressed adaptation issues by updating vulnerability information and adaptation measures that can address GCF readiness activities according to the NDA.

INTERNAL COHERENCE OF FUNDED ACTIVITIES

Objective 3 presents a broad scope that intersects with other components of the RPSP. Its focus on institutional strengthening, strategic framework development, adaptation-related pipeline building, knowledge generation, and capacity building in the adaptation context creates potential overlaps with objectives 1, 2, 4, and 5. Despite this interconnectedness, the evaluation team recognizes the value of objective 3's specific emphasis on adaptation. By concentrating on this area, the RPSP has effectively addressed a critical gap in many developing countries. This was made particularly evident in the case studies, where an NDA of a SIDS underscored the urgent need for dedicated adaptation planning support and support to access funding due to the historic disproportionate focus on mitigation.

NAPs have demonstrated significant impact, serving as frequent references in Funding Proposals to GCF and other climate funds. However, interviews with GCF Secretariat members identified challenges in utilizing NAPs and other deliverables, such as country

¹⁶ Evidence to assess outcome indicators 3.2.1 and 3.3.1 is not available.

programmes or feasibility studies, to construct comprehensive national climate action portfolios. A fundamental challenge also lies in securing adequate funding for NAP implementation. Despite a growing number of submitted NAPs, LDCs emphasized the acute shortage of financial resources at the NAP Expo 2023.

Sustainability of outcomes of objective 3 grants

Case study evidence suggests that the outcomes associated with objective 3 are likely to be sustained. Moldova exemplifies this as the project MDA-RS-003-NAP-2 allowed the country to adopt an action plan for the National Programme for Adaptation to Climate Change, which provides support to five priority sectors: health, transport, energy, water and forestry, and is accompanied by an action plan to prevent and overcome the risks and vulnerabilities caused by climate change. Guidelines for climate change integration at national, sectoral, community, and organizational levels have been adopted. Primary responsibility for programme implementation lies with the Ministry of Environment and its subordinate institutions.

More general evidence highlighted the need for attention to several critical areas. NAPs necessitate a multi-year lifespan. However, their effective implementation requires ongoing financial support to enable regular updates, i.e. continued funding flows from the RPSP.

OBJECTIVE 4: PIPELINE DEVELOPMENT

Objective 4 is targeting the buildup of a pipeline of high-quality CNs and Funding Proposals, mainly targeting LDCs, SIDS, and African States, as well as direct access Accredited Entities. Its five outcomes are:

1. Increase in the number of quality project CNs developed and submitted;
2. Increase in the quality of Funding Proposals developed and submitted from accredited DAEs;
3. An increase in the number of quality CNs developed and submitted that target SIDS, LDCs and African States;
4. An increase in the number of quality Funding Proposals developed and submitted that target SIDS, LDCs and African States; and
5. 4.5 An increase in the proportion of PPF requests and Funding Proposals approved as a result of Readiness and Preparatory Support.

Relevance of objective 4

RELEVANCE – ALIGNMENT WITH GCF'S STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

A total of 346 out of 634 grants targeted objective 4, working in 134 countries. The most frequently targeted outcomes were outcome 4.1 – targeted by 331 grants, focusing on developing CNs for priority sectors (target of 291 grants) and pipeline assessments (target of 111 grants) – and outcome 4.5, with 48 grants, primarily aimed at PPF assistance requests linked to CNs, with a target of 37 (**Table 11**).¹⁷

¹⁷ Indicators 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.3 and 4.3.4 are a subset of indicators 4.1.1, 4.1.2, and 4.1.3 and 4.1.4 respectively focusing only on those developed in SIDS, LDCs and African States. Please note that the numbers can't be added up as there are overlaps in the categories (e.g. some of the grants will be included in both Africa and LDCs). Furthermore, no data has been provided for the outcomes 4.2 and 4.4.

RELEVANCE – ALIGNMENT WITH THE COUNTRIES’ NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

An analysis reviewed the submitted CNs and Funding Proposals for all nine case study countries regarding their focuses and compared them to the needs and priorities as formulated in the NDCs and/or NAPs of each respective country. This analysis revealed that 80% of NDAs responding to the survey confirmed that the CNs and Funding Proposals are aligned with the overall needs of the countries and part of the country programme. The deeper analysis in the case studies does not necessarily confirm this. Here, the CNs that make it to GCF do not always address the highest-level priorities as expressed by the countries or those expressed in the country work programmes. For example, Cambodia’s NDC highlights the need to enhance technical capacity and knowledge across various ministries, especially in climate change capacity, greenhouse gas (GHG) measurement, and vulnerability assessment. The first nine projects in the country programme focus on agriculture and water management. The three CNs that have been designed with GCF readiness support correspond to the project numbers 2 and 10 on this list, and one is not on the list at all.

EFFECTIVENESS OF OBJECTIVE 4

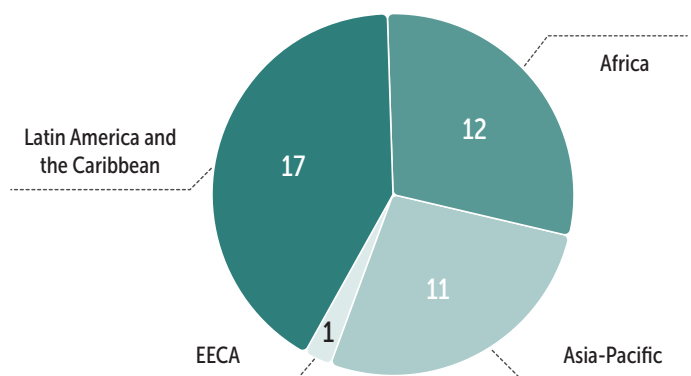
A major pathway to climate finance was expected to arise from the development of CNs and Funding Proposals under objective 4 of the RPSP. The RPSP was overall effective in supporting the development of CNs and Funding Proposals. In the analysis of the readiness portfolio up until 15 January 2024, a total of 331 CNs and 21 Funding Proposals (GCF, 2024a) have been developed under the RPSP.¹⁸ 41 CNs and two Funding Proposals developed with readiness support made it to the GCF pipeline and collectively planned for a total funding amount of more than USD 2.5 billion (outcome indicator 4.1.2 and 4.2.2). Of these, at least one CN was CIC PPF approved,¹⁹ one is CIC PPF endorsed, one is CIC2 endorsed, one is under PRTP review sent to the AE (FP CIC3) and for one PRTP review has started (CN CIC2) (GCF, 2024a). There is evidence that some CNs developed with GCF readiness support are then funded by other mechanisms (outcome indicator 4.1.1 and 4.2.1).

The regional distribution of the 41 CNs supported with readiness funding shows 17 from Latin America and the Caribbean, 12 from Africa, 11 from Asia-Pacific, and one from Eastern Europe (see **Figure 12**). Both Funding Proposals identified as readiness funded originated from Latin America and the Caribbean. The 43 documents developed with readiness funding collectively plan for a total funding amount of USD 2,554 million. Of this, USD 1520.8 million is anticipated to come from GCF, while USD 1,034.3 million is expected to be co-financed. Regionally, Latin America and the Caribbean received the highest funding at USD 1,164.5 million, followed by Africa with USD 771.8 million, Asia-Pacific with USD 604.8 million, and Eastern Europe with USD 10.5 million. Africa has received the highest support from GCF at USD 718.5 million, followed by Asia-Pacific with USD 629.8 million, Latin America and the Caribbean with USD 603.4 million, and Eastern Europe with USD 10 million. But as the progression from CNs to actual climate financing projects is not always linear, clear allocation is difficult, and these numbers are currently estimates.

¹⁸ The integrated portfolio management system (iPMS) records these documents with assigned numbers, though these numbers and titles sometimes change as documents progress through the pipeline.

¹⁹ At the cut-off date in January 2024.

FIGURE 12. REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF READINESS FUNDED CNS IN THE GCF PIPELINE



Source: GCF Secretariat; portfolio data; no multiple selections possible (N = 41).

The number of CNS submitted or planned for submission to other climate funds remain uncertain due to the lack of a tracking mechanism. While there have been some submissions, such as the GEF project “Accelerating the Introduction of Low-Emission and Climate-Resilient Electric Mobility in Grenada” approved in 2022 (see **Table 14**), these instances have been limited.

The high number of CNS is a strain on the GCF system, as the GCF Secretariat can review only around 120–150 proposals per year, according to interviewees. Stakeholders have voiced concern about the relevance of many CNS which might remain unreviewed and unrealized due to limited review capacities at GCF – but also at the country level.

Judging from readiness grant proposals, a total of 915 CNS are expected by 2026 (GCF, 2024b). Secretariat staff raised concerns about the Secretariat’s capacity to manage such a large volume of submitted CNS. It is also unlikely that overall funding as well as national implementation capacity will manage to implement all these projects immediately.

The analysis of 352 CNS submitted between 2016 and 2022 revealed a general trend towards increased adherence to the GCF template. While usage peaked at 100% in 2021, a slight decline in 2022 suggests that this trend may not be entirely consistent. Additionally, interviewees in Peru reported that the RPSP has allowed for the development of higher quality CNS, which have also led to larger-scale climate projects.

PPFs often outperform Funding Proposals developed with readiness support by providing critical support during early project development stages, ensuring better alignment and higher quality, which leads to greater success when projects advance to full Funding Proposal.

Another analysis identified which approved Funding Proposals in the GCF climate projects portfolio were created with readiness support. This required manually checking the CNS and Funding Proposals documents of the nine selected countries. In Bangladesh, interviewees reported that readiness support was crucial in creating a project for private sector investment for the textile sector by improving knowledge and capacity and developing networks for planning, programming, and implementing GCF-funded activities, approved with USD 256.48 million in GCF financing (FP150). Similarly, in Cambodia, the Cambodian Climate Financing Facility, which received USD 54.96 million from GCF, was developed with readiness funding. In the Cook Islands,

readiness support strengthened the DAE (Bank of Cook Islands) by providing training for relevant individuals, enhancing its capacity to access and mobilize funding. In Peru, readiness funding was key in developing two GCF-funded projects, of which one has already been completed (FP193) and one is currently under implementation (FP001). Rwanda also benefited from readiness support, with one receiving USD 39.06 million in GCF financing. However, no CN matching this project was identified, and the situation varied significantly in other countries. In Grenada, no national climate finance projects linked to readiness funding have been identified since 2018, with similar gaps observed in Moldova, Zimbabwe, and Senegal (see **Table 14**).

Coherence of objective 4

COHERENCE WITH OTHER FUNDS

The overall coherence of the pipeline development with other funds demonstrates both strengths and areas needing improvement. Some of these concepts have been submitted to other funds; for example, the project “Accelerating the introduction of low-emission and climate-resilient electric mobility in Grenada” (GEF, ID10629) was approved in 2022 with funding from the GEF Trust Fund (see **Table 14**). This project originated from a GCF readiness grant named GRD-RS-001. However, the number of these submissions have been limited so far, with the exact number unknown.

INTERNAL COHERENCE OF FUNDED ACTIVITIES

Overall, the submitted CNs and Funding Proposals demonstrate strong coherence, effectively addressing the needs and priorities of target countries (see **Table 6**). For example, Cambodia’s CNs and Funding Proposals emphasize water and sanitation infrastructure and sustainable agriculture, focusing on resilience and capacity building. The Cook Islands prioritize financial support for community-driven projects and business resilience. Grenada’s CNs and Funding Proposals span areas like coastal ecosystem restoration, infrastructure resilience, and sustainable wastewater management, but with 22 submissions, prioritization is needed to avoid overlaps. Moldova targets ecosystem adaptation, renewable energy, and soil management. Peru’s CNs focus on climate resilience in the Amazon, particularly protected area management and forest fire prevention. Rwanda covers industrial development, urban planning, and disaster risk management, combining structural measures with capacity building. Senegal emphasizes the Great Green Wall, water management, and sustainable agriculture, focusing on governance and coordination. Zimbabwe targets disaster management and ecosystem resilience, with a focus on climate-smart practices and wetland management.

Despite the often-significant alignment between the priorities and needs of the countries and the content of the CNs and Funding Proposals, the submitted documents generally seem to focus more on individual interests and pilot projects rather than taking a systemic approach and being complementary with sectoral strategies and national planning. The coherence of CNs with sectoral strategies under objective 2 is often insufficiently elaborated. This trend is evident in many instances, although it varies across countries and the number of CNs submitted.

Sustainability of outcomes of objective 4 grants

Overall, substantial barriers can be identified for the sustainability of pipeline development and the readiness activity cycle. Firstly, due to a lack of effective project and information management systems, tracking and managing CNs and Funding Proposals is inadequate. The current systems like iPMS, Open Data Library (ODL), and

Portfolio Performance Management Systems (PPMS) do not comprehensively track these projects from inception to implementation.

Secondly, so many CNs are developed (often as required deliverables) that the Secretariat is not expecting to be able to review them all adequately (cf. 3.2.4.1.3). They are at risk of becoming obsolete fast, particularly given the length of the GCF project cycle. If they are submitted to GCF with delay, or if too many are submitted at the same time, writing efforts and lengthy submission procedures might require duplication of efforts or the CNs may no longer align with country priorities and national priorities. The value of “aging CNs” is questionable. If the high number is a result of a prioritization of quantity over quality, then this is problematic.

This issue is exemplified by cases like Grenada, where multiple CNs were derived from a single project (GRD-RS-001). All in all, Grenada has submitted 22 CNs and one Funding Proposal, with only one project advancing to the funding stage. Stakeholders, including the GCF Secretariat, are exploring strategies to utilize these unreviewed CNs. In Peru, the NDA played a key role in securing the approval of project FP226 in 2024. Initially, several CNs from project PER-RS-002 were combined into a stronger proposal after recognizing quality issues. This highlights that active pipeline management of NDAs and DAEs is required to enhance the sustainability of this funding stream.

OBJECTIVE 5: KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND LEARNING

GCF recipient countries have benefitted from increased levels of awareness, knowledge sharing and learning that contribute to their developing and implementing transformational projects in low-carbon and climate-resilient development pathways. Objective 5 has two outcomes:

1. Best practices with respect to institutional capacity building, direct access, and pipeline development are developed and disseminated to strengthen engagement by NDAs, DAEs, and delivery partners with GCF.
2. Partnerships are established and operational to foster development and dissemination of methods, frameworks, and information systems for enhanced climate finance programming at subnational, national, and regional levels.

Relevance of objective 5

ALIGNMENT WITH GCF'S PRIORITIES

Knowledge management is indirectly relevant for GCF's Strategic Priorities. By disseminating lessons learned, it supports the efficiency of the RPSP-supported activities as well as climate action. It is “greasing” the ToC. Providing funds to the country level through the RPSP complements the Readiness Knowledge Bank that the Secretariat manages for the global level.

Important elements of objective 5 (output 5.1.1 and outcome 5.2) focus on transboundary cooperation and South-South learning, a priority identified by the Board. The need for partnerships across borders was found to be particularly important for SIDS and small countries in general.

ALIGNMENT WITH COUNTRY PRIORITIES AND NEEDS

Stakeholders consulted in the case studies – NDAs, FPs, and DAEs – agreed that enhanced capacity building and increased knowledge to access climate finance are imperative. The persistent capacity deficit highlighted across the case studies can be mitigated with knowledge management. Stakeholders uniformly expressed

a keen interest in expanded knowledge sharing initiatives. For example, the newly appointed NDA in Grenada has commended GCF's knowledge products for providing comprehensive support during their onboarding process.

However, only 32 grants were approved for outcome 5.2, and of these, only 8 have reported any progress to the GCF Secretariat as of January 2024.

Effectiveness of objective 5

NDA/FPs and DPs surveyed indicated a potential for improvement in the contribution of knowledge products to broader project objectives (outcome indicator 5.1.1). While 15 respondents expressed partial agreement that knowledge products generated through RPSP grants supported their capacity building, strategic framework development, direct access, and pipeline building, only nine strongly concurred. Conversely, four respondents perceived a limited contribution. Given the incomplete progress toward this objective, a more comprehensive assessment is warranted in future evaluations.

In the case studies, RPSP grants have notably accelerated knowledge exchange both within and across sectors and stakeholder groups. In various cases, evidence in the evaluation highlighted that NDAs strategically conducted knowledge exchange activities in the form of workshops, conferences, or institutionalized community of practices. One prime example for this was found in Peru. The NDA, based on the interaction and knowledge exchange with other NDAs through a multi-country readiness project (MUL-RS-002), has been able to identify which aspects need to be strengthened internally to have much more agile articulation processes with the sectors and different actors. The community of practice formed with this multi-country readiness project brings together very diverse Accredited Entities (environmental funds, banks, NGOs, ministries), which generates an enriching and continuous exchange, strengthened by annual face-to-face meetings, and has established links that allow them to strengthen institutions based on personal ties, including coordinating joint events at climate change COPs. Another example is the case of Bangladesh where the NDA developed training sessions, modules, and manuals on GCF's funding landscape, priority areas, and requirements for accessing the fund. The South-South exchange programme undertaken by Rwandan stakeholders in neighbouring Kenya also uses this approach, facilitating valuable knowledge and experience sharing.

Coherence of objective 5

INTERNAL COHERENCE OF FUNDED ACTIVITIES

Based on the findings of the evaluation, coherence with other funds can be improved. Theoretically, many knowledge items and stakeholders are relevant to the other funds, as well as for reporting to the UNFCCC. However, in practice, synergies are not systematically leveraged. For example, in Bangladesh, the same DP delivered NDA support under objective 1 and CBIT for Measurement, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) and reporting purposes. It would have been possible and sensible to include a component on knowledge management to support both the NDA and the UNFCCC focal point. Yet, institutional incentives within the DP were not aligned with that.

Impact of objective 5

Evaluation evidence, particularly from case studies, demonstrates that countries are better equipped to access climate financing as a result of RPSP projects implemented with a view to objective 5. Sharing and communication of best practices among

projects have increased knowledge within NDAs and DAEs. Knowledge platforms have facilitated (institutional) knowledge management and transfer, which is particularly valuable for retaining institutional knowledge during staff turnover, as evidenced in multiple case studies. Strengthened partnerships fostered by knowledge-sharing communities were few but as the South-South exchange in Rwanda and the regional network in Peru demonstrate, these partnerships have some impact on demand for GCF funding. These factors have resulted in an overall improved project quality. The findings underscore the pivotal role of knowledge sharing and learning in enhancing countries' capacities to access and effectively utilize climate finance.

Sustainability of outcomes of objective 5 grants

The sustainability of objective 5 is a critical concern due to the frequent turnover of NDAs, a challenge consistently highlighted across case studies and stakeholder feedback in the evaluation. A positive example of knowledge transfer was observed in Grenada, where the previous primary NDA continues to support the successor by providing ongoing assistance as needed.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The GCF RPSP is the largest capacity building effort of all climate finance funds. As this evaluation shows, and as the following conclusions will underline in more detail, it has had a significant impact on improving countries' capacity to apply for GCF and other climate funding.

4.1 CONCLUSIONS REGARDING READINESS AND COUNTRY NEEDS

THE READINESS PROGRAMME SUCCESSFULLY CATERS TO VERY DIFFERENT NEEDS

Countries are different, and this includes the fact that their climate coordination structures are different. Their readiness to embark on climate action varies. Available resources for country coordination vary widely – in terms of funding, interministerial coordination, access to national and international experts, and national implementation structures. Furthermore, they build on different levels of expertise with the climate finance system. The RPSP implicitly recognizes this by tailoring bespoke projects under the different funding streams (objectives). This bespoke approach can ensure that the differences between countries are taken into account. On the downside, it leads to long approval and negotiation processes and potentially a lack of integration of best practice. Both aspects limit the effectiveness and impact of the support.

READINESS BEST PRACTICES INCLUDE WELL-CAPACITATED NDAs, STRONG DAES, STRONG COUNTRY COORDINATION AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Stakeholders frequently asked, “readiness for what?” (cf. sub-chapter 3.1.3). For example, the ToC of the GCF IEU in its recent evaluation implies “ready for a carbon free world”, while the ToC underlying this portfolio says, “ready for mobilizing carbon finance”. At this point it is comparatively clear that the readiness focus is on strengthening national governance processes around the approval and implementation of climate finance projects: national (government) coordination, translation of national plans into climate finance proposals, stakeholder involvement. Overall, readiness shall prepare the (administrative) path for climate action and prepare NDAs and DAEs to fulfil their respective roles in the (GCF) system.

As of now there is little guidance on “readiness best practice”, i.e. what are the most useful components and skills, with respect to in-country institutional capacity, in-country coordination, and developing sectoral strategies into fundable proposals.²⁰ There is no (abstract) description of the ideal situation that countries can use to work towards in order to find the most efficient and effective way of structuring a country's climate finance needs and access to climate finance sources.

Four elements of such a best practice have been identified in this evaluation: well-capacitated NDAs, strong DAEs, strong country coordination mechanisms and knowledge management.

²⁰ There is a guidance document on country programming, highlighting their importance: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/country-programme-guidance>.

THERE ARE STRUCTURAL REASONS WHY NDAS WILL REQUIRE ONGOING SUPPORT

NDA capacity has been highlighted repeatedly as the issue to be supported by the RPSP (GCF, 2018b, 2023b). It is also at the core of the original mandate to the RPSP according to the GCF Instrument. The evaluation has confirmed the relevance of this challenge. In addition, the evaluation has collected evidence to the effect that this challenge will be ongoing. It simply cannot be solved once and for all. Building NDA capacity is an ongoing task, which will never be fully achieved. For structural reasons, such as the frequent turnover of government staff, including NDAs, the RPSP must accept this as a basic tenet. The RPSP has an opportunity to respond to this with a systemic response, for example, continuous easily accessible capacity building offers.

Another structural reason is that NDAs cannot be sectoral specialists for all climate-relevant areas. They need to be able to build on institutionalized systems of country coordination and knowledge management within their country. The fact that support from sectoral specialists and close coordination with other entities for NDAs help create successful climate finance portfolios is evidenced by the (successful) country cases that have been analyzed for this evaluation.

STRONG DAES ARE IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF READINESS, PROVIDING LOCAL KNOWLEDGE AND CONTINUITY

This evaluation has confirmed earlier reviews that there is a need for strong DAEs. Specifically, the country studies have consistently highlighted the relevance of DAEs as important local partners of the NDAs. The NDAs expect that DAEs know and understand the local environment, governance, climate finance priorities, stakeholder ecosystems, and habits. A persistent complaint about the international AEs and regional AEs was that they were not rooted in the country, and therefore their projects were less connected to country priorities and local stakeholders. National DAEs are part of the local community, and building their expertise also supports a pool of national experts for climate finance with a significant degree of commitment (cf. sub-chapter 3.1.5). Compared to NDAs, DAEs are less affected by staff rotation and build up technical competence to a significant extent. In this sense, they can be a potential pillar not only for climate action, but also for a sustainability strategy for the RPSP.

The success of the RPSP in supporting DAEs for accreditation, however, leaves some room for improvement. Only 14 of the 80 or more organizations that have received pre-accreditation readiness support were successful in being accredited (cf. sub-chapter 3.1.4). In the context of this evaluation, it was not possible to identify the exact reasons for that, as accreditation is a challenging process. Generally, the evaluation has confirmed the need for more targeted support towards DAEs. Strong institutional coordination, clear communication plans, and dedicated teams for interacting with GCF were all highlighted as factors contributing to success (GCF, 2022a).

COUNTRY COORDINATION PROVIDES A SOUND BASIS FOR PIPELINE DEVELOPMENT

The evaluation has clearly demonstrated that countries with high funding levels – such as the case study countries – work systematically with national coordination systems and develop country work programmes or sectoral frameworks that guide the development of CN and Funding Proposals.

Looking beyond the case studies, countries consistently rely on funding for capacity building and (later) pipeline development. Yet, the elements in the middle for a clear strategic approach for prioritizing climate finance needs and applying for climate

finance projects accordingly (cf. sub-chapter 3.2.3.2) are often missing or less developed. Comparatively few grants have been completed on country programmes and strategic frameworks under objective 2. But these elements of country coordination are crucial as the basis for the development of quality CNs and Funding Proposals that respond to the funding needs and priorities of the countries. Country programmes and strategic frameworks have the function of helping all stakeholders (national stakeholders, climate funds, negotiators as well as other donors) understand what the countries' priorities are in reducing vulnerability to climate change and in low-carbon development. This can help align with other development plans and support strategies. As the Paris Agreement cannot be implemented in a siloed approach but relies on mainstreaming across all sectors, this planning exercise is crucial for progress.

Systematic sectoral planning in cooperation with or by the line ministries would be best practice for climate finance and sectoral transformation, mitigation, and climate proofing of all sectors of the countries. This would also be the next step in aligning all climate funding across the different funds, as well as implementation of country (development) priorities.

Implementation levels of activities under objective 2 are generally low, mostly lower than 40%. Where country programmes or sectoral frameworks and strategies have been submitted to GCF, they are not consistently translated into CNs and Funding Proposals. A mapping of the submitted projects to the country programmes demonstrated that CNs are not always developed according to the priority ranking included in the country programme (cf. sub-chapter 3.2.4.1.2). Several practical factors might play into this, including a limitation on the number of local entities that can develop programmes that cater to the highest priorities.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS ON THE RPSP LEVEL AND ON THE COUNTRY-LEVEL FILL AN IMPORTANT GAP IN READINESS

The programme exhibits some very good examples of knowledge management on the country level, but there is still a lack of clear guidance to help countries develop robust knowledge management systems. This is noteworthy, as the repeated analysis has clearly identified knowledge gaps and how they can be closed. While the RRMF under objective 5 does not include an outcome indicator on knowledge management on the country level, its relevance has been highlighted in the country studies. The opportunities of country planning and the formulation of strategic frameworks – and the monitoring of their implementation – are key areas where country-based knowledge management is necessary.

Knowledge needs can be differentiated in centralized and country-specific knowledge needs, as well as in one-off versus ongoing needs. Specifically, there is a continued need for onboarding individuals new to the NDA/FP function. There is a continued need to educate AEs about the ecosystem and there is an increasing need to discuss the opportunities for the private sector with NDAs, AEs and other stakeholders, and update stakeholders on GCF policy and procedural change. While some of these needs can be taken on by the GCF Secretariat, it is not required that the Secretariat implements all these knowledge management activities.

It is noteworthy and important that the GCF Secretariat is undertaking significant efforts to provide best practice cases and guidance. The Knowledge Bank was increasingly equipped with knowledge products over the course of the evaluation. Due to this early stage of development, it was not feasible to assess its effectiveness at this point in time. In addition, the evaluation was unable to identify the knowledge management

strategy at the RPSP level that would guide these activities, which needs to be embedded in an overall strategy with a defined target group, appropriate activities, and results monitoring.

4.2 CONCLUSIONS REGARDING THE FUNDING OF THE READINESS NEEDS THROUGH THE RPSP

THE TOC OF THE RPSP IS CONCLUSIVE, COMPLIES WITH THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES OF GCF, AND IS A USEFUL GUIDE FOR SYSTEMATIC MOBILIZATION OF CLIMATE FINANCE

Readiness support shall prepare the (administrative) path for climate action and prepare NDAs and DAEs to fulfil their respective roles in the (GCF) system. In that sense, the ToC as expressed in the original strategy holds. Its building blocks are building on each other consistently (cf. 3.1.3): the foundation is the capacity and institutional setup of the NDAs and FPs. Their main tools for expressing priorities and coordinating climate action are country programmes and strategic frameworks. Based on these programmes and frameworks, CNs and Funding Proposals are developed and submitted to the GCF Secretariat for approval.

More than the readiness funding of other funds, the GCF RPSP directly links readiness and climate action. On the one hand, earlier evaluations have consistently commented upon a missing link between readiness funding and GCF funded activities, and this evaluation also highlights the gap between the country programmes and strategic frameworks. On the other hand, this evaluation finds that GCF is taking steps to enable climate action directly through the RPSP. Specifically, funding under objective 2 to develop sectoral frameworks, studies and policies, which often already constitutes climate action and is logically embedded in the ToC of the RPSP. Much can be achieved for the climate through these modalities and without the immediate need for multi-million-dollar investment projects.

THE FUNDING STREAMS (OBJECTIVES) OF THE RPSP 2.0 WERE DIFFERENT FROM THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF THE TOC

With this ToC, the RPSP 2019–2021 has become much clearer than the readiness support in the first period. Its ToC includes an important role for sectoral and strategic frameworks as well as country programmes (cf. sub-chapter 3.1.3). However, the building blocks of the ToC map only directly on to three out of the five objectives of the RPSP: Objective 1 provides the resources for capacity building, objective 2 provides the resources for strategic planning, and objective 4 provides resources for the development of project CNs and Funding Proposals.

Two objectives are perpendicular to this logic: Knowledge management (objective 5) is underlying and linking all three components. NAP development (objective 3) integrates the logic of objectives 1, 2 and 4 within one theme-specific objective that provides funding for the whole NAP process. In that sense the objectives' structure does not fully reflect the ToC.

THE LINKS BETWEEN THE ELEMENTS OF THE TOC ARE OFTEN NOT FULLY LEVERAGED FOR THE BENEFIT OF PRIORITIZED AND TARGETED CLIMATE ACTION

In practice, countries typically do not implement the full logic of the RPSP's ToC. While capacity building components have demonstrated relevance and effectiveness, the same cannot be said for funding allocated to CN development. Moreover, the intermediary step of developing country programmes and strategic frameworks is frequently omitted. This step is essential as it is the point where country governments prioritize issues and coordinate between the stakeholders. As the examples from the country case studies have shown, if the NDA and the DAEs are using strategic frameworks, country work programmes, and entity work programmes (objective 2) in the sense of the ToC, they can coordinate and consolidate outputs from objective 4 into high priority and high-quality GCF funding. But if objective 4 is optimizing for a high volume of CNs rather than the implementation of country work programmes, outputs risk being fragmented, unprioritized and of low sustainability. Similarly, while knowledge management is a considerate effort of the RPSP and led to some successes, suggested activities under objective 5 as well as the project portfolio do not seem to be integrated into a clear strategy of what kind of knowledge should be managed, how, and for which stakeholders (cf. sub-chapter 3.2.5.3).

As described above, objective 2 funding can be used by NDAs and line ministries to structure sectoral approaches, and clearly define the investment, policy and capacity building needs. Yet, this evaluation, like its predecessors, found that the link between country priorities as expressed in country programmes and submissions to GCF remains weak (cf. sub-chapter 4.1.5). Where the grants for sectoral frameworks are used to describe investment needs in the form of sectoral investment project proposals for GCF funding, this will leverage readiness funding for initial climate action and can later lead to larger climate finance flows in a more catalytic way. Integrating the development of Funding Proposals into this process of working on objective 2 grants, rather than writing CNs with objective 4 grants as a stand-alone activity, will allow country needs to meet and align with GCF staffing and resources. It would also allow for the CNs to be embedded in strategic transformational contexts.

THE STAND-ALONE PRODUCTION OF A HIGH VOLUME OF CNS IS CHALLENGING THE SYSTEM

More than 300 grants develop CNs for pipeline building. The evaluation found that this will result in around 900 CNs scheduled to be submitted to the GCF Secretariat by 2026. This constitutes an unmanageable workload for GCF as well as for the countries and exceeds the funding ability of GCF. It is fair to say that this funding stream is the victim of its own success, as many of these CNs will not be funded before they are outdated.²¹

So far, CNs have had little impact: less than 20% of the submitted CNs have so far entered the GCF review cycle. While the grants might support capacity building on GCF CN writing, it does not deliver effective support towards GCF's primary objective of fostering high-quality projects for both GCF and other funding sources (cf. sub-chapter 3.2.4).

The quality of the CNs is inconsistent as no quality management mechanism has been set up. A screening of the CNs in the context of this evaluation revealed instances of insufficient coherence within the CNs and with the country programmes, as well as of unclear ownership once the CNs are written and delivered. Thus, their utility is relatively

²¹ It is possible to use these CNs for seeking funding from other funders. There has been evidence that this has happened.

low compared to the effort and funding spent on them. Some of the CNs led to funded projects, for example the Green Investment Facility in Cambodia. But potentially, the Project Preparation Facility could satisfy the funding need in the field of pipeline building better, potentially with slight adjustments. It should be noted at this point that pipeline building is also not a mandate of the RPSP funding window as specified by the instrument.

COMPLEMENTARY TO OTHER CLIMATE FUNDS' READINESS AND CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMMES, THE RPSP FILLS AN IMPORTANT GAP IN GCF FINANCING AND IS NOT DUPLICATING FINANCING PROVIDED BY OTHER FUNDS

The kinds of activities funded by the RPSP are distinctly different from the types of activities that the other vertical funds are supporting under their respective readiness programmes (cf. sub- chapter 3.1.3.3). All of them provide some support to strengthen their respective FPs who might or might not be in the same positions or institutions within country governments. GEF's modalities "Enabling Activities" and CBIT are focusing mainly on supporting transparency (e.g. with respect to GHG inventories) and reporting to the Climate Convention. AF is providing limited capacity building for AF designated authorities and accreditation of DAEs.

LDCF and SCCF are primarily dedicated to climate action projects. Nevertheless, their funding of the NAP process occasionally intersects with RPSP activities. Notably, LDCF has allocated more resources to the NAP process than GCF. These overlaps suggest a need for a more in-depth analysis of how these funds can enhance their synergy in the context of supporting countries regarding the development of adaptation planning and strategies. Given the growing urgency for strengthened adaptation planning and strategies, a more comprehensive examination of potential collaborations among the funds could yield valuable insights.

ANSWERING TO THE NEEDS OF GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC CLIMATE FINANCE COORDINATION, THE RPSP IS SUPPORTING THE APPROPRIATE ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES, BUT MORE SUPPORT IS NEEDED

Consistent with previous evaluations, this evaluation highlights the same needs and challenges for more effective climate finance coordination on the country level, including the need for stronger coordination of local programming and stakeholders, better national capacities with DAEs, DPs and experts, stronger focus on the private sector and faster grant approval processes (cf. 3.1).

There is a lack of local experts on climate project design and climate finance, though the support to DAEs is providing some relief. In some cases, local experts use readiness grants, e.g., under objective 4 for building up their competences. However, the lack of experts is one of the factors determining the overall speed of the flow of funding (readiness funding as well as funding activities), as is in some cases the lack of interest of international AEs – probably also due to a lack of staff.

The survey respondents and country case studies have shown that the RPSP enables the recipients to use the resources to address their needs. Furthermore, some of the criticisms of earlier studies have been addressed with the most recent readiness strategy, including the call for more flexibility in the grants. Yet, some of the complaints remain unaddressed, including long approval time periods and complicated processes.

RELATIVE TO THE MANDATE OF GCF REGARDING PRIVATE SECTOR CLIMATE FINANCE, AND RELATIVE TO THE POTENTIAL ROLE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR ON THE COUNTRY LEVEL, THE RPSP IS INSUFFICIENT

While the RPSP exhibits a robust public sector focus and engagement, its focus and links to the private sector remains weak (cf. sub-chapters 3.1.1, 3.1.3, and 3.1.4). Only 2 out of 18 outcomes of the RRMF are specific to the private sector, and progress rates on these are low. Additionally, in terms of grant recipients, the RPSP exhibits a strong public sector focus. Finally, the ToC is based on primary support directed towards NDAs. NDAs, being government officials, primarily focus on governance and coordination of government planning and policy processes as well as international negotiations, often overlooking the private sector. This focus neglects a crucial stakeholder group operating in a distinct cultural context, and with divergent timelines.

In addition, the RPSP's offerings for the private sector do not align with those of GCF. GCF's offerings comprise the PSF whose readiness needs are not considered in the RPSP. Although the case studies were selected to illustrate what the RPSP can deliver if successful, very few of them involved a PSF project, and the relationship to the RPSP is weak or non-existent. In Cambodia, a green financing facility based on a CN developed under objective 4 was ultimately approved as a full GCF project but it is not included in the country work programme. Bangladesh has two private sector DAEs who have been accredited with RPSP support but only one of their seven project proposals is under the PSF.²²

In addition, GCF has mandate to influence financial regulation to achieve Art 2.1c of the Paris Agreement. Again, the RPSP could serve to build capacity with regulators to understand the options for Paris-compatible financial and capital market regulations. However, currently, no such offering is included in the RPSP. Bangladesh Bank, the central bank of Bangladesh, has received readiness support to work towards financial markets, but was ultimately ineligible as a DAE, or for any other direct collaboration with GCF.

Consequently, the relevance and effectiveness of the RPSP is not in line with the expectations that GCF has for the private sector, nor with its strategic priority on the private sector, or scaling. This is also a gap in the ToC of the RPSP which should explicitly account for the role GCF gives to the private sector and its investments and the necessary readiness activities.

4.3 CONCLUSIONS REGARDING THE MANAGEMENT OF THE RPSP

RESULTS ORIENTATION OF THE READINESS PROGRAMME HAS BEEN INCREASING

The first phase of readiness funding lacked a results framework. While the Readiness Strategy 2019–2021 outlined indicators, project reporting against these only started with the availability of RRMF in 2022. Consequently, project monitoring remains incomplete for the first years. At this point, the application of indicator guidance is still to some degree inconsistent. For this evaluation, for example, only data on progress (yes/no) could be used, as results data are too scarce. With increasing practice, the database will improve.

²² According to the Secretariat's CIC database.

IN SOME AREAS THE RRMF IS EFFECTIVE BUT INSUFFICIENT IN COVERING ALL ASPECTS THAT ARE RELEVANT FOR ADDRESSING COUNTRY NEEDS AND GCF'S MANDATE

The RRMF indicators are well considered, and their measurement protocols are well elaborated. It is too early to assess if the numerous indicators with refined methodologies will be helpful in practice. This evaluation used them for the analysis of effectiveness, which indicated that their coverage has room for improvement. At this point, the indicators from the RRMF are not fully reflective of all aspects of the ToC, and not all indicators or outputs are necessary for accomplishing the objectives of the RPSP. For example, the indicators for the private sector include “new business models incubated and/or innovative financial mechanisms and schemes created to increase low- emission and climate-resilient investment” and “strategies, roadmaps, studies, and policy incentives completed to foster private financing for country programme implementation and/or low-emissions climate resilient development” (GCF, 2023a, p. 53). These might not fully reflect all aspects that are necessary for providing readiness and preparatory support for the private sector aspects of GCF's mission. Examples that have been mentioned are cooperation with central banks and the financial regulators.

Several indicators, particularly those measuring outcomes like adaptation plan effectiveness, necessitate qualitative analysis. Assessing the “extent to which country plans guide adaptation” requires in-depth discussions, making portfolio-wide application challenging.

Current reporting through the project management portal by NDAs and DPs is limited to outputs. While the outcomes of the RRMF are well crafted and generally provide a useful framework for measuring readiness results, there is currently no reporting on them. The GCF Secretariat is working on a modality for enhancing that aspect, with the perspective of introducing it in the next revision of the RRMF.

In addition, the RRMF could monitor adherence to some of GCF's policies, specifically the Gender Policy. No gender outcome indicators are included. Output indicators that count people (e.g. training participants) are supposed to be reported in a gender-disaggregated manner.

APPROVAL PROCESSES TAKE TOO LONG

A persistent complaint from the stakeholders is the duration and difficulty of the application process for the grant (cf. sub-chapter 3.2.4.3 and many previous evaluations), which might be due to staff turnover at GCF and a lack of country-specific knowledge as the GCF regional desks are not located in the respective regions as stakeholders reported. Long approval times limit relevance and effectiveness. They also make it difficult to implement the RPSP's ToC and achieve funding flows.

Long processing times, mentioned by two-thirds of the respondents, are a cause and effect of “a lot of work related to the readiness application process”, both of which are exacerbated by high demands on the technical quality of the proposal and the length of the grant document.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are orientated towards implementing the original vision for the funding window on readiness and preparatory support, as expressed in the GCF Instrument. The recommendations are structured in four subsections: general recommendations, recommendations regarding the structure of the RPSP, recommendations regarding the scope of RPSP funded activities and recommendations regarding management and knowledge management. Some of the challenges approached through these recommendations appear in several of these subsections.

5.1 GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: The RPSP should explicitly acknowledge differences in the readiness of countries and their climate coordination structures as well as the fact that some needs will persist.

Countries are different and will have different readiness needs. Country-group specific evaluations have highlighted that the NDAs of LDCs and African States are facing more significant challenges than others. Overall, NDA capacity is not homogeneous, confirming a continued capacity building need. Both aspects should be accommodated in the type and continuity of the support and guidance that they can receive and benefit from.

Evidence indicates that NDAs will undergo a certain staff rotation entailing a constant need for investment in their capacities. This implies that some needs will persist. The offers of the next RPSP strategy should pay attention to these and other patterns and permanent tasks.

Recommendation 2: The Secretariat should commission independent research into best practice in country readiness and provide a self-assessment tool for NDAs and DAEs as soon as possible.

A vision for readiness will help mitigate some of the structural challenges faced by NDAs. While NDAs are placed in different ministries and vested with different organizational powers in their respective governments, their responsibilities towards GCF are highly standardized. There are a limited number of typical situations for the institutional setting of NDAs, for example with respect to the ministry that they are housed in, the national planning and budgeting processes, or their technical expertise. These institutional situations correspond to a closed set of best practices for country coordination and effective development of country programmes as well as the coordination of climate finance activities. Yet so far, too little systematic research has been done to provide abstract guidance on how to build up the capacities, skills and institutional mechanisms for excelling as an NDA in the given situation. An empirical operations research study should be conducted to distil four to seven typical organizational setups and propose several best practice models that NDAs can implement or be inspired by. This will help NDAs to develop institutional visions for efficient and effective country coordination.

Building on this, the study should develop a multistage readiness concept based on its existing evidence. The ToC of the RPSP already gives the framework for such a concept: Firstly, the NDAs and the DAEs are equipped with the necessary capacities and skills, secondly, they establish a country coordination mechanism, thirdly, they enter

into planning (through sectoral frameworks and country or entity work programmes), and finally, they develop a funded activity pipeline on that basis (through CNs produced with readiness funding or through other preparatory support). However, stakeholders, country coordination mechanisms and country programmes and sectoral frameworks have different levels of maturity. The proposed study should describe consistent sets of capacities required to fulfil the minimum functions of an NDA (e.g. signing no-objection letters), as well as higher readiness levels (e.g. managing the country coordination mechanism, managing the access to climate finance along with the country programme, knowledge management of the existing and future portfolio, etc.). The abstract description of these functions will help clarify the overall vision for effective country readiness. Similar elements should be defined for DAEs.

On this basis, to develop best practice standards for more advanced functions of country coordination (e.g. stakeholder coordination setups, knowledge management), the GCF Secretariat should describe standardized, best practice capacity building activities, suited to help stakeholders achieve the next level of proficiency. These best practice solutions should be developed by the GCF Secretariat and illustrated through knowledge products in the Readiness Knowledge Base. Receiving funding for these activities should be made as simple as possible. It is important to highlight that more tailored support still needs to be available and might require a more thorough and case-specific review process.

Based on the best practice analysis and the multi-stage maturity framework, it will be possible to develop a self-rating tool for institutional capacity that NDAs may apply to understand their capacity building needs and opportunities and plan their readiness activities accordingly. The use of the self-rating tool should be voluntary.

The readiness funding should include off-the-shelf courses and offers through the Knowledge Bank, but also standard small grants.

Recommendation 3: As soon as possible, the Secretariat needs to develop and implement a strategy on how to make the private sector and the financial markets fit for corresponding to the private sector mandate of GCF.

GCF's specific mandate for engaging the private sector is inadequately reflected in the RPSP. Suggestions include building in-country capacity on the understanding of GCF's private sector intentions, and more specifically, engaging with different stakeholders in activities on how to i) utilize the GCF's PSF, ii) establish guarantee mechanisms, iii) identify the financial sector's role in scaling, roll-out and replication, and iv) identify the role of the government to encourage green and sustainable finance. When governments want to do the latter, they should be able to identify opportunities for systemic changes in their financial sector and plan their implementation with the help of readiness grants.

Recommendation 4: As soon as possible, the Secretariat should elevate the relevance of country work programmes and strategic frameworks as important manifestos of sectoral or national transformation to Paris-Agreement-compatible development paths.

A lack of country programmes and sectoral frameworks constitutes an important gap regarding countries' abilities to use GCF financing for their compliance with the Paris Agreement goals. As countries embark on transformational change and on mainstreaming of climate concerns into all funding areas, the role of climate compatible planning will increase in all line ministries. It is important that these

ministries get access to resources so that they are enabled and incentivized to include climate resilience as well as avoidance of GHG emissions in their sectoral plans.

It is highly recommended to elevate the role of country frameworks to enhance coherence of the climate finance portfolios. This will also enhance GCF's capacity for strategic fundraising planning.

5.2 STRUCTURE OF THE RPSP

Recommendation 5: The Secretariat should structure the RPSP grants and RRMF by stakeholders who can benefit from the RPSP rather than by objectives.

To enhance transparency of funding activities and achievement of outcomes, the readiness support can be structured by benefitting stakeholders. This will allow the Secretariat to track funding activities and achievement of outcomes more efficiently, and the (potential) beneficiaries can view and navigate the offers more easily. There is a limited set of stakeholders to the RPSP: NDAs, AEs, candidate AEs, national government stakeholders, and CSOs. Currently, the objectives are formulated in a way that makes it unclear who should benefit from the RPSP and in what sense. A future readiness strategy should clarify this by aligning the funding with the stakeholder structure.

The indicators of the RRMF should also be rearranged into new groups that correspond more clearly with stakeholder-specific readiness stages and reflect needed capacities for the respective groups. The types of activities that are useful to reach the next stage could be more clearly identified based on such a model. Activities should include improved knowledge management, structured onboarding of new staff, or the institutionalization of cross-ministerial coordination mechanisms, but also a mere description of additional capacity and staffing needs. To increase the effectiveness of the RRMF, activities to improve its implementation need to be undertaken.

Recommendation 6: The Secretariat should retain a separate funding line for NAPs, with a clarification of synergies with LDCF.

Funding for NAPs should remain separate. The UNFCCC and the GCF Instrument are specifically requesting of GCF to provide funding for NAPs. Of the modalities mentioned in the instrument, NAPs are the ones that remain relevant. This important obligation needs to be catered to. Maintaining a separate funding line is an important signal but if the RPSP is structured in a different way, it needs to be clearly reflected how NAP updating can be financed through the programme. Funding NAPs, the associated stakeholder processes and the development of NAP-based Funding Proposals is also an opportunity to raise the overall level of adaptation funding to ultimately comply with the target of allocating at least half of GCF funding to adaptation projects. Alignment with funding from LDCF should be assured through direct discussions between the two funds.

5.3 SCOPE OF THE ACTIVITIES TO BE FUNDED UNDER THE RPSP

Recommendation 7: The Secretariat should ensure that the RPSP explicitly acknowledges and caters to initial as well as ongoing NDA support. It should be ready to cater to different needs for different stages of NDA coordination system development or country circumstances.

NDA are at the core of GCF operations, and the RPSP is effective in building their capacities. Yet, certain issues are affecting all NDAs which should be explicitly acknowledged in the strategy. Support should be provided through a combination of national readiness grants but also general offers through the Knowledge Bank. Regional projects should place a strong emphasis on capacity building, ensuring that all involved stakeholders, including NDAs, DAEs, and other relevant experts, in all participating countries are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge.

Recommendation 8: The Secretariat should ensure that the RPSP strives to provide more effective support to DAEs as they can strengthen country ownership and accelerate climate action.

DAEs fulfil important functions including offering a better connection to local implementation stakeholders and longer-term engagement as well as continuity and knowledge management. They reduce the countries' dependence on international AEs. The RPSP supports DAEs towards accreditation and pipeline building but the effectiveness of these two activities can be enhanced. These activities should be monitored for effectiveness and swiftly adjusted, potentially with some openness towards experiments and pilot initiatives. Importantly, the support in the accreditation process should be enhanced (qualitatively) to decrease the needed time. For example, DAEs should be in a position to manage not only the GCF project cycle and fiduciary standards, but also participate in country coordination and local stakeholder relations. They should be sufficiently resourced to contribute to the knowledge management of the NDA as well as give feedback to GCF on policies, challenges in their application and other operational issues.

Recommendation 9: The Secretariat should ensure that the RPSP provides resources for and pays attention to the buildup of local expertise on climate finance project design and supervision.

A major bottleneck to climate finance is currently the lack of local independent expertise to support research, consultations, design, writing and calculations necessary in the development of project proposals. As long as this bottleneck is not removed, funding flows will remain slow. There is a tendency in governments to internalize activities like modelling and monitoring. This contributes to the already existing overload of (environment) ministries and climate focal points as well as NDAs who – as civil servants – might not be technical experts on all issues regarding climate change. It is important to have local or semi-local ecosystems of non-governmental experts that can advise based on continued and independent knowledge of the substantive issues, the requirements of the funds, and the local track record on climate finance. Having a pool of experts is good practice and would support the buildup of local expertise.

Recommendation 10: The Secretariat should ensure that the RPSP does not support standalone CNs outside of country work programmes, strategic frameworks, and entity work programmes.

GCF is providing project preparation support for AEs under the Project Preparation Facility. This ensures ownership and access to the GCF system. The support for CNs outside of that should be strongly restricted. The recommendation is to limit grant support under the RPSP to those CNs that demonstrate a clear coherence with country programmes and high priorities within them, strategic sector frameworks and entity work programmes, in those cases where it is not possible to use PPF. The funding envelopes for country programmes and strategic frameworks should then be raised to accommodate the costs of CN/Funding Proposal development within the same workstream to ensure seamless pipeline building.

Recommendation 11: As soon as possible, the Secretariat should collaborate with the PSF on identifying the type of readiness support needed by central banks, financial regulators and small financial intermediaries.

As the mandate of GCF relates to article 2.1c of the Paris Agreement as well as to private sectors, financial markets regulations are important prerequisites for achieving the objective of increasing the amount of private sector finance. Similarly, as the Paris Agreement's Articles 2.1a and b require action in many fields of policy and regulation, funding for sectoral frameworks should be available for non-NDA line ministries who are called upon by national priorities to design such frameworks. In the case study countries, three ministries of finance/economics/planning have such frameworks, but no ministries of health, agriculture or fishery. These sectoral frameworks are crucial for achieving the objectives of the Paris Agreements.

Recommendation 12: The Secretariat should ensure that the RPSP provides more and continued funding for national coordination mechanisms and knowledge management systems and include a corresponding outcome indicator into the RRMF.

In the case study countries of this evaluation, these two elements have been named as facilitating the work of the NDAs significantly. Unfortunately, both mean recurring costs. Stakeholder coordination mechanisms support decision making and keep climate finance relevant for the country's priorities. Knowledge management systems facilitate the local institutional memory on climate change – which unfortunately is too often only preserved in individuals. Both tools are associated with ongoing costs. Knowledge management specifically does not only require databases and websites but also staff to maintain these. The RPSP should find a solution to this challenge.

Recommendation 13: The GCF Secretariat should ensure that gender equality is effectively mainstreamed in RPSP activities by including a gender related outcome indicator into the RRMF.

While the RPSP integrates gender equality into its strategy, currently no specific gender outcome indicators are included in the RRMF. A gender-related outcome indicator should measure the impact of the programme on gender equality.

Recommendation 14: In alignment with GCF's gender policy, the GCF Secretariat should provide stakeholders with essential tools to adequately integrate gender considerations into readiness activities and enforce their use.

Applicants need to pay special attention to environmental, social and gender issues in the readiness proposals. Robust gender training and capacity-building support to

stakeholders should be offered by the GCF Secretariat to ensure that applicants can effectively integrate gender considerations into their readiness projects. Building on this, applicants should be required to include a detailed gender action plan in their readiness proposals, demonstrating how gender equality and women's empowerment will be addressed throughout the readiness project cycle.

5.4 MANAGEMENT AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT OF THE RPSP

Recommendation 15: Immediately, the Secretariat should search for opportunities to standardize grant requests to minimize approval time.

Significant time is lost in the approval of the grants. Higher standardization can be helpful to address this issue. It is recommended to identify and justify funding based on a standardized capacity needs self-assessment questionnaire. Based on the information from that questionnaire and the identified capacity building needs, a building block approach could serve to provide a project proposal composed of standardized activities. If the result of such a semi-automated project design approach leads to a project design that complies with best or typical practices as defined by GCF (which can be checked quickly), approval and review could be shortened to a tolerable time of less than two months.²³ Of course, more individualized applications would still be subject to a longer and more intense review. This recommendation aligns with recommendations 2 and 4.

Recommendation 16: The Secretariat should ensure that the RPSP offers highly standardized grants for NDAs and DAEs in addition to bespoke grants.

Based on the analysis of the stages of readiness, standardized grant applications could be developed, thereby streamlining both the application and review procedures. Building on the multistage readiness framework, it is possible to define standard sets of activities for moving to the next level of readiness. Based on a self-assessment, NDAs and DAEs should be able to apply for a predetermined package achieving their readiness goals. This would allow for the grant approval process to be streamlined through standardized funding streams. Stakeholders should still be open to opting for a bespoke Funding Proposal which would then require a case-specific review and approval process as is current practice. But rolling approvals for very small and standardized funding packages with clear monitoring requirements could expedite the process by limiting the needs for multiple reviews. Standardized project documents, tailored for specific contexts, could be adopted to prevent double-dipping, facilitated by advanced IT checks within the GCF Secretariat. It would be very useful to work towards a situation where NDAs are able to access small amounts of money (e.g. USD 10,000) through a toolbox of standardized templates for prespecified activities (e.g. stakeholder workshop, group field visit, sector assessment for a climate action option), with almost immediate approval, up to a certain cumulative ceiling (e.g. USD 50,000 per year). Once a higher degree of standardization along with a clear vision for readiness best practice is defined, this could be done through GCF's regional desks without consulting a larger number of individuals within the Secretariat. Another option would be to utilize UNOPS, which already manages grants for entities that are not accredited.

²³ This would be in line with the experience with enabling activities at GEF, <https://www.gefio.org/evaluations/enabling-activities>.

Recommendation 17: The Secretariat should continue to work on expanding the Readiness Knowledge Bank.

The Knowledge Bank platform offers information products, case studies and guidelines for the application and implementation of readiness grants. Findings of this evaluation should be included in the repository. In addition, some of the capacity building and orientation needs can be captured in curricula for typical situations stakeholders might find themselves in (e.g. onboarding as new NDA). For these, specific learning offers (e.g. short video tutorials) should be produced in formats that are compatible with the time constraints and information needs as well as language capabilities of the respective target groups. NDAs have acknowledged the value of existing onboarding materials, including documents and tutorials. However, there is a recognized need for a more robust curriculum. Given the frequent turnover of NDA personnel, it is essential to ensure that the onboarding materials are comprehensive, readily accessible, and up to date. This will empower NDAs and other stakeholders to assume their roles effectively and fulfill their responsibilities.

ANNEX I. BIBLIOGRAPHY

GCF (2011). *Governing Instrument for the Green Climate Fund*.

GCF (2018a). *Independent Evaluation of the Green Climate Fund's Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme*.

GCF (2018b). *Initial Review of GCF's Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme. Final Report*.

GCF (2018c). *Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme: Revised Work Programme for 2018 – Addendum I Final report from Dalberg on the initial review of the Readiness Programme*.

GCF (2019). *Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme: Strategy for 2019–2021 and Work Programme 2019*.

GCF (2020). *Updated Strategic Plan for the Green Climate Fund 2020–2023. GCF (2021). Evaluation Policy for the GCF*.

GCF (2022a). *Assessment Report Of The Results Of The Readiness Precatory Support Programme Portfolio*.

GCF (2022b). *Green Climate Fund Evaluation Standards*.

GCF (2022c). *Independent evaluation of the relevance and effectiveness of the Green Climate Fund's investments in the Least Developed Countries*.

GCF (2023a). *Independent Evaluation of the GCF's Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme. Final Report*.

GCF (2023b). *Indicator Reference Sheets Readiness Results Management Framework (RRMF) FOR Impact and Outcome level results*.

GCF (2023c). *Request for Proposals (RfP 2023/023) Consultancy Services for Evaluation of the Outcomes and Impact-Level Results of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme*.

GCF (2024a). *CIC Concept Notes Data Table*.

GCF (2024b). *Line of sight of Concept Notes being prepared in Readiness*.

GCF (2024c). *ODL Entities table*.

GCF (no date a). Policy, research and evaluation. *Readiness Knowledge Bank*. Available at: <https://knowledge.greenclimate.fund/readiness/policy/#policy>.

GCF (no date b). Readiness Results Management Framework. *Results-based management*. Available at: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/projects/results-based-management#readiness-results-management-framework> (Accessed: 19 June 2024).

NAP tracking tool. (2024). *NAPcentral*, 4 June. Available at: <https://napcentral.org/nap-tracking-tool>.

UNFCCC (no date). Objectives of the NAP process. *Overview – National Adaptation Plans*.

ANNEX II. LIST OF DOCUMENTS FOR DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

TABLE 4. LIST OF DOCUMENTS FOR DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

YEAR OF PUBLICATION	TITLE OF THE DOCUMENT	AUTHOR
2008	Policies and procedures for the GEF project cycle. Available at: https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting- documents/GEF_Policies_and_Procedures_for_GEF_Project_Cycle.pdf	GEF
2011	Governing Instrument for the Green Climate Fund.	GCF
2018	Independent Evaluation of the Green Climate Fund's Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme.	GCF
2018	Initial Review of GCF's Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme. Final Report.	GCF
2018	Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme: Revised Work Programme for 2018 – Addendum I: Final report from Dalberg on the initial review of the RPSP.	GCF/Dalberg
2018	Independent evaluation of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme: Final Report.	IEU
2019	Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme: Strategy for 2019–2021 and Work Programme 2019.	GCF
2020	GCF Programming Manual: An introduction to the Green Climate Fund project cycle and project development tools for full-size projects.	GCF
2020	Independent evaluation of the relevance and effectiveness of the Green Climate Fund's investments in Small Islands Development States.	IEU
2020	Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme Guidebook: A practical guide on how to prepare readiness proposals for the Green Climate Fund.	GCF
2020	Updated Strategic Plan for the Green Climate Fund 2020–2023.	GCF
2021	Evaluation Policy for GCF.	GCF
2022	Assessment report of the results of the Readiness Preparatory Support Programme Portfolio.	AAE
2022	Green Climate Fund Evaluation Standards.	GCF
2022	Independent evaluation of the relevance and effectiveness of the Green Climate Fund's investments in the Least Developed Countries.	IEU
2022	RRMF grant output-level Indicator Reference Sheets.	GCF
2023	GCF RRMF Indicator Reference Sheets – Outputs (portfolio level).	GCF
2023	IEU deliverable at B.36 under the RPSP evaluation.	GCF

YEAR OF PUBLICATION	TITLE OF THE DOCUMENT	AUTHOR
2023	Independent evaluation of the Green Climate Fund's Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme: Final Report.	IEU
2023	Independent evaluation of the Green Climate Fund's Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme: Synthesis Note.	IEU
2023	Independent evaluation of the relevance and effectiveness of the Green Climate Fund's investments in the African States.	IEU
2023	Indicator Reference Sheets Readiness Results Management Framework (RRMF) For Impact and Outcome level results.	GCF
2023	Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme: revised strategy 2024–2027.	GCF
2023	Readiness Results Management Framework: Results Handbook.	GCF
2023	Request for Proposals (RfP 2023/023) Consultancy Services for Evaluation of the Outcomes and Impact-Level Results of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme.	GCF
2023	Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme (RPSP) Version 2.0.	GCF
2023	Strategic Plan for the Green Climate Fund 2024–2027.	GCF
2023	Updated guidance note on the new GCF funding window for the implementation of integrated results management framework (IRMF).	GCF
2024	CIC Concept Notes Data Table.	GCF
2024	Line of sight of Concept Notes being prepared in Readiness.	GCF
2024	ODL Entities table.	GCF
2024	NAPcentral. Available at: https://napcentral.org/nap-tracking-tool .	NAP tracking tool
No date	Policy, research and evaluation, Readiness Knowledge Bank. Available at: https://knowledge.greenclimate.fund/readiness/policy/#policy	GCF
No date	Readiness Results Management Framework, Results-based management. Available at: https://www.greenclimate.fund/projects/results-based-management#readiness-results-management-framework (Accessed: 19 June 2024).	GCF
No date	Objectives of the NAP process, Overview – National Adaptation Plans.	UNFCCC

Source: Evaluation team.

ANNEX III. OVERVIEW OF INTERVIEWEES

TABLE 5. OVERVIEW OF INTERVIEWS

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	NO. OF INDIVIDUALS INTERVIEWED (KII/FGD)
GCF Secretariat	15
NDA	8
DP	7
Other funds	4
CSO/PSO	3
Others	4

Source: Evaluation team.

ANNEX IV. FUNDING PRIORITIES AND RELEVANCE OF GRANTS OF CASE STUDY COUNTRIES

TABLE 6. FUNDING PRIORITIES AND RELEVANCE OF GRANTS OF CASE STUDY COUNTRIES

COUNTRY	DEFINED FUNDING PRIORITIES/NEEDS FORMULATED IN NDC AND NAP	FOCUS OF ALL COUNTRIES' CNS AND FUNDING PROPOSALS AND RELEVANCE
Bangladesh	<p>Bangladesh emphasizes the importance of capacity building, particularly enhancing the capabilities of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (Merck) and the Department of Environment in its NDC. They highlight the necessity of regular data collection for GHG inventories, capacity building for MRV processes, and international support for technology transfer related to GHG emission reductions. Financial support is crucial to overcome implementation challenges, including basic data collection and high mitigation costs.</p> <p>In its NAP Bangladesh mentions improvement of flood management systems, the promotion of climate-resilient agricultural practices, and the development of infrastructure to protect against cyclones and storm surges as critical needs. The plan also emphasizes the importance of investing in health systems to address the impacts of climate change on public health.</p>	<p>No CNs were submitted for Bangladesh.</p>
Cambodia	<p>In Cambodia, the focus is on enhancing technical capacity and knowledge across various ministries, especially in climate change capacity, GHG measurement, and vulnerability assessment, as mentioned in its NDC. The country identifies financial barriers and the need for increased support from both internal and external sources. Key priorities include coordination among ministries, stakeholder engagement, improved data collection, and robust Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) frameworks to assess climate change impacts and progress.</p> <p>The NAP for Cambodia emphasizes the need to improve water resource management and enhance agricultural productivity. The plan also highlights the importance of developing infrastructure to withstand climate impacts and increasing investment in research and development to better understand climate change effects on the country's ecosystems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate-resilient water and sanitation (CR-WASH) services • Development and retrofit of urban WASH infrastructure • Transition to climate-sensitive agroecology in Battambang Province • Enhancing resilience and scaling up agroecological practices • Capacity building and institutional arrangements • Financial sustainability through user fee systems • Collaboration with local and international partners • Policy support for integrating agroecology into planning. <p>The CNs are relevant as they focus on improving water and sanitation infrastructure, which aligns with Cambodia's priorities of enhancing technical capacity and knowledge in climate change adaptation and mitigation. Additionally, the emphasis on agroecology supports sustainable agricultural productivity and resilience, addressing key needs identified in Cambodia's NDC and NAP.</p>

COUNTRY	DEFINED FUNDING PRIORITIES/NEEDS FORMULATED IN NDC AND NAP	FOCUS OF ALL COUNTRIES' CNS AND FUNDING PROPOSALS AND RELEVANCE
Cook Islands	<p>The Cook Islands, despite their minimal contribution to global GHG emissions, are committed to significant emission reductions. Their priorities include low-carbon transport technologies and implementing customs duties on motor vehicles to reduce transport emissions. Given their vulnerability to climate change, they strongly emphasize adaptation measures and highlight the need for external support to meet their ambitious NDC targets.*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening health sector capacity to integrate climate change considerations • Improving institutional capabilities to respond to climate-related health issues • Implementing preventative measures for water and sanitation resilience • Capacity building and community outreach on health and climate change • Upgrading health facilities for resilience (e.g. off-grid power, water storage) • Collaboration with local and international partners for technical and financial support. <p>The CNs are relevant as they focus on building resilience in the health sector and enhancing institutional capabilities, aligning with the Cook Islands' priorities of emission reduction and adaptation measures. These efforts support the country's need for robust health and sanitation systems to withstand climate impacts, though more emphasis on immediate adaptation needs could be beneficial.</p>
Grenada	<p>Grenada highlights the significant financial support needed for NDC mitigation actions, seeking assistance from multilateral and bilateral sources. Their NDC implementation is integrated with national policies on climate change, sustainable development, and gender equality. They adopt a holistic, multi-sectoral approach to low-carbon development and climate resilience, involving extensive consultations and validation workshops.</p> <p>Grenada's NAP outlines key funding priorities such as enhancing water security through the development of resilient water supply systems, promoting sustainable land management practices, and protecting coastal areas from the impacts of sea-level rise and storms. The plan also stresses the need for financial support to build capacity within local institutions to effectively manage and implement adaptation strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoration of degraded coastal ecosystems • Enhancement of infrastructure resilience (roads, ports, power, buildings) • Community and institutional capacity building for climate resilience • Development of sustainable wastewater management systems • Promotion of electric vehicle adoption and infrastructure • De-risking geothermal energy investments. <p>The CNs are highly relevant as they address key areas such as coastal ecosystem restoration, infrastructure resilience, and sustainable wastewater management, aligning with Grenada's NDC and NAP priorities. The focus on community capacity building and promotion of electric vehicles supports the country's holistic approach to low-carbon development and climate resilience. However, a more targeted focus on water security and coastal protection could further enhance their relevance.</p>
Moldova	<p>Moldova's priorities lie in sustainable soil management, efficient irrigation systems, and resilient crop diversity in agriculture. They emphasize sustainable water management, afforestation, and reforestation practices in their NDC. Increasing health system resilience and promoting environmentally friendly transport are also critical. Strengthening regulatory frameworks and capacity building for technology development are cross-sectoral priorities.</p> <p>The NAP for Moldova focuses on securing funding for the modernization of agricultural and enhancing the capacity of local governments to implement adaptation measures. Priorities also include the development of early warning systems for extreme weather events.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation of forest and pasture ecosystems to climate change • Enhancing ecosystem resilience • Renewable energy support schemes financing facility • Increasing renewable energy capacity • Promoting biomass and other renewable energy sources • Sustainable and climate-smart management of Chernozems. <p>The CNs are well-aligned with Moldova's priorities in sustainable agriculture and water management. The focus on renewable energy and ecosystem resilience supports the country's NDC and NAP priorities of sustainable soil management and efficient irrigation systems. However, additional emphasis on health system resilience and environmentally friendly transport could enhance their relevance.</p>

COUNTRY	DEFINED FUNDING PRIORITIES/NEEDS FORMULATED IN NDC AND NAP	FOCUS OF ALL COUNTRIES' CNS AND FUNDING PROPOSALS AND RELEVANCE
Peru	<p>Peru's strategies focus on adaptation measures to reduce vulnerability, maintaining biodiversity, and efficient water resource management. As described in their NDC, they aim to reduce GHG emissions in key sectors through sustainable practices, increase renewable energy use, and promote effective forest management. Addressing financial and technological limitations, institutional and capacity challenges, and the need for stronger multisectoral coordination are also vital.</p> <p>Their NAP identifies key funding priorities such as promoting sustainable agricultural practices and protecting biodiversity in vulnerable ecosystems. The plan also calls for financial support to strengthen local capacities in climate change adaptation and to integrate traditional knowledge into modern adaptation strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation of forest and pasture ecosystems to climate change • Sustainable management of alpaca herding and grazing practices • Community-based conservation of communal reserves • Prevention and management of forest fires • Promotion of REDD+ and private sector engagement in forest conservation • Enhancing ecosystem resilience • Capacity building for forest management. <p>The CNS are relevant as they focus on effective management of protected areas, sustainable agricultural practices, and community-based conservation, aligning well with Peru's NDC and NAP priorities. The emphasis on forest fire prevention and REDD+ initiatives support the country's goals for forest management and GHG emission reductions. However, further integration of traditional knowledge and sustainable agricultural practices could enhance their relevance.</p>
Rwanda	<p>Rwanda prioritizes developing climate information systems, promoting renewable energies, and enhancing human resources through education and training. Financial support for capacity building, technology transfer, and integrating gender considerations in climate change issues are emphasized. Strategies to build sector experts' capacity in monitoring and evaluation and improving data availability for tracking climate change impacts are also highlighted.*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing investment in low emission and climate-resilient eco-industrial parks • Greening industry and improving resource efficiency • Development of resilient cities with a focus on agroforestry and inclusive neighbourhoods • Flood and landslide risk management in urban and rural sub-catchments • Strengthening governance, knowledge management, and community awareness • Promoting private sector engagement in climate resilience solutions. <p>The CNS are relevant as they address key areas such as eco-industrial parks, resilient city development, and flood risk management, aligning with Rwanda's NDC priorities. The focus on governance and private sector engagement supports the country's need for capacity building and effective implementation of climate strategies. However, placing more emphasis on climate information systems and renewable energy education could further enhance their relevance.</p>

COUNTRY	DEFINED FUNDING PRIORITIES/NEEDS FORMULATED IN NDC AND NAP	FOCUS OF ALL COUNTRIES' CNS AND FUNDING PROPOSALS AND RELEVANCE
Senegal	<p>Senegal focuses on enhancing institutional and human capacities, transferring environmentally sound technologies, and integrating climate change into broader economic and social development policies. They seek substantial international financial, technological, and capacity-building support, and emphasize collaboration with international partners for effective implementation of climate actions.*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scaling up resilience and adaptation in the Great Green Wall area • Building adaptation through water management and sustainable agricultural practices • Developing resilient and inclusive communities • Securing water supply amidst climate impacts • Promoting renewable energy and sustainable resource management • Strengthening governance and institutional capacity. <p>The CNs are highly relevant as they focus on resilience and adaptation in the Great Green Wall area, water management, and sustainable agricultural practices, aligning well with Senegal's NDC priorities. The emphasis on renewable energy and institutional capacity building supports the country's need for effective climate action implementation. However, a stronger focus on integrating climate change into broader economic policies would improve their relevance.</p>
Zimbabwe	<p>Zimbabwe aims to improve technical expertise and institutional frameworks for climate action and encourage the transfer of environmentally friendly technologies. They emphasize integrating climate change considerations into broader economic policies, balancing environmental preservation with socio-economic growth. International financial and technological assistance and global cooperation are highlighted as essential for tackling climate challenges.*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greening the tourism industry in the Zambezi Basin • Developing early warning systems for climate-related disasters • Sustainable management and restoration of wetlands • Promotion of climate-smart tourism practices • Enhancing community and ecosystem resilience to climate impacts • Capacity building for climate adaptation and mitigation. <p>The CNs are relevant as they focus on greening the tourism industry, developing early warning systems, and sustainable wetland management, aligning with Zimbabwe's NDC priorities. The emphasis on climate-smart tourism practices and community resilience supports the country's goals for sustainable development and climate adaptation. However, better integration of climate change considerations into broader economic policies could further enhance their relevance.</p>

Source: Evaluation team.

ANNEX V. FUNDING RULE CHANGES

TABLE 7. FUNDING RULE CHANGES

NO.	DECISION	DATE	FUNDING RULE CHANGE
1	B01- 13/10	March 2013	The Board adopted the modalities for the Readiness Programme and decided to explore options for making short-term progress on Readiness, including the initiation of work on operationalizing a Readiness phase. This included identifying and engaging with existing initiatives and programmes on Readiness and preparatory support, to enhance learning and ensure coherence.
2	B.05/14	October 2013	The Board decided that GCF will provide Readiness and preparatory support to the following activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable the preparation of country programmes; • Strengthen in-country, GCF-related institutional capacities; and • Enable implementing entities to meet the fiduciary standards and environmental and social safeguards of GCF.
3	B.06/11	February 2014	The Board decided on a detailed work programme on Readiness, with four priority activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing NDA/FP; • Strategic frameworks, including the preparation of country programmes; • Selection of intermediaries or implementing entities; and • Initial pipelines of programme and project proposals. <p>The Board allocated USD 1 million to the Secretariat to prepare a detailed programme of work on Readiness.</p>
4	B.08/11	October 2014	The Board decided that 50% of the Readiness support would be allocated to particularly vulnerable countries , including SIDS, LDCs and African States.
			Each country will be limited to USD 1 million per calendar year as a Readiness commitment, including up to USD 300,000 to help establish an NDA/FPs.
			The Board allocated USD 15 million for the Readiness Programme and an additional USD 14 million after receipt of the next semi-annual report.
5	B.11/04	November 2015	The Board reaffirmed that the Readiness Programme may support a voluntary country-driven national adaptation planning process.
6	B.12/32	March 2016	The Board revised the parameters for NDA or focal point funding and eligible costs for direct NDA or focal point funding.
			NDA or focal points applying for funding must submit the following documents to the Secretariat, inter alia:
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An online funding request form which includes, inter alia: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A detailed one-year budget outlining the NDA or focal point activities to be supported.
			Eligible costs include, inter alia:
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other meeting expenses, training, workshops, consultations. This category includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Training and workshop organization and facilitation; and – Consultations with non-governmental constituencies only (e.g. civil society, academia and the private sector) and processes to promote and improve the quality of stakeholder participation, including travel costs and per diems for civil society participation with “an annual cap of USD 100,000 for stakeholder meetings”.

NO.	DECISION	DATE	FUNDING RULE CHANGE
7	B.13/09	June 2016	The national adaptation plans (NAPs) and adaptation support modality were added to the Readiness Programme, with a cap of USD 3 million per country to facilitate the formulation of NAPs and other adaptation planning processes.
8	B.13/32	June 2016	<p>The Board adopted a revised indicative list of activities that the Readiness Programme can support, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing and strengthening NDAs/focal points; • Strategic frameworks, including the preparation of country programmes; • Support for accreditation and accredited DAEs; • Information-sharing, experience exchange and learning; and • Formulation of NAPs and/or other adaptation planning processes.
9	B.18/09	October 2017	The Board requested to the Secretariat to present a revised work programme for 2018 and approved an additional USD 50 million for the Programme.
10	B.22/10	February 2019	The Board noted the findings and recommendations presented in the report by IEU. It further welcomed the fact that the Secretariat incorporated recommendations from the evaluation report by IEU into its revised strategy and workplan, as found in document GCF/B.22/08 .
11	B.22/11	February 2019	<p>The Board requested that the Secretariat demonstrate operational and administrative improvements to the Readiness Programme in line with the IEU recommendations noted above and consistent with the revised Programme Strategy.</p> <p>The Board decided that the Secretariat may accept multiple-year Readiness requests, allocating up to USD 3 million for three years, while committing no more than USD 1 million per country per year, which is in addition to the national adaptation plans and/or other adaptation planning processes.</p> <p>Annex IV lists the objectives and outcomes of the RPSP Strategy 2019–2021, which include support for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building; • Strategic frameworks; • National Adaptation Plans and Adaptation Planning Processes; • Pipeline development; and • Knowledge sharing and learning.
12	B.29/01	July 2021	The Board decided to allocate an additional amount of up to USD 12.4 million available directly to DAEs to support the implementation of a Readiness Results Management Framework.
13	B.37/17 (Action item)	October 2023	<p>The Secretariat presented to the Board the revised strategy for the GCF Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme for 2024–2027.</p> <p>This document responds to the request of the Board in decision B.33/04 for the Secretariat to present to the Board for its consideration a revised strategy for the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme. During its thirty-sixth meeting, the Board provided a round of review comments and requested that the revised strategy be aligned with the updated Strategic Plan for the GCF 2024–2027 (USP-2) adopted by the Board in decision B.36/13. This document presents the revised Readiness strategy, which is based on the guidance received from the Board during the consideration of the revised strategy at B.36 (specifically, the Board’s direction that the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme focus on climate programming and direct access) as well as on USP-2. The document has been informed by a series of consultations with the Board members and alternate members, national designated authorities, direct access entities, delivery partners, and active observers. It also considers conclusions and recommendations from the independent evaluation of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme.</p>

Source: GCF (no date a).

ANNEX VI. PROGRESS ON OUTCOMES ACROSS THE PORTFOLIO

The progress rate is calculated by dividing the grants that address the output indicator by the grants that have reported progress on it. The data is based on the reporting in PPMS.

TABLE 8. OBJECTIVE 1 – ABSOLUTE FREQUENCY OF OUTCOMES AND PROGRESS RATE OF OUTPUTS

OUTCOME		OUTPUT			
OUTCOME DESCRIPTION	NO. OF GRANTS	OUTPUT DESCRIPTION	TARGET	PROGRESS	PROGRESS RATE
Outcome 1.1	306	Output 1.1.1: NDA or focal points staff trained in areas relevant to GCF objectives and oversight of GCF activities.	173	93	53,75%
		Output 1.1.2: NDA mechanisms established or strengthened for interinstitutional coordination, including engagement with GCF and other climate funds.	172	100	58,14%
		Output 1.1.3: Decision-making processes defined and operationalized at the NDA level for No-Objection Letters and consideration/facilitation of climate.	143	98	68,53%
Outcome 1.2	152	Output 1.2.1: Candidate entities identified and nominated for direct access.	79	38	48,10%
		Output 1.2.2: Direct Access Applicants supported with training, capacity development, or improved systems to close gaps.	37	17	45,95%
		Output 1.2.3: Accredited direct access entities institutional capacities strengthened to improve accreditation status and effectively implement GCF funded activities.	52	9	17,31%
		Output 1.2.4: Capacity needs assessment conducted, and relevant training delivered for monitoring and reporting of the new indicators in IRMF.			
		Output 1.2.5: Capacity needs assessment conducted, and relevant training delivered for the evaluation on paradigm shift and enabling environment.			
Outcome 1.3	340	Output 1.3.1: Relevant stakeholders engaged and trained to support planning, programming and implementation of GCF funded activities.	267	130	48,69%

OUTCOME		OUTPUT			
OUTCOME DESCRIPTION	NO. OF GRANTS	OUTPUT DESCRIPTION	TARGET	PROGRESS	PROGRESS RATE
		Output 1.3.2: Stakeholder engagement mechanisms established to support planning, programming and implementation of GCF funded activities.	164	72	43,90%
		Output 1.3.3: Strengthened information sharing.	93	36	38,71%

Source: GCF Secretariat; portfolio data (N = 634).

TABLE 9. OBJECTIVE 2 – ABSOLUTE FREQUENCY OF OUTCOMES AND PROGRESS RATE OF OUTPUTS

OUTCOME		OUTPUT			
OUTCOME DESCRIPTION	NO. OF GRANTS	OUTPUT DESCRIPTION	TARGET	PROGRESS	PROGRESS RATE
Outcome 2.1	158	Output 2.1.1: Country programmes endorsed by GCF recipient country progress.	158	31	19,62%
Outcome 2.2	310	Output 2.2.1: Readiness needs assessment to develop an action plan with strategies for Readiness support.	33	13	39,39%
		Output 2.2.2: Long-term, Low Emission Development Strategy (LT-LEDs/LTS) developed.	8	0	0,00%
		Output 2.2.3: NDC updated or revised and/or financing strategy or related policies developed.	31	10	32,26%
		Output 2.2.4: MRV systems developed and operational for tracking internal and external climate finance flows.	93	40	43,01%
		Output 2.2.5: Studies, action plans, modelling efforts and other research efforts conducted/developed.	139	74	53,24%
		Output 2.2.6: Sectorial strategic frameworks or associated plans developed.	123	48	39,02%
		Output 2.2.7: Appropriate climate technologies/ solutions identified and prioritized.	36	26	72,22%
Outcome 2.3	25	Output 2.3.1: Entity work programmes aligned to country programmes developed and submitted to GCF.	25	14	56,00%
Outcome 2.4	151	Output 2.4.1: New business models incubated and/ or innovative financial mechanisms and schemes created to increase low-emission and climate resilient investment.	48	18	37,50%
		Output 2.4.2: Strategies, roadmaps, studies and policy incentives completed to foster private financing of country programme implementation and/ or low-emissions climate resilient development.	129	75	58,14%

Source: GCF Secretariat; portfolio data (N = 634).

TABLE 10. OBJECTIVE 3 – ABSOLUTE FREQUENCY OF OUTCOMES AND PROGRESS RATE OF OUTPUTS

OUTCOME		OUTPUT			
OUTCOME DESCRIPTION	NO. OF GRANTS	OUTPUT DESCRIPTION	TARGET	PROGRESS	PROGRESS RATE
Outcome 3.1	119	3.1.1 National, sub-national and/or sectoral adaptation plans developed or updated.	93	18	19,35%
		3.1.2 Adaptation policy and/or regulations developed or strengthened for integrating adaptation actions/ measures in sectoral, subnational and national development strategies and plans.	43	33	76,74%
		3.1.3 Inter and intra institutional coordination and decision-making mechanisms established or strengthened.	79	43	54,43%
		3.1.4 Stakeholder engagement frameworks, agreements and awareness raising conducted or strengthened.	94	40	42,55%
Outcome 3.2	105	3.2.1 Adaptation impact monitoring, evaluation and learning systems established or strengthened for strategic planning and investment.	79	34	43,04%
		3.2.2 Studies on climate vulnerability, and identification of adaptation solutions conducted (and used) for strengthening adaptation investment.	98	59	60,20%
Outcome 3.3	68	3.3.1 Strategies, policies, and incentives developed to foster private investment in adaptation solutions.	45	11	24,44%
		3.3.2 Assessments and knowledge products to inform the private sector on adaptation options and GCF finance developed.	25	5	20,00%
		3.3.3 Capacity building provided to the private sector on adaptation options.	35	5	14,29%
Outcome 3.4	96	3.4.1 Mechanisms established to prioritize adaptation options based on objective criteria.	57	7	12,28%
		3.4.2 Number of CNs and/or Funding Proposals developed for adaptation priority actions.	71	6	08,45%
		3.4.3 National systems developed for tracking adaptation national and international finance flows.	61	11	18,03%

Source: GCF Secretariat; portfolio data (N = 634).

TABLE 11. OBJECTIVE 4 – ABSOLUTE FREQUENCY OF OUTCOMES AND PROGRESS RATE OF OUTPUTS²⁴

OUTCOME		OUTPUT			
OUTCOME DESCRIPTION	NO. OF GRANTS	OUTPUT DESCRIPTION	TARGET	PROGRESS	PROGRESS RATE
Outcome 4.1	331	4.1.1 CNs for priority sectors developed with the support of the RPSP for submission to GCF.	291	73	25,09%
		4.1.2 Pipeline identified and prioritization assessments.	111	38	34,23%
		4.1.3 Mitigation potential assessed.	6	1	16,67%
		4.1.4 Prefeasibility studies conducted.	85	9	10,59%
Outcome 4.2		4.2.1 Funding Proposal developed and submitted by DAEs.			
		4.2.2 Assessments and studies conducted for the development of quality Funding Proposal (submitted by accredited DAEs).			
Outcome 4.3		4.3.1 CN developed targeting SIDS, LDCs and African States.			
		4.3.2. Pipeline identified and prioritization assessments targeting SIDS, LDCs and African States.			
		4.3.3 Mitigation potential assessed targeting SIDS, LDCs and African States.			
		4.3.4 Prefeasibility studies conducted targeting SIDS, LDCs and African States.			
Outcome 4.4		4.4.1 Funding Proposal developed and submitted that target SIDS, LDCs and African States.			
		4.4.2 Assessments and studies conducted for the development of quality Funding Proposals that target SIDS, LDCs, African States.			
Outcome 4.5	48	4.5.1 PPF assistance requested linked to a concept note developed with support from the Readiness grant.	37	18	48,65%
		4.5.2 Funding Proposals submitted to GCF developed with the support of the RPSP.	14	13	92,86%
		4.5.3 Number of assessments and studies conducted for the development of quality Funding Proposals as part of PPF support.	2	2	100%

Source: GCF Secretariat; portfolio data (N = 634).

²⁴ Indicators 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.3 and 4.3.4 are a subset of indicators 4.1.1, 4.1.2, and 4.1.3 and 4.1.4 respectively focusing only on those developed in SIDS, LDCs and African States. Please note that the numbers cannot be added up as there are overlaps in the categories (e.g. some of the grants will be included in both Africa and LDCs). No data has been provided for outcomes 4.2 and 4.4.

TABLE 12. OBJECTIVE 5 – ABSOLUTE FREQUENCY OF OUTCOMES AND PROGRESS RATE OF OUTPUTS

OUTCOME		OUTPUT			
OUTCOME DESCRIPTION	NO. OF GRANTS	OUTPUT DESCRIPTION	TARGET	PROGRESS	PROGRESS RATE
Outcome 5.1	163	Output 5.1.1: NDAs, DAEs, DPs have developed knowledge products containing information on LECRD, methodologies, lessons learned, or best practices extracted from within the country and from other countries (South-South cooperation).	130	68	52,31%
		Output 5.1.2: NDAs/DAEs who have established processes, systems and/or platforms for identification of best practices, lessons learned and knowledge management.	57	28	49,12%
Outcome 5.2	32	Output 5.2.1: Collaborations at subnational, national, or regional levels to foster development and dissemination of methods, frameworks, and information systems for enhanced climate finance programming.	32	8	25,00 %

Source: GCF Secretariat; portfolio data (N = 634).

ANNEX VII. OVERVIEW OF READINESS SUPPORT MECHANISMS

TABLE 13. OVERVIEW OF READINESS SUPPORT BY FUND

FUND	PROGRAMME NAME	AREAS OF SUPPORT	AVAILABLE FUNDING	LINK
GCF Secretariat	Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity building for climate finance coordination Strategic frameworks for low-emission investment Strengthened adaptation planning Paradigm-shifting pipeline development Knowledge sharing and learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Max. USD 1 million per country per year for support related to institutional capacity building, coordination, policy and planning, and programming for investment Max. USD 3 million per country for formulation of NAPs and/or other adaptation planning processes (may include support for subnational adaptation plans and/or sectoral adaptation planning processes). 	https://www.greenclimate.fund/readiness
Adaptation Fund (AF)	Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support to accredited implementing entities Cooperation/partnerships Support to countries seeking accreditation Knowledge management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Readiness Package Grant for National Implementing Entities (NIE) max. USD 150,000 Project Formulation Assistance Grants max. USD 50,000 Project Scale-up Grants max. USD 100,000 per project/programme Technical Assistance (TA) Grants for Environment and Social Policy and Gender Policy max. USD 25,000 per NIE Technical Assistance Grant for Gender Policy (TA-GP) max. USD 10,000 per NIE. 	https://www.adaptation-fund.org/readiness/
Global Environment Facility (GEF)	Enabling Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support countries to prepare Biennial Update Reports (BUR) Support countries to prepare Periodic National Communication (NC) Support countries to transition to BTRs that replace BURs by 2024. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National entities can request max. USD 500,000 of direct financing for objectives under Biodiversity, Land Degradation, and Climate Change Conventions Countries can request max. USD 352,000 for BURs. 	https://climate-transparency-platform.org/ and https://www.unep.org/gef/index.php/focal-areas/climate-change-mitigation/our-work/enabling-activities

FUND	PROGRAMME NAME	AREAS OF SUPPORT	AVAILABLE FUNDING	LINK
Climate Investment Funds (CIF)	Investment Plan	Preparation of investment plan by Multilateral Development Bank partners (World Bank Group, Inter-American Development Bank, African Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and Asian Development Bank) and countries together.	No data found.	https://www.cif.org/cif-funding

Source: Compilation by evaluation team, see link per row.

ANNEX VIII. OVERVIEW OF GCF FUNDED ACTIVITIES LINKED TO GCF READINESS FUNDING

TABLE 14. OVERVIEW OF GCF FUNDED ACTIVITIES LINKED TO GCF READINESS FUNDING

SELECTED COUNTRY	GCF READINESS GRANT	GCF FUNDED ACTIVITY THAT WAS SUPPORTED BY THE RSP; AMOUNT OF GCF FINANCING (IF AVAILABLE)	DESCRIPTION
Bangladesh	No CNs available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase resilience to climate change in southwest coastal zones of Bangladesh through adaptive livelihoods, housing, and safe drinking water supply (KIIs during country visit). Promoting private sector investment through large scale adoption of energy saving technologies and equipment for textile sector of Bangladesh (Link FP150); GCF financing: USD 256.48 million. 	<p>Even though no CNs from Bangladesh were submitted/ provided by GCF for the analysis, it is known that the GCF readiness support process has led to the development and approval of several Funding Proposals by the DAEs.</p> <p>The FP150 has been in the pipeline since 2018 and was approved in November 2020. It is now under implementation and to be completed in October 2034.</p>
Cambodia	KMH-RS-003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cambodian Climate Financing Facility (Link FP228), AE: Korea Development Bank; GCF financing: USD 54.96 million. 	<p>The project was developed with readiness funding as it matches a submitted CN. A consultancy firm designed a financing facility for renewable energy under RS-003 and searched for an AE to implement the programme. The project has been in the pipeline since January 2022, the full project proposal was approved by the GCF Board in March 2024.</p>

SELECTED COUNTRY	GCF READINESS GRANT	GCF FUNDED ACTIVITY THAT WAS SUPPORTED BY THE RPS; AMOUNT OF GCF FINANCING (IF AVAILABLE)	DESCRIPTION
Cook Islands	COK-RS-002 COK-RS-003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved Simplified Approval Process (SAP) Proposal: Building Resilient and Healthy Cook Islands Communities (Link SAPO34), has been developed for GCF readiness funding mechanism; implementing entity: Ministry of Finance and Economic Management, Cook Islands; GCF financing: USD 12.51 million. PPF Application: Building Resilient and Healthy Cook Islands Communities (Link); implementing entity: Ministry of Finance and Economic Management, Cook Islands. 	The project has been in the pipeline since February 2018. The SAP FP was submitted in January 2019. The request for support from PPF was submitted in May 2021, and the SAP Proposal was approved in April 2024.
Grenada	GRD-RS-001	G-CREWS	This readiness project focused on the preparation of the country programme, and on establishing and strengthening the NDA. GIZ staff that were involved in the project are now leading the G-CREWS project. Their work on the readiness project has provided the personnel with a good understanding of climate governance in the country and the relevant stakeholders, which have supported their capacity to develop GCF proposals.
Peru	PER-RS-002 PER-RS-003 PER-RS-006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peruvian Amazon Eco Bio Business Facility (Link FP193); GCF financing: USD 8.97 million. Resilient Puna: Nature-based climate solutions for sustainable high Andean communities and ecosystems in Peru (Link FP226); GCF financing: USD 44.10 million. 	<p>PER-RS-002, PER-RS-003, PER-RS-006 readiness has contributed to the institutional strengthening of the DAE (Profonanpe), and it is in a better position to access and mobilize funding.</p> <p>The FP193 has been in the pipeline since 2020, was approved in October 2022 and has been under implementation since March 2023. For this FP Profonanpe acted as the AE. The FP226 has been in the pipeline since 2021 and has been approved by the GCF Board in March 2024. It is to be completed in March 2030. AE is GIZ.</p> <p>Both Funding Proposals have been submitted as CNs under readiness support. However, no provided CN could be identified that matches these Funding Proposals.</p>
Rwanda	Unknown	Building Resilience of Vulnerable Communities to Climate Variability in Rwanda's Congo Nile Divide through Forest and Landscape Restoration (Link FP217); GCF financing: USD 39.06 million.	<p>Three national GCF climate finance projects from Rwanda can be found in the GCF portfolio after 2018.</p> <p>The project FP127 has been supported by readiness funding. It has been in the pipeline since October 2018 and was approved in October 2023. It has been under implementation since February this year and is expected to be completed in February 2029. The AE is the Ministry of Environment. However, no provided CN could be identified that matches this project.</p> <p>FP167 and FP221 have not been supported by readiness funding (Link FP167; Link FP221).</p>
Senegal	/	/	<p>One national GCF climate finance project after 2018 can be found in the portfolio (Link FP138). However, this project has not been developed with readiness support.</p> <p>Therefore, no link between the GCF RPSP and the GCF Climate Finance Portfolio can be identified.</p>

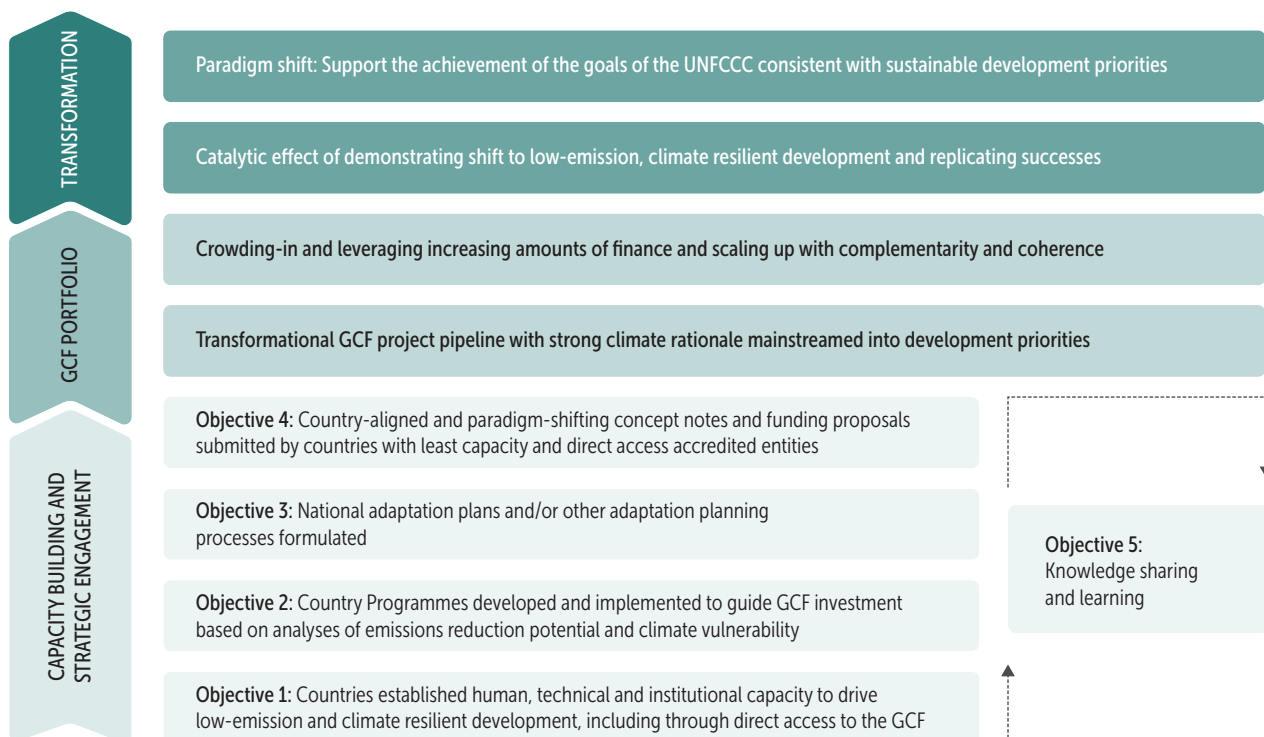
Progressed to other funds:

Rwanda	RWA-RS-002 RWA-RS-006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green City Planning and Development (Fund unknown, DP: GGGI); no information on funding volumes. Cooling Equipment and Cold Chain for food Safety and Security (Fund unknown, DP: GIZ); no information on funding volumes. 	The named projects can be directly linked to a GCF readiness grant.
Grenada	GRD-RS-001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accelerating the introduction of low-emission and climate-resilient electric mobility in Grenada (GEF, ID10629); GEF Project Grant: 1,050,917, Co-financing total: 6,138,793. 	Project was approved in 2022 with funding source GEF Trust Fund.

Source: Compilation by evaluation team.

ANNEX IX. TOC FROM THE RPSP STRATEGY 2019–2021

FIGURE 13. SUMMARIZED TOC FROM THE RPSP STRATEGY 2019–2021



Source: GCF (2019).

ANNEX X. EVALUATION MATRIX

TABLE 15. EVALUATION MATRIX

PRIMARY DATA SOURCES									
KIIS/FGDS									
	COUNTRY CASE STUDIES AND COUNTRY REVIEWS	SURVEY	WITH NDAS/FPS	WITH DAES	WITH DPS	GCF SECRETARIAT	UNOPS	REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER FUNDS/PARTNERS	
CRITERION	GUIDING QUESTION								
1 Relevance	To what extent have RPSP portfolio outcomes and impact responded to the country's climate Readiness needs?								
Alignment with the Fund's priorities	X	X				X			
Alignment with country priorities and needs	X	X	X						
2 Effectiveness	To what extent have the outcomes and impacts of the RPSP portfolio been achieved? What are the contributing factors? How could these achievements be further optimized?								
Achievement of outcomes	X	X							
Factors affecting effectiveness of activity to outcome	X	X	X	X	X		X		
Alignment of success factors with RPSP strategy	X		X			X			
Non-intended positive and negative results		X	X	X	X	X		X	
3 Coherence	To what extent are the RPSP portfolio outcomes and impact achieved through complementarity and synergies with Readiness and other technical assistance support of other institutions?								
Coherence on the programme level			X		X	X	(X)	X	
Coherence on the country level	X	X	X						

		SECONDARY DATA SOURCES			DOCUMENTS			
		COUNTRY	CAPACIT	COUNTRY	CAPACIT	COUNTRY	CAPACIT	CAPACIT
	OTHER GLOBAL STAKEHOLDERS	GCF DATA	PREVIOUS EVALUATIONS AND REVIEWS	ASSESSMENT REPORT OF THE RESULTS OF THE RPSP (FOR THE YEARS 2015–2021)	BOARD AND SECRETARIAT LEVEL DOCUMENTS	PROJECT LEVEL DOCUMENTS	COUNTRY GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS	THIRD PARTY DOCUMENTS
		X	X	X	X	X		
			X				X	
		X		X		X		
		X	X	X		X		
			X	X	X			
		X	X			X		
			X		X			X

PRIMARY DATA SOURCES									
KIIS/FGDS									
	COUNTRY CASE STUDIES AND COUNTRY REVIEWS	SURVEY	WITH NDAS/FPS	WITH DAES	WITH DPS	GCF SECRETARIAT	UNOPS	REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER FUNDS/PARTNERS	
CRITERION	GUIDING QUESTION								
4 Impact	To what extent have the RPSP supported countries achieved their resource mobilization for climate change actions?								
Achievements of impacts	X	X				X			
Factors affecting outcome to impact		X	X			X			
Contribution of GCF RPSP to observed impact	X					X			
Effectiveness of the funded activities		X				X			
5 Sustainability	To what extent will the achieved outcomes and impact at the country-level continue or are likely to be sustained beyond the RPSP support?								
Longevity of outcomes	X					X	(X)		
Factors negatively affecting the sustainability of the results of the intervention	X	X					(X)		

ANNEX X. EVALUATION MATRIX

		SECONDARY DATA SOURCES			DOCUMENTS			
		COUNTRY	CAPACIT	COUNTRY	CAPACIT	COUNTRY	CAPACIT	CAPACIT
	OTHER GLOBAL STAKEHOLDERS	GCF DATA	PREVIOUS EVALUATIONS AND REVIEWS	ASSESSMENT REPORT OF THE RESULTS OF THE RPSP (FOR THE YEARS 2015–2021)	BOARD AND SECRETARIAT LEVEL DOCUMENTS	PROJECT LEVEL DOCUMENTS	COUNTRY GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS	THIRD PARTY DOCUMENTS
		X	X	X		X		
			X					
		X		X		X		X
		X	X	X		X		
			X					

ANNEX XI. COORDINATION MECHANISMS IN CASE STUDY COUNTRIES

TABLE 16. COORDINATION MECHANISMS OF THE CASE STUDY COUNTRIES

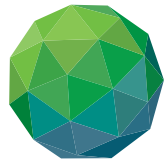
COUNTRY	CAPACITY BUILDING FOR NDA AND ESTABLISHMENT OF COORDINATION MECHANISMS ACHIEVED?
Bangladesh	Yes. NDA has significantly improved institutional and human resource capacity: higher capability of supporting DAEs, DAE aspirants, and others; better understanding of climate change finance modalities. DAEs are capable of effectively implementing GCF-funded activities and have developed and submitted Funding Proposals to GCF. Country stakeholders, including the DAE, DAE Aspirants, EEs, CSOs, and private sectors, have established capacity and networks to support the planning, programming, and implementation of GCF-funded activities.
Grenada	Yes. The capacity of NDA has been strengthened significantly. There is an issue with turnover of staff in NDAs. Coordination mechanisms are effective to a significant extent and policies, systems, and procedures are in place.
Peru	Yes, largely. Strengthened capacities for key institutions (NDA, DAE, MEF, MINAM), improved coordination, and formalized processes for accessing GCF resources. Profonampe achieved re-accreditation and expanded its role, while capacity building for subnational governments and the private sector needs further enhancement. There is also a need for more inclusive funding mechanisms for civil society and Indigenous groups.
Rwanda	Yes. NDA is operational with an established Technical Coordination Committee comprising 16 members from public and private sector entities, NGOs, and CSOs. One DAE accredited (Ministry of Environment) but needs more training. Private sector, NGOs, and CSOs are involved in GCF-funded activities.
Zimbabwe	Yes. Significantly improved NDA capacities enable better oversight, communication of climate priorities, and guidance for other ministries. Multi-stakeholder governance structures and provincial working groups established. GCF Coordination Framework and climate finance tracking system have been developed. MoFED now mandates climate change considerations in budgets, and IDBZ has been accredited. Capacity building for ministries, private sector, and civil society has enhanced their roles in climate finance initiatives.
Cambodia	Not successfully. The survey indicates the NDA's capacity to perform its roles has improved to "some extent", but coordination mechanisms remain less effective. Both the NDA and DAE reported capacity gaps, particularly in guiding DAE on GCF reporting requirements. The DAE acknowledged challenges in complying with GCF's reporting system, resulting in delayed and partial implementation of grant activities, with only 49% of the approved grant utilized. There is also a need for better policies and procedures for mobilizing blended finances from other sources, despite some developed procedures and systems.
Cook Islands	Yes. Capacity of NDA has been strengthened significantly through the RPSP project; policies, institutional capacities, and information systems have been strengthened, and NDA-level coordination mechanisms are effective. All DAE applicants have achieved accreditation for GCF and were able to be accredited for other funds through RPSP capacity building activities. Interviewees have stated that the RPSP Programme has demonstrably enhanced their knowledge and capacity to access GCF-funded activities, and collaboration in the country is seen as highly effective.
Moldova	Not successfully. There is moderately high agreement that NDA has increased capacities to fulfil their roles and responsibilities and that policies, procedures, systems, and tools, including multi-stakeholder coordination, have improved through the readiness activities. No national DAE is available, which is seen as a limitation in the country.
Senegal	Not successfully. NDA is strengthened and NDA-level coordination mechanisms are developed in a participatory approach (all to some extent). DAE has been accredited and has implemented GCF-funded activities. Stakeholder engagement is present, but private sector engagement needs improvement.

Source: Case studies.

CONTACT INFORMATION

GCF Department of Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (DMEL)

OCSIO.DMEL@gcfund.org



GREEN
CLIMATE
FUND