

Paris Committee on Capacity-building (PCCB)

Call for submissions from Parties and non-Party stakeholders:

Experience, good practices and lessons learned related to enhancing the ownership of developing countries of building and maintaining capacity

Background

The PCCB aims to address gaps and needs, both current and emerging, in implementing capacity-building in developing country Parties and further enhance capacity-building efforts.

Current priority areas are:

- a) Enhancing coherence and coordination of capacity-building under the Convention;
- b) Identifying capacity gaps and needs, both current and emerging, and recommending ways to address them;
- c) Promoting awareness-raising, knowledge- and information-sharing and stakeholder engagement.

To learn more about the work of the PCCB, you can access its annual reports and other documents [here](#).

Topic for submissions

As part of its continuing efforts to respond to these priorities, the PCCB determined in its 2021-2024 workplan, to make a call for submissions from Parties and non-Party stakeholders on:

Experience, good practices and lessons learned related to enhancing the ownership of developing countries of building and maintaining capacity.

Submissions form

We thank you in advance for filling out this template with concise, evidence-based information and for referencing all relevant sources. There are 2 sections in this template:

- *Details about your organization*
- *Guiding questions about implementing NDCs and national development plans in developing countries*

How will the inputs be used?

The inputs will feed into upcoming deliverables under Activity B.3 of the 2021-2024 PCCB workplan, including a technical paper in 2022, a technical session at the 5th Capacity-building Hub in 2023, and recommendations to the COP and CMA.

Further information:

You are welcome to provide any other information that your organization thinks would highlight suggestions made in response to this call for submissions.

Address for submission: pccb@unfccc.int

Deadline for submissions: 30 November 2021

Please only fill out sections that are relevant to the work of your organization. Please note that no section is mandatory.

Organization or entity name:

Green Climate Fund (GCF)

Type of organization:

Please choose as appropriate:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intergovernmental organization | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Development bank / financial institution |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UN and affiliated organization | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-governmental organization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> International network, coalition, or initiative | <input type="checkbox"/> Research organization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regional network, coalition, or initiative | <input type="checkbox"/> University/education/training organization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public sector entity | <input type="checkbox"/> Private sector entity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Development agency | <input type="checkbox"/> Philanthropic organization |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify) <small>Click or tap here to enter text.</small> |

Organization Location

City: Songdo, Incheon

Country: Republic of Korea

Scale of operation:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Global | <input type="checkbox"/> Regional |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local | <input type="checkbox"/> Subregional |
| <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Transboundary |

City(ies)/Country(ies) of operation (if appropriate):

Click or tap here to enter text.

Experience, good practices and lessons learned related to enhancing the ownership of developing countries of building and maintaining capacity.

Enhancing country ownership of capacity-building, is a topic that the PCCB has explored from the start as part of its mandate. Article 11.2 of the Paris Agreement notes that capacity-building “should be country-driven, based on and responsive to national needs, and foster country ownership of Parties, in particular, for developing country Parties, including at the national, subnational and local levels.” Parties and other stakeholders in the UNFCCC process have variously noted that a lack of country ownership and local leadership is a key cause behind existing capacity gaps and constraints in developing countries.

Under its new workplan for 2021–2024, the PCCB will collate, review and share information on experience, good practices and lessons learned related to enhancing the ownership of developing countries of building and maintaining capacity, and providing recommendations in this regard.

What are good examples of lessons learned and best practices in enhancing country ownership of capacity-building efforts?

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) has been mandated by the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to serve as a main operating entity of the Financial Mechanism of the UNFCCC. It is guided by the principles and provisions of the UNFCCC with the mandate to make “an ambitious contribution to the global efforts towards attaining the goals set by the international community to combat climate change”.

The Governing Instrument of the GCF has mandated the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme (RPSP or the Readiness Programme) to provide resources for strengthening institutional capacities, governance mechanisms, and planning and programming frameworks to identify a transformational long-term climate action agenda for developing countries, ultimately moving towards meeting the objectives of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement. Designed to be a flexible tool to support climate action, the Readiness programme does not have a defined list of activities eligible to be supported, and instead encourages countries to develop readiness support requests aligned with their national climate action vision and that are complementary to previous and ongoing initiatives in the country.

The GCF Secretariat and Board has continued to shape the Readiness Programme to describe work areas and indicative activities of the programme. At the 22nd meeting of the Board (B.22), the Readiness Programme Strategy for 2019-2021 was approved, which incorporates features to improve impact, by orienting the Readiness Programme to encourage a national strategic outlook, provide greater flexibility within a national vision, and increase support for the identification and development of high-impact programming and pipeline development activities. Under the revised strategy, the Readiness Programme aims to support one or more of the following objectives:

- **Objective 1:** Capacity building for climate finance coordination
- **Objective 2:** Strategic frameworks for low-emission investment
- **Objective 3:** Strengthened adaptation planning
- **Objective 4:** Paradigm-shifting pipeline development
- **Objective 5:** Knowledge sharing and learning

Country ownership or a “country-driven approach” is both a guiding principle and an operational modality of the GCF as described in its Governing Instrument. During the 17th meeting of the Board (B.17), the Board further adopted guidelines for enhanced country ownership and country drivenness that emphasizes the central role of National Designated Authorities (NDAs) for coordinating and developing readiness support requests and Country Programmes to drive

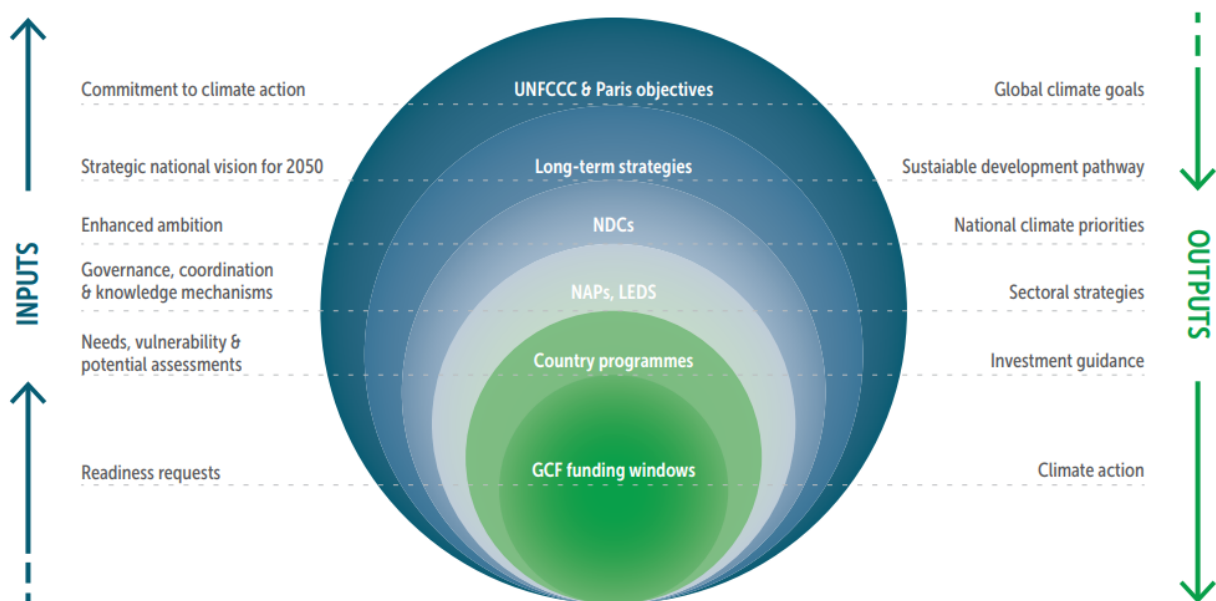
investment planning. The GCF document [B.17/14](#) details these guidelines on which the GCF operates by.

Likewise, the Readiness Programme is also guided by the principle of country ownership as NDAs and stakeholders may leverage readiness support to address gaps and key to enhance country ownership of climate financing in the country. Some of which may include:

- Building national and subnational actors’ capacities to improve their communication, coordination, and technical skills to set the climate finance agenda domestically
- Catalyzing an investment pipeline through support to identify, scale up, and replicate transformational projects and programmes informed by the national vision and circumstances
- Developing the enabling framework for sustained climate action in line with the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement through robust policies, plans and programming frameworks based on the national vision

Figure 1 below demonstrates the relationship between long-term goals and the interlinked planning and programming documents of the NDC, sectoral strategies, and GCF Country Programmes in support of country ownership for climate action.

FIGURE 1. READINESS AND GCF SUPPORT IN THE CONTEXT OF COUNTRY OWNERSHIP AND THE CLIMATE ACTION AGENDA



Under this framework, countries are encouraged to submit requests for readiness support aligned with the near-, medium- and long-term strategies and encompassed by the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement objectives. This readiness support would address specific gaps, barriers and challenges in the capacities, planning frameworks, and investment pipeline development depending on the nation’s context and in line with the country’s climate vision and priorities. Ultimately, the flexibility of the Readiness Programme and its country driven approach aims to facilitate NDAs to convene stakeholders, identify needs, and build capacity towards a nationally owned, low-emission and climate-resilient pathway.

Case study: Readiness Support to Côte d’Ivoire (CIV) with Fonds Interprofessionnel pour la Recherche et le Conseil Agricoles (FIRCA) | \$477,135

This Readiness grant entitled, “Strengthening Côte d’Ivoire’s capacities & ownership to access climate finance for Country Programme implementation” has two main objectives (1) develop strong ownership and capacity of the country’s stakeholders on GCF modalities for further improving the institutional framework, training stakeholders for proposal development, staffing up of the country’s National Designated Authority (NDA) team and supporting the accreditation of FIRCA as a Direct Access Entity (DAE); (2) develop and strengthen a pipeline of quality projects through a learning-by-doing approach including the development of a readiness needs assessment.

This example highlights country ownership not only through the strengthening of Côte d’Ivoire’s NDA operations and technical capacity but also by ensuring that the country is able to envision future climate priorities, needs and financing through the readiness needs assessment. Additionally, training of key policy and decision makers will enable the country to create an enabling environment for climate action, which will be reinforced by a fully operational “engagement platform” for proper implementation of the Country Programme and cross-coordination of stakeholders.

Case Study: Readiness Support to Argentina with the World Health Organization (WHO) | \$299,839

This Readiness grant entitled, “Increasing health sectors capacities and strengthening coordination on climate action in Argentina at national and subnational levels” addresses the gaps identified in the country’s “Situational Analysis of Health and Climate Change” and “National Action Plan on Climate Change and Health” (PANSyCC) regarding the limited collaboration and coherence between policies at national, provincial, municipal and local levels.

As a result of this Readiness support, three provisional working groups and action plans on climate change and health are to be established that address the current capacity gaps and needs of the three provinces. Six training programs on toolkits for GHG measurement and reporting particularly for the health sector and a climate and health data integration platform will be implemented. Through the activities of this grant and its implementation arrangements, the strengthened cross-collaboration across the country’s ministries and other relevant stakeholders in response to its National Action Plan serves as a strong example of country ownership.

In your experience, how can country ownership of capacity-building efforts best be ensured and enhanced?

Given the flexibility of the Readiness Programme and the requests received, country ownership is ensured in many ways. During the origination and development stage of the readiness proposal, the GCF regional focal point provides support to countries to facilitate access to GCF resources. Following a review of key documents and interventions to assess the needs and identify the capacity and/or technical gaps and challenges within the country, the NDA is encouraged to engage with the GCF focal point and nominated Delivery Partner (DP) (if any) who can provide useful information on best practices and lessons learned from other countries and successful proposals.

Through the **Readiness proposal appraisal criteria**, good practices of country ownership have been further reinforced by encouraging NDAs and Delivery Partners to:

- Elaborate on how the support will respond to and advance NDCs and national development plans.
- Articulate the focus of the proposal based on specified gaps in information and planning, including based on stocktaking and situational analysis where relevant.
- Deepen the sectoral, geographic, or impact-specific planning within the context of a broader national vision, to produce precise and implementation-ready planning.
- Build on and strengthen current policy and institutional frameworks that will support implementation of projects and programmes.

- For adaptation planning, consider multiple adaptation planning proposals to the GCF over time for iterative phases of increasingly sectoral or local planning, potentially with different delivery partners to access most relevant and targeted technical expertise. More than one proposal for adaptation planning support through the Readiness Programme may be submitted and be implemented at the same time.
- Articulate the Terms of Reference for a delivery partner to implement the proposal and selecting them based on the required expertise and qualities.

Additionally, **complementarity and coherence** of previous and/or existing readiness support as well as resources from other donors have been a useful tool in ensuring country ownership and cross-collaboration. NDAs and Delivery Partners are required to complete a dedicated section on complementarity and coherence, indicating the financial support that has been received or is foreseen while describing the nature of that support and how additional resources proposed will enhance and build on other efforts in the country. This analysis calls for enhanced planning and coordination and communication across the different focal points under different delivery partners and climate funds for the country. Complementarity and coherence is prioritized by the GCF not only as an appraisal criteria for project proposals but also throughout the operations of the GCF financing mechanisms. As such, by decision [B.12/07](#), the GCF Board requested the Secretariat to prepare an [Operational framework for complementarity and coherence](#), adopted by decision B.17/04. The [annual update on complementarity and coherence activities](#) by the GCF Secretariat to the Board as well as the [GCF in Brief](#) provides the latest information of GCF activities to ensure complementarity and coherence at large.

The **implementation arrangements** of the proposals also serve as a key area for integrating and ensuring country ownership. Though the flow of funds is only streamed from GCF to the DP, Readiness grants involve several different types of stakeholders often beyond the NDA and DP for the execution of the activities as well as the reach of beneficiaries. Stakeholder engagement at the local level including the public decision and policy makers, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and the private sector remain important elements of country ownership. The implementation arrangements detailed in the proposals highlight how these stakeholders will be more effectively engaged and the importance of coordination mechanisms with clear roles and responsibilities signify country ownership beyond the life of the project as well.

What are key challenges (incl. e.g. knowledge and institutional barriers and capacity gaps) with regard to effectively enhancing country ownership of capacity-building efforts?

Despite the tremendous growth in Readiness Support for capacity building and enhancing country ownership, the programme still face challenges in this regard. The Independent Evaluation Unit of the GCF has conducted an evaluation of the Readiness Programme in 2018. Since then, continuous efforts in responding to these gaps and challenges on country ownership have been made including the updated Readiness Strategy 2019-2021, approved by the GCF Board, as well as the improvements in internal process optimizations and learning loops mechanisms. However, challenges persist with the rapid growth of the Readiness Programme portfolio as it current has more than 490 approved grants amounting to more than USD 343M.

With the first grants being approved in 2015 and six years into the programme, early Readiness grants struggle to meet the requirements for grant closure and with inconsistent quality of grant reporting. **Results-based reporting at the country level** remain a challenge despite capacity building efforts, particularly as in-country focal points within ministries as well as NDAs to GCF change, and NDA staffing and capacity are limited. Additionally, there has been evidence that tensions between the environment and finance ministries exist in some countries which may also become a challenge when formalizing and internalizing the activities and results of the projects. In response to this challenge, the updated strategy has emphasized strengthening capacities of the NDA through the

development of a formalized No Objection Procedure or a coordination mechanism. Under Objective 1, capacity building activities for the NDA, potential or accredited DAEs, and other stakeholders can be supported while encouraging collaborative efforts for in-country coordination. Additionally, GCF is also scaling up the Fund's staffing, particularly in the portfolio management division to meet the demands of the growing portfolio and better engage with NDAs and DPs on results-based management and reporting.

The development of a **strong exit strategy** has also been a challenge across the portfolio. Building on the challenge on results-based reporting, ensuring that exit strategies are well planned and developed for sustainable support beyond the life of the project, has been a priority in project appraisal. Yet, the quality at entry of the exit strategies as well as the findings from the grants in the grant closure process reveal the need for further strengthening of this section and the activities within. A strong exit strategy is integral for key results, outcomes and products of the grant to remain useful, relevant and integrated into the country's processes and operations. Thus, this challenge must be addressed and lessons learned from early Readiness grants must be fed back into a learning loop for best practices.

Cooperation with the private sector and civil society is another challenge in addressing country ownership through the Readiness programme. Participation by the private sector, civil society, indigenous peoples and marginalized communities in climate action are required to achieve full country ownership. In most countries, this participation, though visible, is still in its infancy stage. The Readiness Programme has continued to encourage stakeholder engagement strategies and activities to build networks or strengthen existing networks to feed into investment programming processes at the national level. Since the adoption of the updated strategy, the programme has seen increases in Readiness support to build capacity for these stakeholders and to better engage them for future planning and implementation efforts for climate action.

Useful sources:

Please give examples of useful sources relevant to this topic

(e.g. webpages and portals, publications, fora, organizations working on this issue)

- [Readiness and Preparatory Support guidebook: A practical guide on how to prepare readiness proposals for the Green Climate Fund](#)
- [Webinar on the updated Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme](#)
- [GCF/B.17/14: Guidelines for Enhanced Country Ownership and Country Drivenness](#)
- [GCF Operational Framework for Complementarity and Coherence](#)
- [GCF/B.30/Inf.11/Add.04: Annual Update on Complementarity and Coherence](#)
- [GCF in Brief: Complementarity and coherence](#)
- [Independent Evaluation of the GCF's Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme \(RPSP2018\)](#)

Open comment:

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