

IEU Evaluation on the GCF's Approach to Gender

Access the document: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/board-document/gcf-b45-14-rev01>

We acknowledge the IEU Evaluation on the GCF Gender Approach, as it moves in the right direction in most of its findings, conclusions and recommendations. Nonetheless, we are concerned about its fast-tracking, which has led to it leaving elements unaddressed or lacking further substantiation, ultimately at the expense of providing more targeted recommendations. This compounds with the compressed timeline of the proposed GCF GAP, landing at the same board meeting.

Several elements in the evaluation deserve close attention. The evaluation adequately notes that while Gender Assessments and Gender Action Plans secure a minimum standard for project integration, it responds to a procedural compliance approach which does not necessarily translate to quality at the entry level nor at the implementation level. We see the tendency to engage with women as passive beneficiaries and as participants to be counted rather than as partners or leaders of GCF funded activities; the evaluation highlights on the need to update the gender Toolkit and a scorecard that better allows to track quality delivered given the lack of accountability mechanisms to track progress on the implementation of the Gender Policy in the projects currently implemented. This is compounded by information only coming from AE self reporting and the currently understaffed and overworked existing ESS and gender team, which results in delays in the review of GAs and GAPs, as well as limited capacities to monitor, including on the ground.

However, there are a couple of elements on which we disagree or consider the IEU could have further substantiated or better structured its recommendations. For instance, the IEU argues in finding 66 how contexts can limit the implementation of project Gender Action Plans. Nonetheless, it does so without addressing the extent to which Gender Assessments are in the first place adequately identifying the context and sector of the proposals, and whether these are fully translating into coherent actions at the GAP level that actually respond to the challenging contexts in which these are to be implemented. Lack of connection between GAs and GAPs has been seen by the LAC Gender Monitoring group as one of the recurrent issues when evaluating these instruments. As this analysis is sidelined, no recommendation speaks to this issue.

Furthermore, we disagree with finding 39 on the 30x50 strategy being aligned with gender objectives, by taking the mention of "most vulnerable groups" as an implicit equivalent to gender incorporation. If gender is a priority to a strategy, we expect at the minimum as civil society that this is made explicit, and not through the subsummation into other categories.



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Third, while the report acknowledges that the ESS and Gender Team is understaffed and overworked, the recommendations do not speak to this issue. Secretariat wide actions, such as gender-related KPIs as incentives, or staff orientation, can't be taken as a replacement for the human and monetary resources currently needed.

Unfortunately, the Secretariat response disregards the Board's decision-making processes by taking for granted in its response the adoption of the proposed GCF GAP at the time of the publication, while deflecting from efforts to further strengthen the fund's gender approach. For instance, we agree with the recommendation on the need for guidelines for improving the incorporation gender into programmatic, multi-country, and private sector projects, and reject the Secretariat's assertion that the Gender Policy is "consistently applied across all investment modalities" with "no inherent ambiguity" and therefore requires no Secretariat action. On the contrary, there is significant evidence that programmatic and private sector projects present poorly elaborated GAs and GAPs, and often do not follow through at the sub-project level, a pattern we as civil society have consistently pointed to in our analyses. This warranted more thorough examination in the IEU evaluation.