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Evaluation of the Global Concessional Financing Facility

Interim Report v2

Ipsos MORI

Ipsos MORI



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Acronyms

AMIF – Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund

BC – Benefitting Countries

CA – Contribution Analysis

CFF – Concessional Financing Facility

CU – Coordination Unit

DPL – Development Policy Loan

EBRD – European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

EIB – European Investment Bank

EQ – Evaluation Question

ERF – European Refugee Fund

ERI – Economic Resilience initiative

FIF – Financial Intermediary Fund

GCFF – Global Concessional Financing Facility

IBRD - International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

OECD DAC – The Organization for Economic Co-ordination and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC)

OM - Operations Manual

IADB – Inter-American Development Bank

IDA – International Development Association

IOM – International Organization for Migration

ISA – Implementing Support Agency

IsDB – Islamic Development Bank

IMF – International Monetary Fund

MDB – Multilateral Development Bank

M&E – Monitoring and Evaluation

MENA – Middle East and North Africa

MENA TF – Middle East and North Africa Transition Fund

MIC – Middle-income country

NGO – non-governmental organization

PDO – Project Development Objectives

SC – Supporting Countries

ToC - Theory of Change

TOR – Terms of Reference

UN – United Nations

UNDP – United Nations Development Program

UNGA – United Nations General Assembly

UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

(UN)OCHA - United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

Executive Summary

Context and background to this evaluation

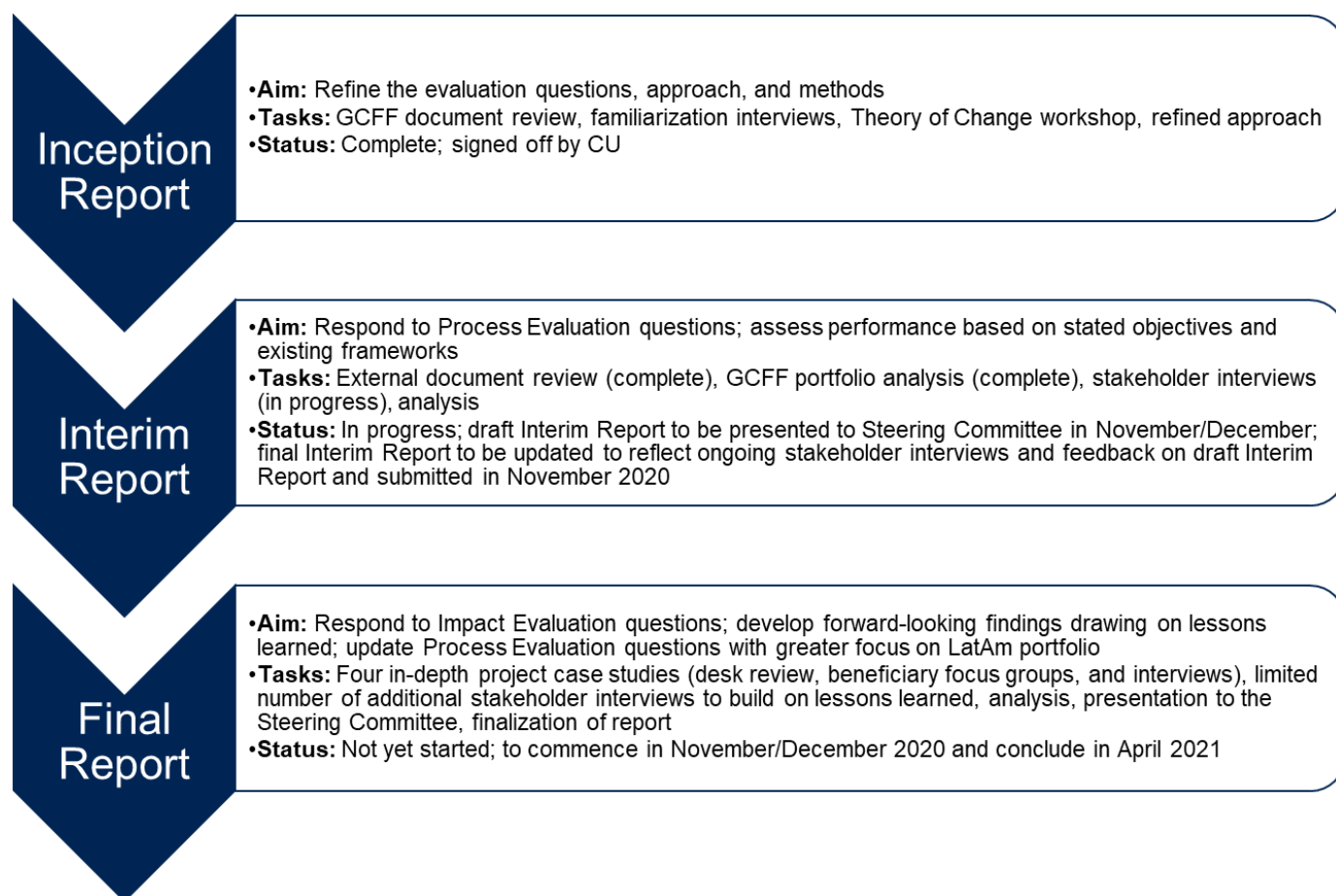
The Global Concessional Financing Facility (GCFF) is a World Bank Financial Intermediary Fund (FIF). Its objective “is to support middle income countries affected by the influx of refugees through the provision of concessional financing and improved coordination for development projects addressing the impact of the influx of refugees”. It aims to bridge the humanitarian-development gap that middle income countries face when hosting refugees over the medium to long term, recognizing that hosting these refugees is providing a global public good. It also aims to improve coordination between stakeholders to better address emerging refugee crises and support pro-refugee policy and project design. Founded in 2016 to address the influx of Syrian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan, it has subsequently welcomed Colombia and Ecuador as Benefitting Countries in the wake of the Venezuelan refugee crisis. The GCFF combines donor-funded grants with standard multilateral development bank loans to offer concessional loans to these countries, which otherwise would not be eligible for loans on concessional terms, in order to fund projects across a wide range of sectors aligned to each country’s development agenda and needs.

Ipsos MORI has been commissioned by the World Bank Group to carry out an independent evaluation of the GCFF after its first four years of operation to inform discussions around the Facility’s extension and identify necessary improvements that can be made to its operations to maximize impact in future years. The purpose of the evaluation **is to draw lessons learned, assess progress towards the GCFF’s objectives, and recommend any changes to design and management**. It is therefore both retrospective – evaluating the GCFF’s performance based on its stated objectives and indicators, evaluating the impact of the GCFF to date, and assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of the governance, operations and funding structures of the GCFF – and forward-looking, identifying the areas where GCFF has showed strength as well as lessons learned, in order to recommend potential adjustments in order to enhance development impact. It covers all of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development’s Development Assistance Committee evaluation criteria: relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability.

This Interim Report summarizes initial findings from the first stage of the evaluation, which is a **Process Evaluation**, covering the performance of GCFF structures, governance, and processes. To date, the evaluation has gathered and synthesized evidence from 31 in-depth interviews, a review of the program documents, and an external literature review. This stage is ongoing, with a targeted further 19 interviews to be completed. Crucially, it should be noted that only two of the four Benefitting Countries have been interviewed at this stage. This document should therefore be considered **for discussion purposes only** until a review of the full evidence is completed. Following discussion of the draft Interim Report with the Steering Committee and completion of the remainder of the planned interviews, a final Interim Report will be submitted. Conclusions and recommendations will be provided in the final Interim Report; due to the incomplete evidence base at this stage, this draft report summarizes available evidence only.

The next stage is an **Impact Evaluation** to consider the GCFF’s development impact which will be further supported by interviews and document review, as well as in-depth case studies of four GCFF-funded projects. The breadth of evidence will be analyzed within the context of the Theory of Change and evaluation framework set out in the Inception Report. The figure below outlines the evaluation deliverables and progress to date.

Overview of evaluation deliverables and progress to date



Key emerging findings: Efficiency and effectiveness of the GCFF and alignment of structure and management to its stated objectives

The GCFF has so far been mostly successful so far in **achieving its targets set for 2021** as outlined in the Results Frame Indicators presented in the Operations Manual, with particular success made on Indicator 3 – the amount of multilateral development bank financing made on concessional terms from the GCFF, which it has exceeded significantly. The progress against these objectives is summarized below:¹

- **Indicator 1 – Amount of contributions made:** A total of USD 773.13 million has been raised in pledges and contributions, as of June 2020, against the target of reaching USD 1 billion by June 2021. This represents 73% of the target reached. The amount of contributions has fallen year-on-year and have fallen below USD 200 million for the last two years. A significant increase in contributions by June 2021 will be required for the fund to meet its target of raising USD 1 billion.
- **Indicator 2 – Amount allocated by the GCFF per year:** A total of USD 622.75 million has been allocated by the GCFF, as of June 2020, at an average of USD 155 million per year. As such the target of allocating USD 150-200 million is currently being met. However, the last two years have seen a reduction in allocations below this target.
- **Indicator 3 – Amount of MDB financing made on concessional terms from the GCFF:** A total of USD 4.2 billion of MDB financing has been made on concessional terms from the GCFF. This has significantly exceeded the target of USD 3 billion. The yearly target of USD 600 million has been exceeded in each year of the program.

¹ Figures taken from the 2019-2020 GCFF Annual Report.

- **Indicator 4 – share of stakeholders who indicate that CFF implementation is making a useful contribution to coordination efforts:** Reporting on this indicator has been limited and is no longer ongoing. This evaluation is assessing how the Results Framework can better reflect its objective to increase stakeholder cooperation.

While targets are not set for impacts on refugees and host communities, stakeholders emphasized that ultimately, the GCFF aims to benefit these groups. The progress towards meeting the GCFF's objectives in terms of effects on refugees will be assessed to a greater extent in the final report. The portfolio analysis identified that in the majority of projects, project design specifically considered how refugees would be impacted. However, interim findings have highlighted that project delays, especially in Lebanon, largely as a result of the worsening political and economic situation, have limited the extent to which GCFF projects in Lebanon are able to impact refugees. This is reflected in the low level of GCFF fund disbursement in Lebanon of only 5%.

Overall, **monitoring** on the GCFF's targets at Facility level has been an efficient and effective process, although a new approach is needed for monitoring the GCFF's influence on collaboration (indicator 4). Project-level progress updates are also collected from Implementation Support Agencies (ISAs); this process has been considered efficient and its effectiveness has improved through introduction of a new reporting template by the Coordination Unit to better meet Supporting Countries' information needs. However, there is an ongoing desire from Supporting Countries for more information at project-level, particularly surrounding projects' impacts on refugees and women, as well as lessons learned. A mechanism for aggregating disparate results across projects is also desired, but the challenge of this is acknowledged.

Although the GCFF was initially conceived to benefit countries in the MENA region only, it has been extended to a global scope, with two new countries having joined and already having had projects approved. The process for **adding new Benefitting Countries** has been considered effective, with the most relevant countries being members of the GCFF and the process being recipient-led. Sponsorship by a Supporting Country is seen as a necessary function of the process to ensure that sufficient finance is available for all Benefitting Countries. However, the GCFF may be able to more effectively draw on the expertise of both the Steering Committee members and Observers to bring new Benefitting Countries into the GCFF more efficiently when crises emerge in the future.

GCFF **fundraising** has been considered effective. Fundraising has been more successful in responding to the Syrian refugee crisis than it has in response to the Venezuela migrant crisis. This has been reflected in the relatively slow progress towards objective of raising USD 500 million for the global window, which currently stands at USD 123 million, while progress towards overall target of raising USD 1 billion has been stronger, currently standing at USD 773 million in pledges and contribution. When compared to similar funds addressing the same crises, it is performing well. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development's (EBRD) Refugee Crisis Response has directed EUR 900 million towards building resilience in Turkey and Jordan to address the Syrian crisis, while the European Investment Bank's (EIB) Economic Resilience Initiative (ERI) has invested roughly EUR 400 million towards 16 projects across Lebanon and Jordan.

An informal process has also emerged where Supporting Countries time their financial contributions to the GCFF when a project of interest is ready for approval, potentially undermining the global eligibility principles of the program. Several stakeholders highlighted that greater consistency and predictability in financing would be beneficial for the long-term planning of the Facility. Fundraising efforts will likely face

additional challenges going forward in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and associated economic downturn.

The GCFF's **project portfolio** is relevant to the GCFF's aims, and efforts to ensure projects benefit refugees have been considered effective, although the implementation of these aspects in projects has not yet been explored by the evaluation. In terms of the process for **selecting funded projects**, this was considered effective at supporting these aims, and Supporting Countries felt that the information provided in Funding Requests had improved over time. There is an opportunity for more consistent sharing of project pipeline information with Supporting Countries and some concern that the 14 day timescale for Steering Committee approval of requests does not allow for sufficient review and discussion. In addition there is a sense that project documentation could be further strengthened including by leveraging expertise within the Steering Committee and among Observers.

The GCFF structure utilizes **ISA** procedures and practices and as such the costs of managing the loans are greatly reduced. This is seen as a key strength of the program and ensures that Fund is managed cost effectively. At a project level, ISAs provide technical assistance in certain aspects, such as M&E, implementation is largely the responsibility of recipient agencies. The GCFF has been less effective in engaging all ISAs, with the majority of GCFF projects implemented by the World Bank. The concessionality formula was highlighted as a key reason for this, and the evaluation team understands the formula is currently under review.

The GCFF's **governance and management structures** were largely considered effective. The Steering Committee was considered to be an effective governing body, particularly in terms of working as a partnership and reaching decisions efficiently. Some questions were raised about whether the membership has sufficient expertise related to Latin America and whether Supporting Countries feel sufficiently free to share concerns and critiques. The Coordination Unit was generally considered to be efficient and effective but faces demands for a greater degree of involvement in project design and monitoring which would require expanding its current role, as outlined in the Operations Manual. The Trustee was likewise considered to be efficient and effective in fulfilling its responsibilities.

Key emerging findings: Measuring the relevance and development impact of the GCFF Portfolio

The GCFF is **relevant to the needs of Benefitting Countries** given their financial context and the needs of refugees. The GCFF has been successful in responding to the critical financing needs of Benefitting Countries experiencing a significant influx of refugees which had significant impacts on host countries. The role of the GCFF funds in contributing to stabilizing the situation in Lebanon and Jordan at the onset of the Syrian refugee crisis has been highlighted as a particular success. Benefitting Country leadership in the GCFF is felt to be ensured through their ownership of Funding Requests and participation in the Steering Committee and position of joint chair. The **country selection process** is largely considered to be effective, and the current Benefitting Countries were considered those most appropriate for the GCFF, but there is no formal mechanism to de-select Benefitting Countries when the program is no longer relevant. The extent to which the GCFF has met the needs of refugees and host communities will be assessed further through the Impact Evaluation. Stakeholders felt that Supporting Countries' and the Coordination Unit's scrutiny of project designs had effectively led to an increased **focus on refugees in project design**, but that there is a need for improvements in program monitoring to better understand impacts on refugees, and many of the projects are at too early of a stage for such results to be evident.

The **concessional finance model** has considered successful for meeting Benefitting Countries' financial needs, incentivizing inclusion of pro-refugee elements in project design, and leveraging additional funding

from MDBs. However, it was felt that the concessional formula has been a barrier to greater participation in the GCFF by MDBs, and the future relevance of this model is questioned given current low interest rates and high debt levels in some Benefitting Countries.

Key emerging findings: Lessons learned to enhance coordination and impact and promote sustainability of the GCFF

Evaluation of the GCFF's impact, including its impact on the global policy discussion, the operations of ISAs, the policies of Benefitting Countries, and scaling of impacts, will be the focus of the forthcoming Impact Evaluation element of this evaluation. Thus, limited data on these points has been collected at this stage. However, some preliminary findings have emerged.

The GCFF **Results Framework** focuses on the GCFF's funds raised, allocated and distributed, in line with the GCFF's mandate, but there is a strong interest among Supporting Countries for measurement of the overall impact of the GCFF on refugees and host communities. Given ISAs and Benefitting Countries are responsible for monitoring activities, this would necessitate a new framework at the Facility-level for aggregating results indicators across the portfolio. There is also a desire for increased reporting on certain aspects of interest, such as gender. Another area which has not yet been addressed at the Facility-level is an ongoing assessment of risks, such as those due to changes in the political and economic climate.

However, based on a review of project documents and stakeholder interviews conducted thus far, it seems that as a result of the GCFF, Benefitting Countries have introduced a number of **pro-refugee** policies and incorporated pro-refugee elements in project design, although any wider policy impacts and the ongoing inclusion of these elements in project implementation is yet to be explored. In addition to this, the GCFF has influenced the IsDB's policies and operations to some extent.

The GCFF is considered to provide a new and unique **platform for a wide range of stakeholders** to engage and discuss priorities in addition to knowledge and expertise sharing. In particular, bringing together stakeholders across the development-humanitarian nexus at the Steering Committee is seen as a key strength, which could be further enhanced through increased inclusion of UN agencies and more multi-party engagement outside of Steering Committee meetings. Different ministries within Benefitting Countries could also be more engaged to increase their awareness of the GCFF.

On the global stage, the GCFF has also participated in **global fora** related to refugees, where the Facility's concessional finance model has been highlighted. This is informing the World Bank's strategy on refugees more broadly and also leading to the creation of a new World Bank Global Public Good fund.

1 Introduction

1.1 Overview of the evaluation scope and objectives

The World Bank Group has commissioned Ipsos MORI to carry out this evaluation of the Global Concessional Financing Facility (GCFF) after 4 years of its operation completed, to inform discussions around the facility's extension and identify necessary improvements that can be made to its operations to maximize impact in future years. The purpose of the evaluation was originally set out in the GCFF's Operations Manual (OM), and confirmed in the evaluation Terms of Reference (TOR) outlining that the independent evaluation shall:

- (i) draw lessons learned;
- (ii) assess progress towards the GCFF's objectives; and
- (iii) recommend any changes to design and management.

The evaluation scope has been primarily defined by the TOR and informed by feedback gathered from key stakeholders during familiarization interviews, which identified their priorities for the evaluation. In line with the evaluation purpose set out above, the evaluation will be both **retrospective** – evaluating the GCFF's performance based on its stated objectives and indicators, evaluating the impact of the GCFF to date, and assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of the governance, operations and funding structures of the GCFF – and **forward-looking**, identifying the areas where GCFF has showed strength as well as lessons learned, in order to recommend potential adjustments in order to enhance development impact. The evaluation will cover all of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC) evaluation criteria: relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability.

A thorough analysis of operational processes over past years will take place in the form of a **Process Evaluation**, covering the performance of GCFF structures and the governance that underpin the fund: the Steering Committee, Coordination Unit (CU) and the Trustee – as well as its linkage with its Supporting Countries (SC), Benefitting Countries (BCs), ISAs and other stakeholders such as the IMF and other UN agencies. The evaluation will also explore how external stakeholders are engaged by the Steering Committee and CU, in particular. The evaluation will also probe into the efficiency and effectiveness of the GCFF's key processes, especially its fund allocation process and its financial architecture (commitments and disbursements). Individual processes and the operating structures will be reviewed as to their **efficiency** and **effectiveness**.

The GCFF provides funding to projects that respond to both humanitarian and development needs and, as such, the evaluation will need employ an **Impact Evaluation** to consider its development **impact**. While it may be too early to observe some of the longer-term impacts anticipated from the program, the evaluation will seek to understand the outcomes that have been achieved to date and likely trajectory toward longer-term impacts. However, this Interim Report will mainly focus on the findings of the process evaluation, with the remaining evaluation activities testing impact.

As part of both the Process Evaluation and the Impact Evaluation and to develop forward-looking recommendations for future improvements, the evaluation will explore the overall GCFF results framework and reporting mechanisms, as well as those of the Implementation Support Agencies (ISAs) who co-fund and implement the projects. The alignment of projects to the results framework and the way in which

impacts on refugees and host communities are measured are of particular interest to Supporting Countries, as well as maximizing the development impact of GCFF-funded operations and a better understanding of the benefits occurring from GCFF operations. The evaluation will therefore consider reporting frameworks and develop recommendations for their improvement, based on an assessment both at the project-level and wider fund level. This assessment of the results framework will also support the evaluation's efforts to consider and make a judgement on the GCFF's development impact, a key objective of the evaluation.

Assessments of impact will explore the likely **sustainability** of these achievements. The assessment of impact and sustainability will be supported by an analysis of wider operating contexts that may affect GCFF projects as well as by learning from similar initiatives regarding the impacts they achieved and how these have been sustained over time. The GCFF implements projects in particularly challenging and often fragile and unstable contexts. The current political, economic and social situation in Lebanon is a prime example but the continuing impact of COVID-19 may be another major factor affecting GCFF projects. The relevance of the projects to these contexts and the effect these contexts may have on projects will be explored. Risks to project achievements will also be explored as part of this effort.

Although the OECD DAC criterion of **coherence** has not been specified as part of the evaluation scope in the TORs for the evaluation, the evaluation team plans to investigate the **coherence** of the GCFF, that is how well it has aligned with the many other initiatives seeking to support refugee-supporting countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and Latin America and specifically how it has coordinated its activities with other initiatives and the intentions of host and donor governments. Specifically, the evaluation considers whether the GCFF's extension to Colombia and Ecuador has helped or hindered coherence and whether it has supported the intention to act as a mechanism for donor coordination on support to development projects in refugee crises. Similarly, the evaluation explores the **relevance** of the fund in terms of the sectoral interventions it has supported and whether these can best meet the needs of national governments in responding to the needs of refugees and host communities. Relevance is explored through analysis of the fund's financial mechanisms, assessing the appropriateness of the financial tools provided to Benefitting Countries and the benefits of the concessionality offered by the fund.

1.2 Overview of the evaluation approach

The evaluation will involve five main work phases, each of which are described in detail in Section 5:

- **Phase 1: Inception** – The aim of the Inception Phase was to refine the evaluation approach, first outlined in the proposal. This was done through developing a deeper understanding of the GCFF and a better understanding of stakeholder intentions for the evaluation. The evaluation team carried out an internal document review to develop our understanding about the program and to map out the documentation to be used in the main stage of the evaluation. To better understand the program as well as stakeholder's aspirations for the evaluation, we had a number of meetings with the CU, carried out familiarization interviews with Supporting Countries, BCs, the CU and Trustee, ISAs and SC observers. We also conducted a Theory of Change workshop with stakeholder representatives to re-assess the program's functioning and the causal mechanisms to be tested within this evaluation. On the basis of this activities, we refined our proposed evaluation framework, approach and methods.
- **Phase 2: Portfolio Analysis and Document Review** – Project portfolio analysis allows for an assessment of the efficiency, effectiveness, coherence, relevance and development impact of GCFF projects and the extent to which objectives have been met for project activities that have taken place to date. It has assessed whether the program as a whole has achieved its intended

objectives. The analysis includes a review of internal documentation and monitoring information, a review of country-specific information from both internal and external sources and stakeholder feedback (drawn from Phase 3, below). In addition, the wider Document Review has built on the findings from the Inception Phase and explored the work of existing policies and programs that align with GCFF, the development impact they are achieving, the context in which GCFF operates both globally and in the four countries of operation. The review has fed into the analysis and reporting stages of the Interim Report and will feed into analysis and reporting for the Final Report (Phases 4 and 5) to develop an assessment of the comparative principles and practices on refugee programming amongst comparable funds and implementers in the BCs. The Project Portfolio Analysis and Document Review was initially presented in the Emerging Findings note and forms a significant contribution to the analysis in this Interim Report.

- **Phase 3: Stakeholder and in-country consultation** – Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders have and will continue to build on the evaluation team’s understanding of the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and coherence of the GCFF and the development impact of projects funded by the GCFF, informing findings in Phase 4 and 5. It has helped to provide evidence to inform the evaluation team’s generation of recommendations for future-facing changes to design or implementation. Phase 3 will also include four in-depth case studies on projects sampled from the GCFF’s 16 current projects. These case studies will feature stakeholder consultations with government and municipal government representatives for projects, project implementers, organizations representing refugees (such as local advocacy groups) and the designated ISA responsible for the project (alongside further project document reviews, contributing to Phase 2 findings, above). This will allow the evaluation team to explore in greater depth the causal links between the program’s inputs and activities and the observed outputs, outcomes and impacts. It will also allow for a further investigation of the GCFF’s project selection process and the activities of ISAs, as well as the development impact that has been achieved beyond what would be possible in the portfolio analysis of all 16 projects. Phase 3 data collection has informed this Interim Report and will also inform the Final Report. Case study reports for each of the four projects will be included in the annex to the Final Report.
- **Phase 4: Analysis of operations and funding structures** – Phase 4 comprises the Process Evaluation, which has focused on relevance, efficiency and effectiveness. It focused on several key aspects of the program’s delivery as identified in our Process Map (described in Section 4): fundraising from donors, country approval, funding requests and approval, monitoring, and the support provided to projects, along with an assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of the key structures involved within the GCFF. The output of this task is an analysis of operations and funding structures included in this Interim Report.
- **Phase 5: Analysis, synthesis and reporting** – The evaluation team has gathered evidence from Phases 2, 3, and 4 to develop findings and specifically answer the evaluation questions as set out in the evaluation framework. These findings are included in this Interim Report, and the evaluation team will continue analysis, synthesis and reporting for the Final Report. As emphasized in the TOR, the evaluation will seek to explore whether the program is “working” (its components and causal chains are operating as expected) and to understand how the program is interacting within its context, with reference to the collaboratively-produced Theory of Change developed in Phase 1. Contextual analysis conducted within the Document Review in Phase 2 has been particularly important here in helping the evaluation team to place the fund’s achievements within their operating contexts and allow for judgments on additionality to be made. Both primary and

secondary data collected in Phases 2 and 3 are used to help triangulate evidence and develop rigorous and reliable findings. The outputs of Phase 5 are the Interim and Final reports which will seek to answer the evaluation questions.

1.3 Activities undertaken for the Interim Report

The Interim Report includes the finding based on the following workstreams. An overview of the workstreams involved in the evaluation as a whole can be found in Section 5.

- **External Document Review:** An external document review was conducted focusing on the following broad categories: existing policies and programs; global trends; contextual analysis of the economic and policy landscape in Lebanon, Jordan, Colombia and Ecuador; and development impacts of case study projects. The document review is included in Annex 9.
- **Portfolio Analysis:** An analysis of the 16 GCFF funded projects was undertaken using project and program documentation. The analysis centered around the following key documents:
 - The Project Request form
 - The Project Appraisal Document (PAD)
 - Project Progress Reports

The evidence gathered together from documentation and consultations is organized into a portfolio analysis matrix (see Annex 8).

- **Stakeholder interviews:** Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders are currently be conducted to understand the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and coherence of the GCFF, and to understand the development impact of projects funded by the GCFF. Stakeholder interviews remain ongoing. So far, a total of 31 interviews have been conducted against a target of a 50; this includes 3 with the Coordination Unit and Trustee, 2 with Benefitting Countries, 8 with Supporting Countries, 5 with Implementation Support Agencies, 6 with Observers, and 7 with project leads.

1.4 Purpose and structure of the Interim Report

The purpose of the Interim Report is to report on findings gathered from early-stage research. The report is structured around the key evaluation questions and includes technical annexes.

The remainder of the Report is structured as follows: Section 2 provides a brief overview of the GCFF program (with the full overview in Annex 1); Section 3 presents a brief overview of the Theory of Change (with the full overview in Annex 2); Section 4 details a brief overview of the evaluation's methodology (with the full overview in Annex 3); Section 5 presents interim findings; and Section 6 provides lessons learned.

This report will be revised following receipt of feedback from the GCFF and completion of the remaining interviews.

2 Evaluation Framework

Through synthesis of evidence across its various workstreams, this evaluation aims to answer all the sub-questions set out in the evaluation matrix in the table below, which was agreed with the Coordination Unit in the Inception Report. Table 1 below presents a simplified version of the evaluation matrix, presenting the key evaluation questions and the relevant indicators.

Table 1 Evaluation Matrix

Key evaluation question	Indicators
4.1 Efficiency and effectiveness of the GCFF and alignment of structure and management to its stated objectives	
4.1a To what extent has the Facility achieved its objectives as set out in Section 8 (Results Framework) of the OM?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Achievement of Results Framework indicators - Perspectives of stakeholders on role of GCFF in achieving indicators and addressing drivers/barriers
4.1b How well did ISAs, working with Benefitting Countries, monitor, evaluate and report on the interim results of their activities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analysis of GCFF reports for timeliness, completion - Project Portfolio Analysis (ISA M&E submissions) - Analysis of evidence generated from Case Studies - Perspectives of stakeholders on monitoring processes employed
4.1c To what extent has the process of fundraising been carried out efficiently and effectively?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analysis of GCFF documentation including Progress Reports, Annual Reports and Steering Committee minutes - Perspectives of stakeholders on processes used, role of GCFF and the success of the GCFF in raising funds from Supporting Countries and attracting Supporting Countries - Analysis of donor spending trends in Document Review
4.1d To what extent has the process of country approval been carried out efficiently and effectively?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analysis of GCFF documentation including Progress Reports, Annual Reports and Steering Committee minutes - Perspectives of stakeholders on processes used for country approval
4.1e To what extent have funding requests been handled efficiently and effectively? Did applications for funding provide enough information, including regarding compliance with the ISA's policy and safeguards, to the SC to adequately inform allocation decisions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analysis of GCFF documentation including Progress Reports, Annual Reports and Steering Committee minutes - Perspectives of stakeholders on funding requests and their suitability - Analysis of Case Study-generated evidence on funding requests
4.1f To what extent have funding commitments and disbursements been delivered efficiently and effectively? Have the fund allocations and disbursement processes been efficient and effective both in terms of transfers of funds from FIF to ISAs and from ISAs to Benefitting Countries?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perspectives of stakeholders on funding disbursement process, suitability for recipient ISAs and BCs, including their efficiency and effectiveness
4.1g To what extent has GCFF project monitoring been carried out efficiently and effectively?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project Portfolio Analysis - Perspectives of stakeholders on project monitoring processes - Analysis of Case Study-generated evidence on project monitoring - Synthesis of alternative monitoring procedures and processes in comparator program generated from stakeholder consultations and Document Review

4.1h To what extent has support during prep phase and project implementation, particularly from ISAs, been carried out efficiently and effectively?

- Perspectives of stakeholders on support provided to BCs
- Synthesis of evidence of support provided to recipient BCs or implementing agencies in comparator program generated from stakeholder consultations and Document Review
- Analysis of Case Study-generated evidence

4.1i To what extent has the Steering Committee been efficient and effective and fulfilled its roles as set out in the OM? Has decision making been timely?

- Analysis of GCFF documents including SC minutes
- Perspectives of stakeholders on performance
- Analysis of Case Study-generated evidence

4.1j To what extent has the Coordination Unit been efficient and effective and fulfilled its roles as set out in the OM? Have internal GCFF resources been used efficiently?

- Analysis of OM
- Perspectives of stakeholders on performance
- Analysis of Case Study-generated evidence

4.1k To what extent has the Trustee been efficient and effective and fulfilled its roles as set out in the OM? Have resources been used efficiently and decision making been timely?

- Analysis of GCFF documents including trustee-produced reports financial reports
- Analysis of OM and other internal documents
- Perspectives of stakeholders on performance
- Analysis of Case Study-generated evidence

4.1l What are the key factors that prevent certain ISAs from participating to a greater extent in the GCFF?

- Analysis of GCFF documents and any unsuccessful applications (if obtainable)
- Perspectives of stakeholders, including ISAs
- Contextual and trend analysis in Document Review

4.1m From a cost perspective, how efficiently have ISAs been able to leverage their existing operations?

- Reporting of ISA activities in GCFF and ISA documents
- Analysis of Case Study-generated evidence
- Perspectives of stakeholders, including learning on costs and processes gleaned from ISA stakeholder consultations

4.2 Measuring the relevance and development impact of the GCFF Portfolio

4.2a Does the GCFF's financial support respond to critical financing needs of Benefitting Countries and the objective to "support middle income countries impacted by the influx of refugees through the provision of concessional financing and improved coordination for development projects addressing the impact of the influx of refugees"?

- Analysis of GCFF documents including funding requests
- Analysis of Benefitting Countries' national development strategies, funding asks and refugee response plans in Document Review
- Perspectives of stakeholders on needs for financing
- Project Portfolio Analysis
- Analysis of Case Study-generated evidence

- Has concessional financing been an appropriate tool to respond to these needs?

- Has the concessionality formula adequately served the needs of the Benefitting Country?

4.2b Is the GCFF aligned to the critical programmatic needs for support of Benefitting Countries in their support to refugees and host communities and support the objective to “support middle income countries impacted by the influx of refugees through the provision of concessional financing and improved coordination for development projects addressing the impact of the influx of refugees” and what lessons can be learned to ensure the GCFF is country-owned?

- Have the critical needs of female refugees and host community members been supported?

4.2c To what extent has country selection appropriately served the objective “to support middle income countries impacted by the influx of refugees through the provision of concessional financing and improved coordination for development projects addressing the impact of the influx of refugees.”

4.2d What complementarities, synergies, overlaps or disconnects are there between the GCFF and other funds and programs addressing the refugee crisis?

4.2e What are the anticipated results of the program and its supported projects, and what are the outcomes and impacts of the portfolio on refugees and host communities? To what extent has the program supported BCs to be able to cope with and support refugee influxes?

4.2f How well has the Facility been able to follow up on the commitment made at the inception to mobilize more than US\$1 billion over five years for Lebanon and Jordan and another US\$500 million for the Global Window (progress to date)? What has helped or hampered resource mobilization?

4.3 Lessons learned to enhance coordination and impact and promote sustainability of the GCFF:

- Analysis of GCFF documents including funding requests
- Project Portfolio Analysis
- Analysis of Benefitting Countries’ national development strategies, funding asks and refugee response plans
- Evidence of inclusion considerations in projects identified in portfolio analysis
- Perspectives of stakeholders on needs and relevance of projects
- Analysis of Case Study-generated evidence

- Analysis of GCFF documents including SC minutes
- Analysis of country suitability for GCFF participation based on literature on global trends and policies (contextual and trend analysis) reviewed in Document Review
- Perspectives of stakeholders, including external stakeholders

- Analysis of GCFF documents
- Perspectives of stakeholders on GCFF coherence
- Synthesis of processes, practices and implementation areas of comparator programs generated from stakeholder consultations and Document Review

- Achievement of Results Framework indicators
- Analysis of GCFF documents
- Development of ToC
- Analysis of evidence on impact reported internally for Case Study projects as well as in external reporting (Document Review)
- Refugees’, host communities’, and other stakeholders’ perspectives on results achievement
- Disaggregation of results by gender and other inclusion dimensions

- Analysis of GCFF documents including funding pledges, commitments and Trustees’ Financial Report
- Perspectives of World Bank, SC, and external stakeholders on resource mobilization

4.3a To what extent has the GCFF influenced the global policy discussion on the needs of refugees and host communities? What types of positive or negative effects?

- Perspectives of stakeholders on the effects of the program
- Evidence of the GCFF's coordination efforts influencing refugee response agendas of key actors identified in stakeholder consultations and documentation
- Evidence of other countries and actors increasing their engagement with these crises, motivated by the work of the GCFF identified in Document Review
- Contextual and trend analysis in Document Review

4.3b To what extent has the GCFF been able to inform and influence the operations of the ISAs and the policies of Benefitting Countries? To what extent has the Facility's communication/outreach approach been effective? Has the dialogue between the CU, SC, ISAs and Benefitting Countries translated into increased attention for refugees and hosting communities in Benefitting Countries?

- Analysis of Benefitting Countries' national development strategies and refugee response plans
- Evidence of similar modalities/innovations emerging to respond to similar crises and related global public goods identified in Document Review
- Project Portfolio Analysis
- Contextual and trend analysis in Document Review. Perspectives of stakeholders on the effects of the program, including ISAs and Benefitting Countries

4.3c To what extent did the GCFF drive additional funding, contribute to scaling operations, create a multiplier effect, incentivize cooperation among ISAs and Benefitting Countries, etc.?

- Contextual and trend analysis in Document Review
- Evidence of similar modalities/innovations emerging, influenced by GCFF, to respond to similar crises and related global public goods identified in Document Review
- Evidence of other countries and actors increasing their engagement with these crises, motivated by the work of the GCFF identified in Document Review and Stakeholder Consultations
- Analysis of GCFF documents
- Perspectives of stakeholders on the effects of the program

4.3d How sustainable are the GCFF's results likely to be?

- Development of ToC
- Contextual and trend analysis in Document Review
- Analysis of results achieved (GCFF Results Frameworks and per project in Project Portfolio Analysis and Case Studies)
- Perspectives of stakeholders on likely sustainability of projects and results

4.3e To what extent have risks at the overall Facility level been discussed by the relevant stakeholders and appropriate mitigation measures put in place?

- Analysis of GCFF documents including SC minutes, project documents
- Perspectives of stakeholders on risks and mitigations

4.3f Is the current results framework fit for purpose? How can it be improved?

- What options could be developed to update the Results Framework to more effectively monitor the impact on refugees and host communities, and how practical are these options?

- Analysis of GCFF documents including Results Framework
- Analysis of incorporation of equity and social inclusion dimensions in Results Framework
- Development of Theory of Change
- Review of literature on impact (Document Review)
- Perspectives of stakeholders on Results Framework and feasibility of proposed options
- Refugees', host communities', and other stakeholders' perspectives on results achievement

- What steps/data would it take to develop a dedicated M&E framework to be designed for the GCFF in addition to the project-level M&E framework ensured by ISAs?²
- How can the updated M&E framework take into consideration gender-disaggregated data and environmental indicators?

- Synthesis of comparator program efforts on results frameworks in similar fields and funding modalities

Source: Ipsos MORI

² From the TOR: Beyond measuring project-level results, several Supporting Countries have expressed a shared interest in maximizing the benefits of GCFF-funded operations for refugees and host communities. The effort to achieve this shared objective would be aided by a framework that supplements normal project-level monitoring to be undertaken by the ISAs to systematically capture the wider impact of GCFF-funded projects on refugees and host communities.

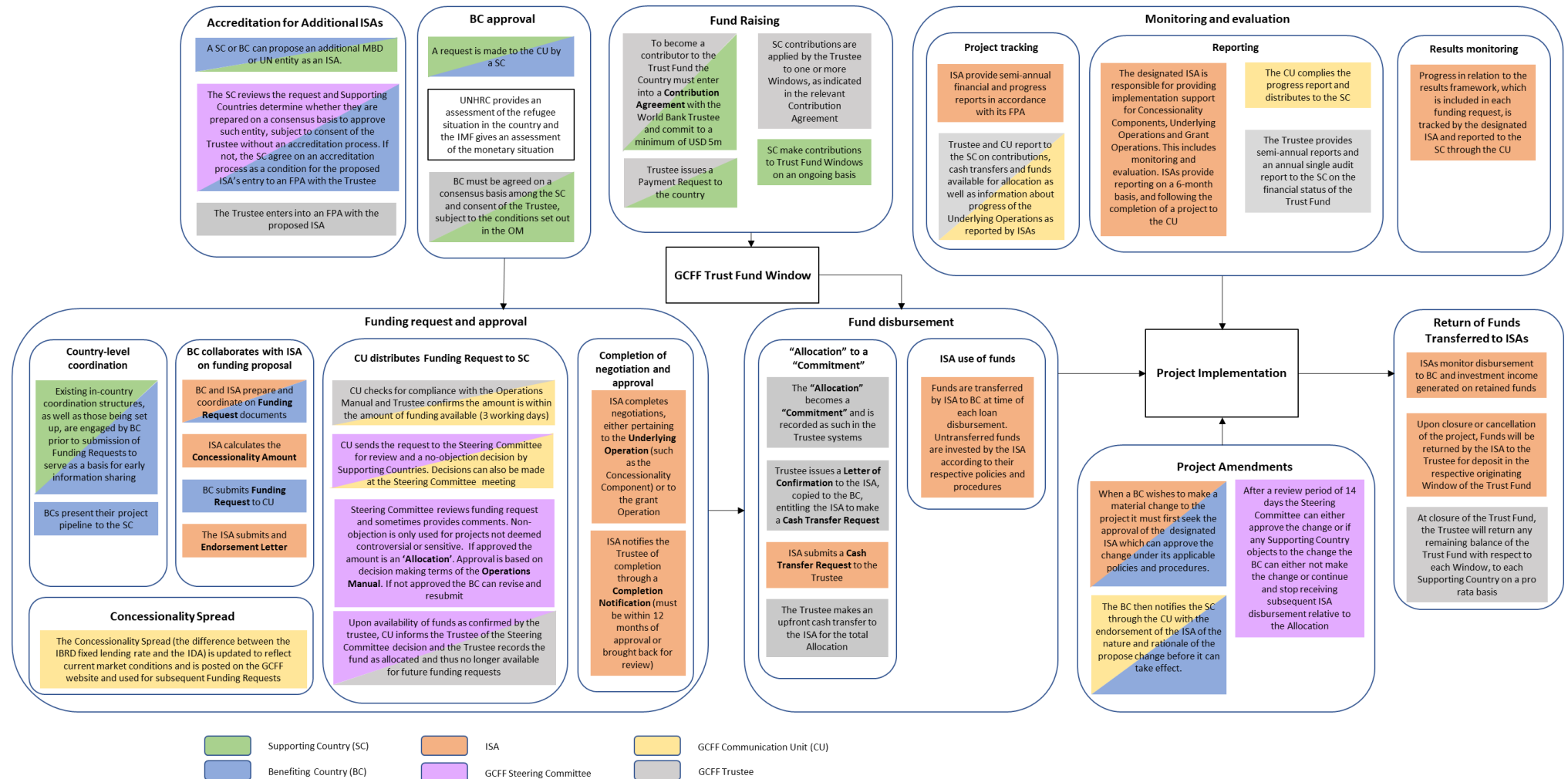
Process Map

For the purposes of the present Process Evaluation, a Process Map was also agreed with the Coordination Unit in the Inception Report. It should be noted that the Inception Report also includes a separate Impact Evaluation framework, which is not included here given this report's focus on the Process Evaluation.

The Process Evaluation will aim to assess the effectiveness with which the GCFF has been implemented and the efficiencies of the processes involved, and the extent to which these processes either help or hinder the achievement of the intended outcomes. It will be both retrospective and forward-looking, assessing both the GCFF's achievement of intended results set out in its Results Framework retrospectively, and considering how the program could be strengthened in the future to support achievement of impacts envisaged in the ToC. To support this, the Process Evaluation framework consists of the process evaluation questions and indicators which would be used to assess each question (as set out in the evaluation matrix above) as well as a process map.

A key task in the Inception Phase was therefore to develop the process map, which describes the key processes involved with the delivery of the program and responsibility for their delivery. This is largely informed by the OM, which describes the key processes, with insights from familiarization interviews, the ToC workshop, and a review of other documents in the Inception Phase. The process map is illustrated in the diagram below. Subsequently, a narrative is provided for each process, providing more detail on each.

Figure 1 Process Map



Source: Ipsos MORI analysis of the Operations Manual and Stakeholder input

Benefitting Country approval

The OM outlines that Jordan and Lebanon are eligible for GCFF funds provided by ISAs. Additional countries may become BCs following a request to the CU by a Supporting Country. BCs become aware of the GCFF through informal mechanisms such as bilateral relationships with donor countries or through existing engagement with ISAs. Initially, a country which would like to join the GCFF writes to the SC to express an interest. A Supporting Country then puts them forward in a formal request to the CU who share this with the SC. The Supporting Country will make the case for the inclusion of the new BC as per paragraph 9 (below) of the OM. A decision will be taken at a meeting of the SC, informed by the country reports of UNHCR's Assessment of the Refugee Situation and the IMF's Assessment of the Monetary Situation. SC observers are invited to provide contributions to the discussions to help inform the decision of the supporting countries.

The new country must be approved on a consensus basis by Supporting Countries and the consent of the Trustee. BCs must meet the following conditions as determined by Supporting Countries:

- Hosting more than 25,000 refugees;
- Refugees make up 0.1% of the population;
- The country is committed to principles that contribute to long-term solutions benefitting both refugees and host communities. This should be based on an adequate framework for the protection of refugees, based on adherence to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol, or the adoption of national policies and practices consistent with the principles within these instruments. In addition, the country should demonstrate its commitment to progressive policy or legal reforms regarding refugees.

Accreditation for ISAs

The Governance structure of the GCFF allows for the addition of new ISAs. When a prospective ISA is proposed by a Supporting or Benefitting Country, the SC reviews the request and the Supporting Countries determine whether to approve the new entity, subject to consent of the Trustee, without an accreditation process. If this is not agreed upon, then the Supporting Countries agree on an accreditation process, satisfactory to the Trustee, for verification of the entity. The accreditation process would be designed to assess the entity's record and capacity to manage any funds entrusted to it, including guarding against the misuse or ineffective use of funds, in line with international standards related to safeguards, procurement, and financial management. If after such assessment, the Supporting Countries agree on a consensus basis to approve such entity, subject to consent of the Trustee, the entity becomes an ISA for the GCFF upon effectiveness of or accession to an FPA.

Fund Raising

Any country interested in becoming a contributor to the Trust Fund must do so through a signed **Contribution Agreement** with the Trustee. Upon the effectiveness of the Contribution Agreement for an amount of at least USD 5m, the country becomes a Supporting Country of the GCFF. Supporting Country contributions are applied by the Trustee to one or more Windows, as indicated in the relevant Contribution Agreement. Supporting countries make ongoing contributions to the Trust Fund Windows.

In practice, an informal procedure has also emerged whereby Supporting Countries contribute funds to relevant Windows at an appropriate time to fund a project preferred by that Supporting Country.

Funding Request and Approval

Projects are conceived through existing ISA liaison with BC. This can include the expansion of existing programming. BCs present their expected pipeline of projects (referred to as “**underlying operations**”) to the SC early in the process, providing an opportunity for early feedback on opportunities and for Supporting Countries to identify projects they are most interested in funding.

A BC works together with an ISA to prepare a **Funding Request**. The CU can also offer informal support throughout the process to help BCs and ISAs develop the Funding Request. The Funding Request is submitted to the CU for review.

Once this finalized, formal Funding Request is submitted, the CU has three days to review the Funding Request to ensure compliance with GCFF requirements set out in the OM and, where necessary, provide feedback to the BC and ISA. The World Bank’s Treasury Financial Products team, together with the GCFF, calculates the amount of GCFF funding that would be required to reduce the ISA’s non-concessional interest rate provided for this project loan to concessional terms, based on the concessional **Calculation Worksheet** in the OM. The GCFF provides the Concessional Amount to a designated ISA for an amount that would cover on a net-present value basis, a pre-defined Concessional Spread for the disbursement period for the ISA loan.

Concessional Amount Calculation

The Concessional Amount is calculated according to the following mechanisms:

- The Concessional Spread: The Concessional Spread reflects the spread between The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) fixed lending rate and the International Development Association (IDA) terms. Its Euro equivalent is calculated by the Coordination Unit and posted on the GCFF website on a quarterly basis, to reflect current market and pricing conditions. Adjustments to the Concessional Spread affect all subsequent Funding Requests.
- Concessional Amount:
- The funds needed to meet the Concessional Spread is calculated by the ISA and included as part of the Benefitting Countries’ Funding Request.
 - The amount is calculated as the net present value of the Concessional Spread, discounted using the corresponding swap curve³, and based on a projected disbursement schedule.
 - The IDA regular terms serve as a floor for the Concessional Amount.

Once compliance has been verified, the Funding Request is sent to the Supporting Countries and copied to the rest of the SC so that they are also aware of the request. The SC has two weeks to review the finalized funding request, before a SC meeting is held to discuss the opportunity or before Supporting Countries confirm the project via email on a no-objection, consensus basis. Supporting Countries make this decision based on selection criteria. When reviewing, SC members consider adherence to the criteria set out in the OM (described below), but stakeholders also report that other outcomes such as the inclusion of gender and sustainability angles in the proposal are also considered. The SC also seeks to assess the feasibility of increasing the BC’s debt, for example through referring to IMF Mission Reports.

³ A USD swap curve is used for USD loans and a EUR swap curve for EUR loans

At SC meetings, Funding Requests are approved on a consensus basis by Supporting Countries. Supporting Countries have the opportunity to negotiate improvements to the proposal. While technically all SC members can participate in the decision, in practice, BCs abstain. Supporting Countries then decide on whether to approve the Funding Request based on the terms of the OM, subject to the availability of funding as determined by the Trustee. The criteria outlined in the OM are as follows:

- Completion of the Funding Request form.
- Submission of an **Endorsement Letter** from the respective ISA.
- Demonstration that the Funding Request for a Concessionality Component properly applies the Concessionality Spread to calculate the Concessionality Amount.
- A clear description of the Underlying Operations or Grant Operation demonstrating: the objective of supporting refugees and host communities; the coherence with the Benefiting Country's development agenda; development impact; and project readiness.
- Preparation (through appraisal) and implementation plans consistent with the ISA's applicable policies and procedures.
- Submission in English with figures in USD.

Once the Funding Request has been approved by the SC and subject to available funding as assessed by the Trustee the Funding Request becomes an "**Allocation**". The Trustee is informed of the decision and the amount is recorded as allocated and thus no longer available for future Funding Requests.

Fund Disbursement

Once the terms of the Underlying Operation are confirmed by the ISA and notified to the Trustee, the "Allocation" becomes a "**Commitment**". Funding requests are first funded by available funds in the relevant country window, before drawing on funds from other multi-country windows. In some cases, project requests may be scaled down if limited funding is available. The Trustee then sends a **Letter of Confirmation** to the ISA enabling them to make a **Cash Transfer Request**. The ISA submits the Cash Transfer Request to the Trustee and an upfront cash transfer is made to the ISA for the total amount. The ISA transfers the funds to the BC (through **Recipient Entities**, i.e. relevant ministries) at the time of each loan disbursement on a pro rata basis. Untransferred funds can be invested by the ISA according to their policies and procedures.

Project Implementation

Projects are implemented by the BCs with the support from ISAs. The ISAs are also responsible for accountability processes in line with their own policies and procedures. They are therefore responsible for ensuring implementation of the project is in line with their own requirements. Projects can aim to support refugee populations and/or host communities.

Project amendments

In that case that a BC seeks to make a change to a project in terms of the project development objective, geographic area, thematic or sectoral scope, or ministry managing the Project for an Underlying Operation or a Grant Operation, it must first seek the approval of the designated ISA who must approve the proposed change according to its applicable policies and procedures. Through the Communication Unit, the BC must then notify the SC of the proposed change and the rationale behind it. The SC then has a 14-day period to approve the change, during this period Supporting Countries can object to the change or request further review by the SC. At the end of the period if there are no objections from Supporting Countries the proposed change is considered to be approved and may take effect. If the proposed change is objected,

then the BC can either drop the change or apply the change and will then stop receiving subsequent ISA disbursements.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) consists of three key processes:

Project Tracking – The CU tracks and compiles progress reports based on the information provided from the ISA. The CU distributes progress reporting to the SC on Concessionality Components and Grant Operations compiled from individual progress reports received from ISAs during the reporting period, and also shares information about progress of the Underlying Operations as reported by ISAs. Over time, the operational update may include a focus on problem cases to evaluate performance such as: (i) performance ratings provided in the individual progress reports; (ii) levels of disbursements; and (iii) lead time to effectiveness.

Reporting - Each ISA is responsible for providing implementation support, including M&E of the Project performance. ISAs provide reporting on a six-month basis and following the completion of a project to the CU for distribution to the SC. Reporting is made using the relevant **Reporting Template**. The CU reports to the SC on progress of the Concessionality Components (and for information, on the Underlying Operations) and the Grant Operations based on information received from the ISAs and the Trustee.

Results Monitoring - Progress in relation to the Results Frameworks included in the Funding Request are tracked by the ISAs and reported to the SC through the CU for informational purposes.

The project Results Framework assess the extent to which Underlying Operations support the impact of the influx of refugees. This provides a common reporting framework which is based on information ISAs would be collection for their own reporting purposes, in order to provide specific information on the impacts of GCFF funded projects. The OM includes the Results Monitoring Template, which requires the input of the unit of measurement, baseline, cumulative target values and intermediate results. In addition, the template provides a menu of the following sample indicators:

- Indicators related to the number of refugee and host community beneficiaries, disaggregated by gender
 - Direct project refugee beneficiaries (number), of which female (percentage)
 - Direct project host community population beneficiaries (number), of which female (percentage)
- Indicators related to improved Social Service Delivery for host and refugee populations
 - Refugees and Host community population receiving improved access to education through project (number), of which female (percentage)
 - Refugees and Host community population receiving improved access to health services through project (number), of which female (percentage)
- Indicators related to improved economic opportunities for host and refugee populations
 - Work permits issued to refugees (number), of which female (percentage)
 - Refugee and Host Community SMEs supported (number)

- Jobs provided to or created for refugee and Host Community populations (number), of which female (percentage)
- Refugees and Host Community trained (number), of which female (percentage)
- Indicators related to improved access to and quality of infrastructure for host and refugee populations
 - Refugee and Host Community Population receiving access to improved Water Sources or improved sanitation facilities/Wastewater (number), of which female (percentage)
 - Roads rehabilitated or constructed, benefitting refugees and Host community (km)

Return of funds transferred to ISAs

The BC will repay the ISA's loan on its original terms. The additional funds provided by the GCFF come at no cost to the BC (they have been used, instead, to support the ISA to offer this loan at highly concessional terms). The ISAs monitor investment income which is generated on retained funds. Once the projects have closed, unused funds are also returned by the ISA to the Trustee to be deposited in the respective originating Window of the Trust Fund. This can also include any proportional amount of refunds from misused funds. Upon the closure of the project, the Trustee will return any remaining balance of the Trust Fund with respect to each Window, to each SC on a pro rata basis.

3 Overview of the GCFF

3.1 GCFF overview and objectives

As stated in its OM, the GCFF's objective *"is to support middle income countries affected by the influx of refugees through the provision of concessional financing and improved coordination for development projects addressing the impact of the influx of refugees"*. In doing so, the GCFF also aims to bridge the humanitarian-development gap that MICs face when hosting refugees over the medium to long term, and to support such countries that are providing a global public good. Stakeholders stated that as secondary objectives, the GCFF aims to improve coordination between BCs, Supporting Countries, ISAs and others to ensure better coordinated, well-designed solutions for emerging refugee crises as well as increasing these actors' focus on refugee crises overall.

The Concessional Financing Facility (CFF) was formed and began in late 2016, in the wake of the Syrian refugee crisis which resulted in Jordan and Lebanon having the highest proportion of refugees as a share of their overall population in the world. In October 2015, at the World Bank Group-IMF Annual Meeting, Lebanon and Jordan appealed to the international community for support in coping with this influx. In response, a global consensus emerged on the weakness of multilateral development banks' (MDBs') existing financial instrument to engage on the required scale of the crisis and that additional arrangements were needed on top of existing development and humanitarian sources of financing.⁴ Some major donors favored concessional loans as a mechanism of support to host country governments over grant funding (although in exceptional circumstances, the GCFF may also provide direct, grant funding at a Benefitting Country's request with the consensus agreement of the Supporting Countries).⁵ It was acknowledged that as a result of the protracted nature of the crisis and the characteristic that refugees often stay in their host country for an extended period of time, a platform to provide medium-to-long-term development financing supporting both refugees and their host communities was needed. The fund's operating model is unique; by blending grants from the GCFF (funded by Supporting Countries) with loans from ISAs, it creates concessional loans (providing significantly more favorable terms than would otherwise be available to these countries). While the objective is to provide full concessionality, different levels of concessionality can be provided.

After initially focusing on the Syrian crisis, supporting Lebanon and Jordan with refugee influxes, the CFF was extended to a global level (renamed the GCFF) in September 2016, by allowing it to support eligible countries anywhere in the world. Colombia was added to the CFF in January 2019, with a view to addressing the impacts of the Venezuelan crisis on its economy. Ecuador was added in September 2019 to support its efforts to handle an influx of refugees from the same crisis.

The fund has a particularly wide scope of operations. It is flexible to respond to various sectors where BCs identify a funding need, as long as those sectors and proposed projects are part of BCs' development agendas while also clearly supporting refugee populations and host communities. Financing may be provided to support the delivery of basic services (e.g. education, health), social protection, expanding economic opportunities (e.g. work permits, job creation), and/or operations that strengthen and develop

⁴ *Concessional Financing for Refugees and Host Communities in Middle-income Countries Case Study*, The World Bank, available at: <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/802571523387514211/case-study-Financial-Products-concessional-financing-for-refugees-and-host-communities.pdf>

⁵ Ibid.

critical infrastructure, promote private sector participation, and provide host countries with necessary budget support as it relates to the impacts of the refugee crisis.

Projects are jointly developed and implemented by BCs and ISAs and funding requests are submitted by BCs together with ISAs when projects are ready for GCFF approval. GCFF funding is calculated to result in reduced borrowing rates that cannot go below the IDA borrowing rate (i.e. the rate provided by the World Bank to low-income countries). The GCFF is an open platform for funding, and GCFF provides funds using any of the instruments used by its ISAs; for example, where the World Bank is the ISA, this could be investment financing, budget support, or program for results. The ISAs then integrate GCFF funds into their loan operations based on their applicable policies and procedures and are therefore responsible for ensuring implementation of the project in line with ISAs' own requirements. The GCFF's provision of a grant to the ISA therefore leverages ISAs' loan finance. Results reporting to the GCFF includes specific pre-agreed indicators regarding refugees and hosts, although ISAs also carry out their own results reporting.

3.2 Summary of the GCFF governance and key stakeholders

The GCFF's Operating Manual (OM) outlines the fund's governance structure, operating principles, guidelines and procedures for operations. This sub-section sets out our understanding of the main structures of the GCFF and its key stakeholders.

Founding partners

The founding partners of the GCFF are the World Bank, the UN (represented by UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UN Development Program (UNDP) and UN Resident Coordinators for each Benefitting Country), and Islamic Development Bank (IsDB). The foundation of the GCFF was brokered between the UN Secretary General, the President of the IsDB, and the President of the World Bank Group in April 2016.

Governance

The GCFF's decision-making body is the Steering Committee (SC), comprised of representatives from each Supporting Country and Benefitting Country; observers also attend who provide expertise and guidance. It facilitates coordination among Benefitting Countries, Supporting Countries, ISAs and Observers, as well as other country-level stakeholders and in relation to other financing instruments. It is co-chaired by a representative from the Supporting Countries and one from the Benefitting countries. The SC will approve strategic documents of the fund and advise on the process and common format for Funding Requests. Supporting Countries all have an equal say in decision-making, regardless of their contribution amount.

Management

The World Bank serves as **Trustee** for the Financial Intermediary Fund (FIF) Trust Fund and hosts the secretariat, referred to as the **Coordination Unit (CU)**. The Trustee administers the Trust Fund through receiving funds from Supporting Countries, holding funds under the terms of the Contribution Agreement, disbursing and returning funds.

The CU supports the SC and liaises between the Trustee, ISAs and other stakeholders. It is also responsible for raising funds and has various responsibilities relating to management, coordination and guidance.

Supporting Countries

Currently, there are 10 Supporting Countries: Canada, Denmark, the European Commission, Germany, Japan, Norway, the Netherlands, Sweden, the UK, and the USA.

The GCFF has four Trust Fund Windows – one for Jordan, one for Lebanon, one for Jordan and Lebanon and one for a Global Window. Donors may contribute to these windows based on their intentions to support specific refugee crises and host communities.

Benefitting Countries

There are currently four **Benefitting Countries**: Colombia, Ecuador, Jordan and Lebanon. The GCFF is a global facility and can include additional Benefitting Countries in the future.

ISAs

The GCFF has established partnerships with four MDBs to carry out projects supported by the Facility: the EBRD, EIB, IsDB, and World Bank. The Facility also allowed for other MDBs to join in the future and is currently in discussion with the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB). 12 projects are implemented by the World Bank, two jointly by the World Bank and IsDB, and one by the EBRD.

Project-level stakeholders

At a project level, stakeholders vary depending on the delivery model designed by the BC and ISA. These may include responsible national government ministries, local government, and delivery partners such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or the private sector.

GCFF Portfolio

The GCFF became operational in July 2016 and has mobilized nearly \$800 million in pledges and contributions from Supporting Countries and provided over \$600 million in funding to date, which has leveraged over \$4 billion concessional financing.

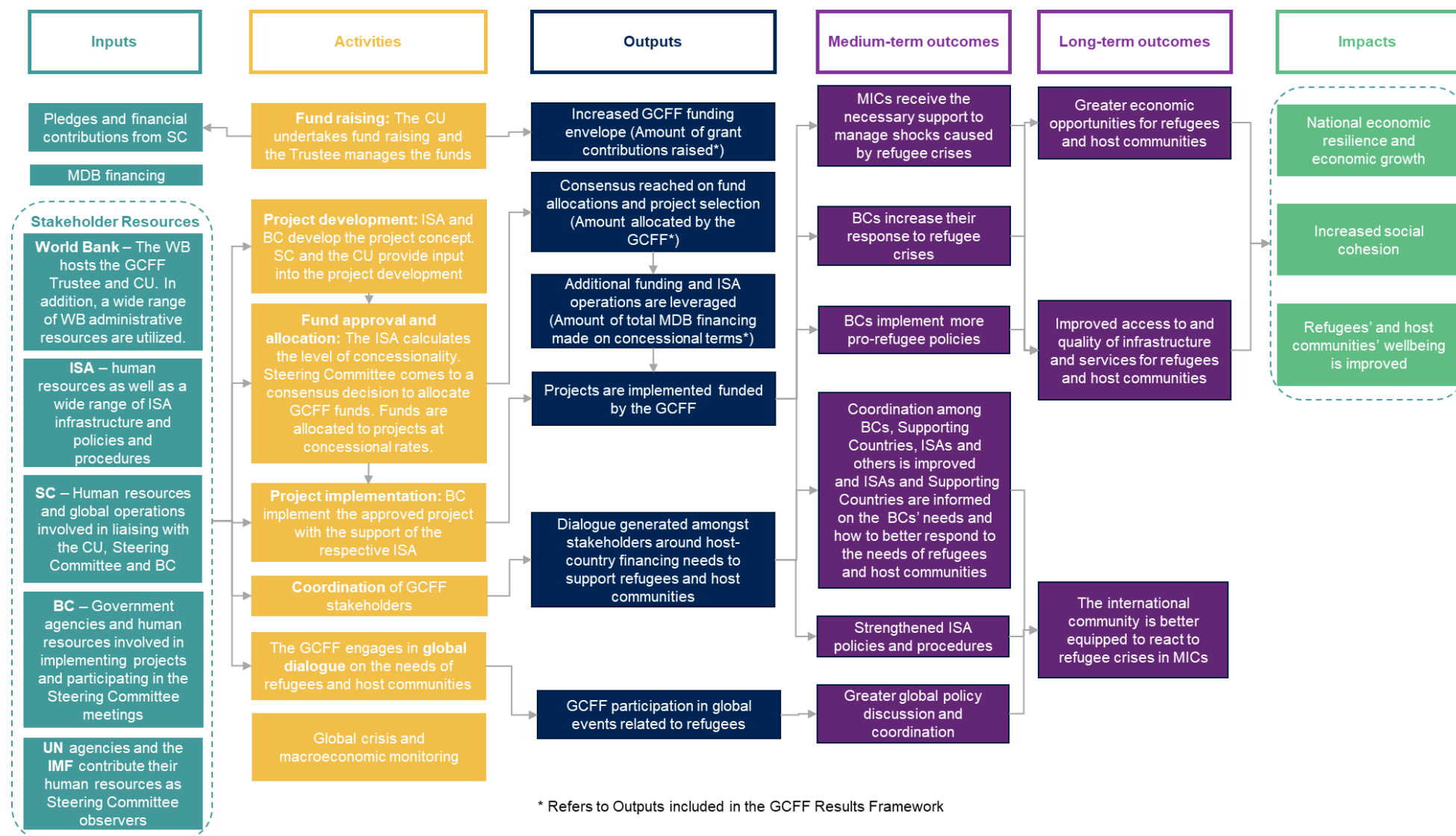
4 Theory of Change

A Theory of Change (ToC) is an overall narrative that explains how a program aims to achieve its intended objectives. It traces the program inputs through to its intended impacts. The ToC helps capture how the program will support changes to achieve its objectives and how it will evolve, assuming pre-conditions for changes (both inside and outside of the program) are in place. This section outlines in detail how the program operates and the ToC that underpins program delivery and will be used in this evaluation. The ToC was developed in collaboration with the GCFF at a ToC workshop undertaken on August 18th, 2020 and has additionally been informed by a document review and familiarization interviews undertaken throughout the Inception Phase.

4.1 Logic Model

The figure below provides a visual representation of the key elements of the ToC for the GCFF, highlighting the linkage between each step in the ToC.

Figure 2 GCFF logic model



Source: Ipsos MORI

5 Methodology

This section summarizes the methodology to support the evaluation and satisfy the frameworks detailed above in Section 3. The full methodology is provided in Annex 4.

5.1 Data collection workstreams

The evaluation will carry out a range of data collection activities designed to provide a holistic account of GCFF performance to date, supporting both the process evaluation and impact assessment. These include:

- **Portfolio Analysis:** The first task of the second phase of the evaluation was an assessment of the project activities that have taken place to date, which allowed the evaluation team to measure the relevance and development impact of the GCFF, its additionality, and the extent by which it pursues the stated objectives. This was done through an analysis of the Facility’s portfolio, including all closed and ongoing operations which have received funding since the GCFF became operational in 2016. The evidence gathered together from documentation and consultations is organized into a portfolio analysis matrix (see Annex 4). The analysis of projects in Colombia and Ecuador, given the short timeframe since their start date, does not permit sufficient time to assess their development impact at the time of this Interim Report, and they will be updated in the Final Report.
- **Document Review:** This evaluation is informed by the existing evidence base around what works in helping countries manage and adapt to refugee influx in different contexts and geographies. The document review focused on the following broad categories: existing policies and programs; global trends; contextual analysis of the economic and policy landscape in Lebanon, Jordan, Colombia and Ecuador; and development impacts of case study projects.
- **Stakeholder Consultations:** In phase three, the evaluation team is carrying out semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders to understand the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and coherence of the GCFF, and to understand the development impact of projects funded by the GCFF. These consultations have also informed the Portfolio Analysis, contributing evidence to both add to and triangulate document-generated evidence and provide inputs to generate lessons for changes to implementation - looking forward, based on experiences of what could be improved in future design and implementation. We are planning to interview 50 stakeholders in total; to date, 32 interviews have been conducted.
- **Case studies:** In phase three, we will also carry out four “program effects” case studies, with GCFF-funded projects constituting the case study “sites”. The selection of case studies have followed a sampling approach to ensure a representative variety in terms of size of GCFF contribution, country, project status, as well as ISA, target sector, length of project implementation and progress towards objectives.

5.2 Approach to synthesis

This evaluation will synthesize a particularly diverse set of data collected across the evaluation to support subsequent analysis. This allows the evaluation team to triangulate the evidence and validate the findings from different data collection strategies. The evaluation team can be more confident if similar findings and themes are identified from different methods and data sources. Synthesis is also able to generalize the

findings from across the case study evidence and provide insight into the potential replicability of GCFF in different contexts and sectors.

It is key for the data synthesis to bring together the evidence in relation to the evaluation questions, particularly for understanding which process mechanisms are most effective in driving outcomes, and amongst which groups. As data is added to the evidence base throughout the lifetime of the evaluation, it will allow analysis of whether new data corroborates or contradicts previously collected data and findings.

The evaluation will employ meta-synthesis.⁶ This approach seeks to analyze the findings from across primary and secondary, and across qualitative and quantitative evidence⁷ to form interpretive explanations and thematic descriptions. The following main steps will be followed:

- Organization of the evidence by theory area into data tables;
- Thematic analysis of evidence by individual reviewers;
- Comparison of thematic analysis and identification of chains of influence (drawing on performance stories);
- Making connections among the chains of influence; and,
- Refining the theory of change in light of the evidence from the findings (which can then be brought back to the stakeholder workshop).

A variety of analytical approaches will be employed to ensure a thorough exploration of the GCFF program's processes and outcomes; these are described in more detail in Appendix 4. These include a "weight of evidence" based approach where different strands of evidence are weighted based on a quality assessment of their reliability and validity to minimize bias; evidence reviews conducted across different members in the evaluation team; and an internal peer review process. The Final Report will report against the evaluation framework questions using CA to inform responses judgments, particularly in relation to questions concerning impact. It will also report specifically against the Theory of Change and report on its realization and the flow of causal mechanisms.

5.2.1 Comparison with other implementers

Where the evaluation identifies program aspects that are performing less well, the evaluation will seek to gather additional information regarding the practices, policies and programs of comparator funds and organizations working on refugee and host community support in the target countries and regions within the Final Report. The evaluation will explore the work of these comparator bodies across external literature in the document review, in wider stakeholder consultations and in project case study-based stakeholder consultations, with the specific aim of identifying how other programs have dealt with similar issues and alternative strategies adopted elsewhere which the GCFF could explore adopting. The evaluation team will produce an exploration of processes and practices carried out by other implementers which will be of use to the GCFF, particularly the Steering Committee as it seeks to make changes to the fund and consider the value of its extension.

⁶ Sandelowski M, Barroso J. Handbook for synthesizing qualitative research. New York, NY: Springer; 2006.

⁷ The principles of the meta-synthesis, primarily employed for qualitative analysis, will also be applied to quantitative analysis for the purpose of this evaluation in order to ensure a consistent approach is employed.

This analysis has not yet taken place but will be completed as part of developing the final version of this Interim Report.

5.3 Limitations

This Interim Report faces the following limitations:

- While the evaluation team has made good progress in recruiting stakeholders, it has faced difficulties in recruiting stakeholders from two of the Benefitting Countries and external stakeholders. The evaluation team is in ongoing communications with the Benefitting Country representatives to arrange an interview, and the Coordination Unit has offered support with prompting stakeholders. If these stakeholders are not available/willing to participate we will ask that they provide a secondary contact (where appropriate), and the Coordination Unit has also suggested alternative Benefitting Country stakeholders if needed.
- Regarding the external stakeholders, the Coordination Unit has few suggested contacts. The Coordination Unit agreed that these interviews should take place once the other stakeholder groups have been interviewed, to build on these learnings. The evaluation team has been asking stakeholders interviewed thus far for suggestions for additional stakeholders, and the expectation is that these suggestions will be used to identify participants alongside Coordination Unit contacts and desk research.
- Due to time constraints within stakeholder interviews, not all the topic guide questions can always be covered, meaning some interviews have not covered all the relevant aspects of the GCFF. Although stakeholder availability has limited the time the evaluation team has for interviews, the evaluation team are experienced in identifying the priority areas that need to be covered, according to stakeholder role and particular areas of interest or gaps in knowledge. The evaluation team has also checked whether stakeholders consent to a follow up email if any clarifications are needed, keeping communication links open. The evaluation team is confident that with 50 interviews being planned across the evaluation, this data availability risk is low.

6 Interim Findings

The following section outlines the interim findings from Phase 1 of the evaluation, this includes the findings from the external document review, the portfolio analysis and the stakeholder interviews carried out to date. It is structured around the key processes reviewed, with responses given for each relevant evaluation question associated with the process.

6.1 Mobilizing and disbursing finance

The GCFF aims to mobilize funds from Supporting Countries to provide concessional financing in Benefitting Countries. In 2016, the Facility set the financing objective to raise USD 1 billion for Jordan and Lebanon and USD 500 million to be available for other middle-income countries facing refugee crises over a period of five years.

EQ1a. To what extent has the Facility achieved its objectives as set out in Section 8 (Results Framework) of the Operations Manual?

Table 2 sets out the Results Framework indicators used to assess the achievement of the GCFF in the provision of concessional financing to middle income countries impacted by the influx of refugees, and improved partner and donor coordination. The table below shows the progress made towards each of the Results Framework indicators.

Table 2 Progress made towards GCFF Results Framework indicators

Indicator	Baseline (2016)	Target (2021)	Current Status (June 2020)
Amount of contributions raised	USD 0	USD 1b contribution,	USD 773m in pledges and contributions
Amount allocated by the GCFF per year	USD 0	USD 150-200 million yearly	USD 155m ⁸ average yearly
Amount of MDB financing made on concessional terms from GCFF	USD 0	USD 3b in Concessional MDB Financing (2021) (USD 600m yearly)	USD 4.7b (USD 1b yearly)
Share of respondents from Benefitting Countries, ISAs, and Supporting Countries who indicate that CFF implementation is making a useful contribution to coordination efforts	n/a	% indicating that GCFF contributing to MDB & UN coordination to address refugee impact	Limited survey results. This indicator is currently under review, together with the whole GCFF RF.

Source: GCFF Progress Reports

Indicator 1

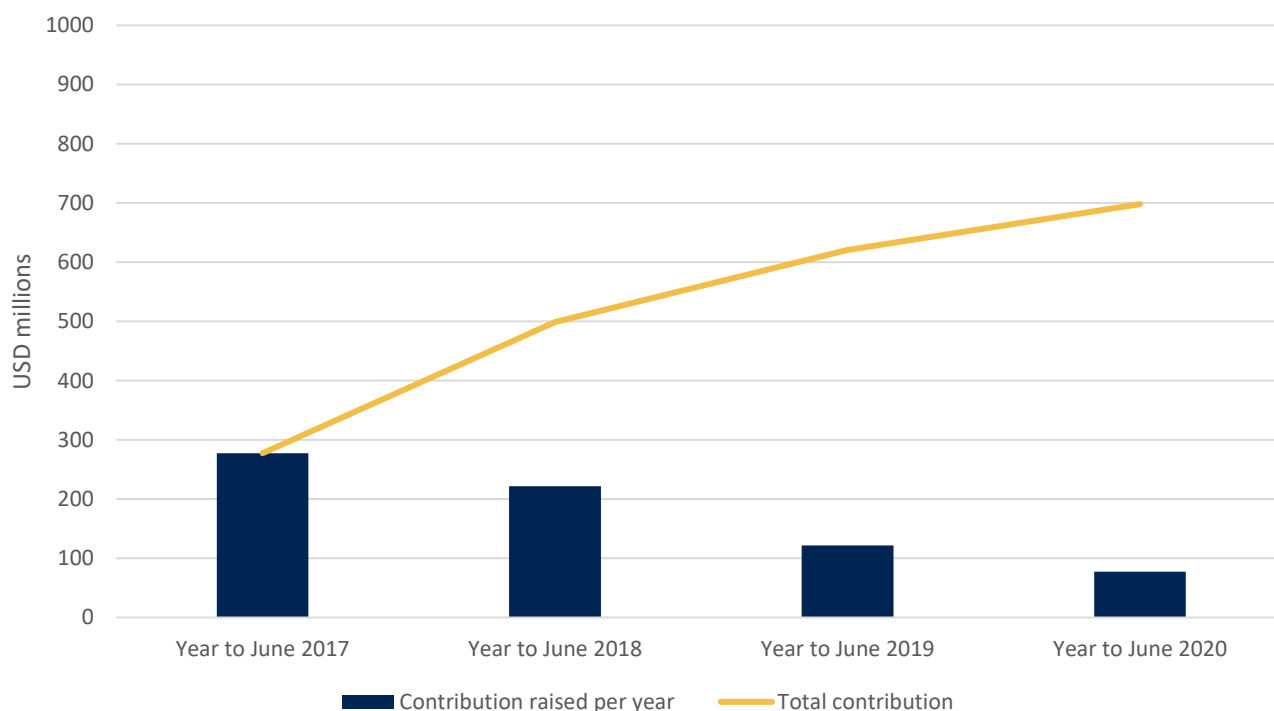
The GCFF has been partially successful in achieving its commitment to mobilize more than USD 1 billion by June 2021, having so far achieved 77% of this target, with one year remaining. As of June 30, 2020,

⁸ Yearly average between 2016 and 2020

USD 698.17 million had been contributed and a further USD 75.00 million had been pledged, taking the overall amount raised in pledges and contributions to USD 773.13 million.

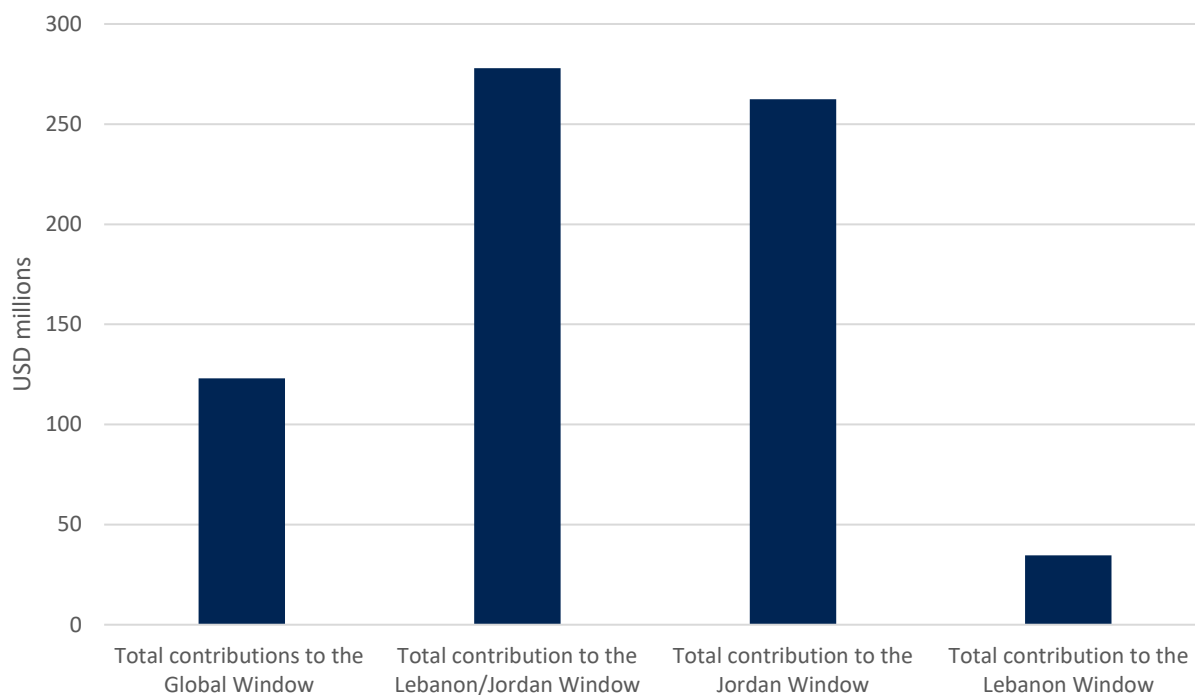
The figure below presents the funding contributions made to the GCFF since its inception. Funding contributions were strongest in the first two years of the GCFF. In the years to June 2019 and June 2020, funding contributions fell below the annual Indicator 1 target of USD 200 million. Funding contributions will need to be increased significantly from the previous year if the GCFF is to meet its Indicator 1 target of a total of USD 1 billion raised in the five years of the Facility.

Figure 3 Funding contributions made to the GCFF



Source: Ipsos MORI analysis of GCFF Progress Reports

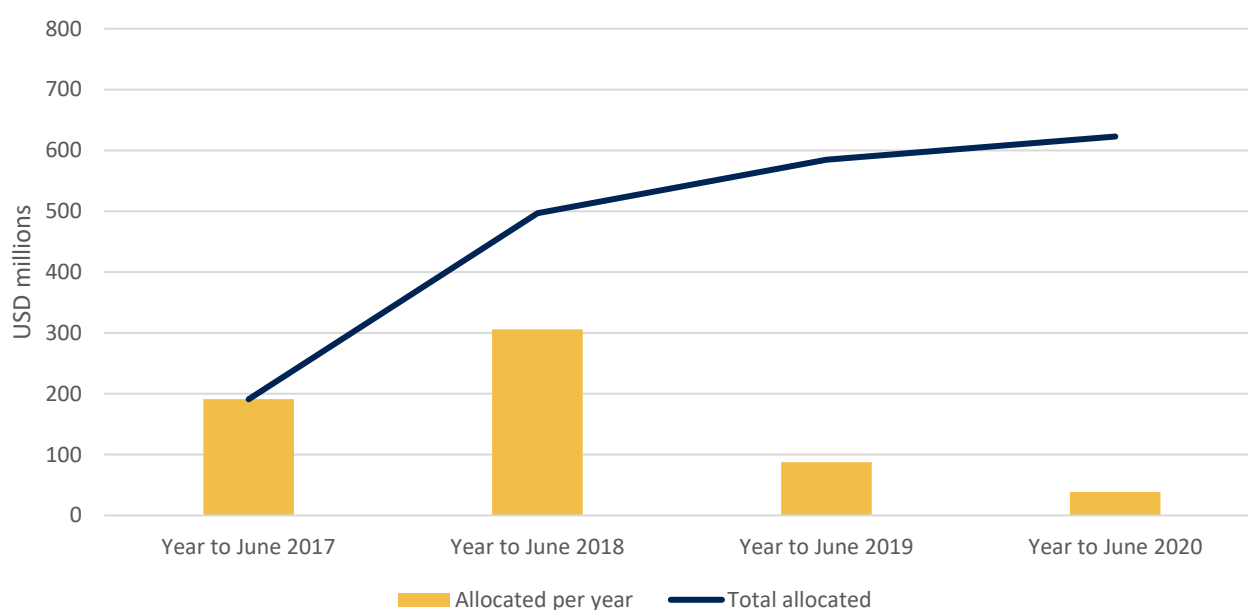
However, the fund has been less successful in its pledge to mobilize a further USD 500 million for the global window. As of June 30, 2020, USD 123.04 million has been committed to the global window, representing 26% achievement of this target. The figure below shows the total funding contributions by Funding Window as of June 2020.

Figure 4 GCFF contributions by Funding Window, as of June 2020

Source: Ipsos MORI analysis of GCFF Progress Reports

Indicator 2

The GCFF has allocated a total of USD 622.75 million in concessional financing. The average amount allocated by the GCFF has been USD 155 million per year, which is within the target range set in Indicator 2 of between USD 150 and 200 million. However, over the last two years the amount of funding allocated has fallen below this level, mirroring the lower level of contributions in these two years.

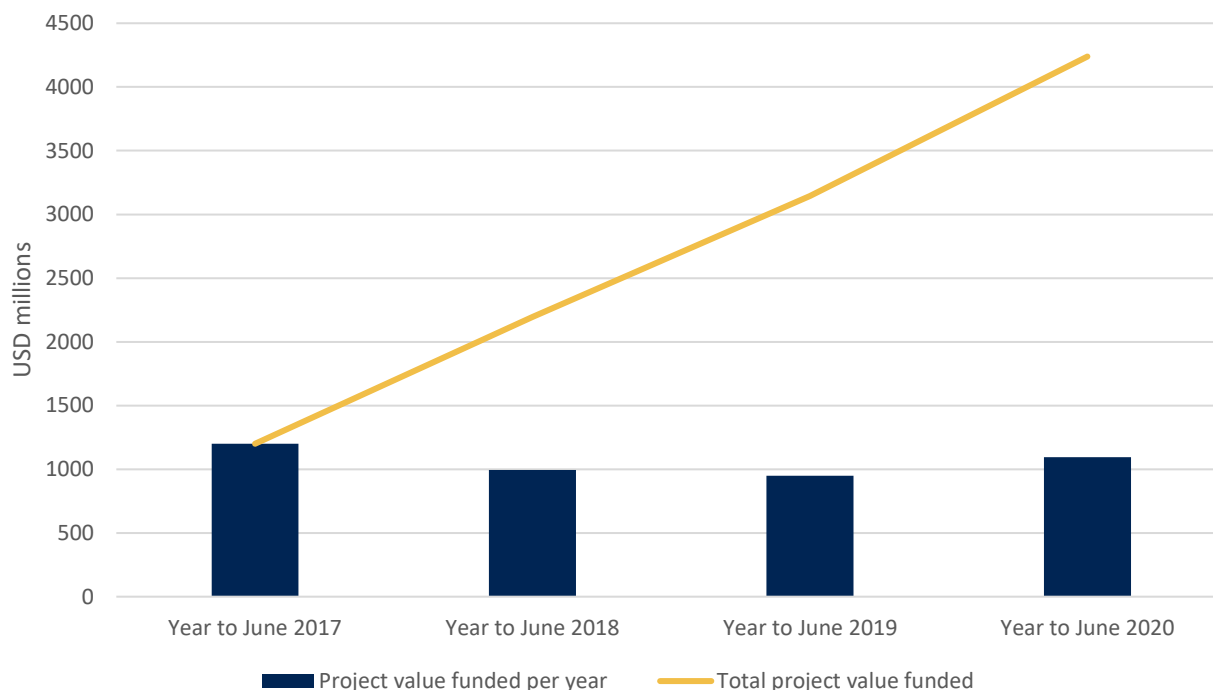
Figure 5 Allocation of concessional financing, total and by year

Source: Ipsos MORI analysis of GCFF Progress Reports

Indicator 3

The GCFF has already exceeded its targeted amount of MDB financing made on concessional terms from the GCFF. Currently over USD 4.2 billion has been made in concessional MDB financing, exceeding the target of USD 3 billion. In each year, the target of USD 600 million has been exceeded.

Figure 6 Value of projects funded, total and by year



Source: Ipsos MORI analysis of GCFF Progress Reports

This suggests the GCFF has had a greater contribution to mobilizing MDB financing than targeted, despite its lower level of funds raised and committed than had been targeted.

EQ1c To what extent has the process of fundraising been carried out efficiently and effectively?

In general, fundraising was seen by stakeholders to be a key success of the program, although the amount of grant contributions raised has fallen below the Indicator 1 target. As of June 2020, there was USD 91.37 million available to support the Steering Committee decisions. The table below presents the funds available for GCFF Steering Committee Funding Decisions at 6 monthly intervals (although it should be noted that fund availability fluctuates in between these intervals, according to Funding Requests and Supporting Country contributions).

Table 3 Funds Available for GCFF Steering Committee Funding Decisions

Date	Funds Available for GCFF Steering Committee Funding Decisions (USD millions)
30/09/2016	10.80
31/12/2016	25.00
30/06/2017	59.23
31/12/2017	114.44
30/06/2018	2.47
31/12/2018	80.35
30/06/2019	35.18
31/12/2019	
30/06/2020	91.37

Source: GCFF Annual Progress Reports.

However, the success of fundraising should be considered in the context of demand for funds. Generally, the demand for funds has been able to be met which has been the case in the majority, but not all of, Funding Requests. These Funding Requests are described below:

- **Jordan First Equitable Growth and Job Creation DPL:** received a concessional grant of USD 113.0 million in response to a request of a concessional amount of USD 156.6 million.
- **Second Fiscal Sustainability, Competitiveness, and Migration Development Policy Financing:** The Government of Colombia requested a concessional amount of USD75m. However, at the time of the Steering Committee approval (1 April, 2019) the availability of Funding in the GCFF Trust Fund was USD 5.19m. As a such a payment of USD 5.13m was allocated for the Underlying Operation and an additional allocation of up to USD28m for the Concessional Amount was made as of 9 April 2019, providing a total concessional amount of USD 31.5m.
- **Greater Urban Transport Project:** The project was accepted, in principle, at the Third Steering Committee meeting on 29 October 2017. Lebanon then submitted a new funding request based on updated calculations of the concessional amount at the time of resubmission for a virtual, no objection approval as soon as additional funds are available. Steering Committee members agreed on a shorter period of 4 business days for the no-objection approval of this funding request, based on the fact that the underlying operation had already been approved. A total concessional amount of USD 69.80 was approved, slightly below the original request.

Further, an informal process has also emerged where Supporting Countries time their financial contributions to the GCFF when a project of interest is ready for approval, indicating that the shortfall in funds relative to targets may be more reflective of a lack of demand for funds for high-quality projects. However, one stakeholder noted that this process potentially undermines the global eligibility principles of the program as a financial intermediary fund.

It has been suggested that providing more predictability around the flow of financing would assist Benefitting Countries in the planning process and improve the project design process and improve the consistency of funding.

"If there was one recommendation going forward, it would be to see with the donors whether, like the financing that they provide to IDA 19, could be up-front, and provided as a 3-year global amount. To allow a different design and preparation process to take place"

Fundraising is the responsibility of the CU. Both the Supporting Countries and CU reported that the CU continuously engages with a range of potential donors to attempt to mobilize additional Supporting Countries onto the program and ensure that fundraising is sustainable.

The widespread interest in the Syrian refugee crisis and concern for its implications for stability in the region have been seen as a key contributing factor in mobilizing these funds. A potential reason for the relatively slower progress made towards the fundraising objectives of the global window is the Venezuela crisis does not impact the majority of Supporting Countries' policy objectives to the same extent as the Syrian refugee crisis. The ability of the Fund to level MDB financing is seen as a key appeal for the Supporting Countries, and this success is related in the total amount of project financing exceeding its target, as defined by Indicator 2.

However, concerns were raised that fundraising may come under increasing pressure in the future due to increased competing demands for funds related to providing support for countries in dealing with Covid-19 and pressure on Supporting Countries' budgets. Supporting Countries' desire to see greater evidence of the impact of the program on refugees and some concerns about low levels of disbursement are also potential risks for fundraising.

EQ1f To what extent have funding commitments and disbursements been delivered efficiently and effectively? Have the fund allocations and disbursement processes been efficient and effective both in terms of transfers of funds from the FIF to ISAs and from ISAs to Benefitting Countries?

The time taken to disburse funds from the FIF to the ISA has been handled in a timely fashion, with no reported delays. The time taken for funding to be disbursed varies depending on the Benefitting Countries' internal approval processes and implementation progress. Five projects including the Jordan West Irbid Wastewater Project and the Ain Ghazal Wastewater Project (Jordan) are yet to receive disbursement of any funds, despite being approved in 2017 and 2016 respectively.

A number of projects have run into delays after funding was approved. These are to a large extent due to recipient agencies or Benefitting Country governments failing to agree on either significant project matters (the Lebanon Municipal Investment Program, for example, has not yet been declared effective as the GOL is still negotiating the loan with the ISA, even though GCFF funding was approved in October 2019) or failing to agree on more minor issues (such as the details of a TOR or taking months to appoint key personnel) causing roadblocks. One project (Lebanon National Jobs Program for Results) was cancelled due to the delays in declaring effectiveness exceeded ISA guidelines, and financing was withdrawn.

Fund disbursement for projects in Lebanon is particularly low, on average at less than 5% across the four projects approved in Lebanon (as of June 30, 2020, not including the National Jobs P4R project that was cancelled in 2019). Issues in implementation in Lebanon specifically are impacting further Funding Requests from the country; for instance, Steering Committee meeting minutes show that when discussing the Lebanon Municipal Investment Program, Government delays were a reason for concern, contributing to the project going through another iteration before approval).

6.2 Meeting the needs of host countries and refugees

EQ2a Does the GCFF's financial support respond to critical financing needs of Benefitting Countries and the objective to "support middle income countries impacted by the influx of refugees through the provision of concessional financing and improved coordination for development projects addressing the impact of the influx of refugees"?

The GCFF has responded to two major refugee crises, both of which have disproportionately impacted MICs.

Commencing in 2011, the Syrian crisis has been and continues to be the largest contributor of displaced persons worldwide, including 6 million refugees and 6.6 million IDPs as of 2019.⁹ Refugees from the Syrian crisis have fled to neighboring middle income countries, with 3.6 million hosted in Turkey, 880,000 hosted in Lebanon, and 660,000 hosted in Jordan, representing roughly 4%, 15%, and 7% of their populations respectively.

Starting in 2016, political instability in Venezuela has contributed to a growing displacement crisis in the Americas, with roughly 3.6 million Venezuelans displaced abroad as of 2019. Similar to the Syrian crisis, displaced persons from Venezuela have fled to neighboring, middle income countries, with 1.8 million hosted in Colombia, and 800,000 hosted in Peru, representing 4% and 3% of their populations respectively. In addition to this, while Ecuador currently hosts 370,000 Venezuelan refugees (2% of the population).

The Syrian Refugee crisis and Venezuelan migrant and their associated cost have resulted in a significant funding requirement. The funding need and funding coverage for these crises, as estimated by UNOCHA is displayed in Table 4, which illustrates the significant gap in funding coverage in both the Syrian and Venezuela crisis.

Table 4 Coverage of funding required for major refugee crises¹⁰

	Amount required (millions USD)	Funding (millions USD)	Coverage (%)
South Sudan 2019	1,507	1,147	76.1
Afghanistan 2019	612	465	76.0
Bangladesh: 2019 Joint Response Plan for Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis	920	689	74.8
Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan (Venezuela)	737	393	53.3
Syria Refugee Response and Resilience Plan 2019	5,535	2,332	42.1

⁹ <https://www.unhcr.org/5ee200e37.pdf>

¹⁰ <https://fts.unocha.org/appeals/overview/2019/plans?order=coverage&sort=desc>

Each of the Benefitting Countries on the GCFF faces a unique set of economic and social challenges:

- **Jordan:** Jordan is hosting the second highest share of refugees per capita in the world, heavily affected by the Syrian refugee crisis. Slow economic growth coupled with the country's **weak fiscal performance** has led to high public-debt-to-GDP levels; in 2019 Jordan's central government debt reached 99% of its GDP. According to the World Bank, this scenario characterized by slow economic growth and high unemployment rates is likely to persist in the country due to the globalized impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Lebanon:** Lebanon has the largest number of refugees per capita in the world, with almost 25% of the population being Syrian refugees. The financial strain put on the country is felt especially hard due to weak economic growth rates and extremely high public debt. The country is going through an economic crisis marked by a deceleration of the country's economic activity due a tightening of liquidity, high inflation rates and a deterioration of fiscal deficit. As estimated by the IMF, the real GDP annual growth rate was -6.5% and the projected real GDP change for 2020 is -12%.¹¹ Additionally, the country's debt-to-GDP ratio is expected to remain on an unsustainable trend, at 151% at the end of 2018¹².
- **Colombia:** Colombia is the country with the highest migration flows caused by the socioeconomic and political crisis in Venezuela. It is estimated that Colombia has received more than 70% of the Venezuelans fleeing their country. The country's economic growth accelerated to 3.3% in 2019, a growth mainly driven by strong private consumption and investment¹³, however is predicted to decline sharply by 8.2% in 2020, largely as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated fall in private consumption.¹⁴ At the same time, the central government debt was estimated to be 41.7% of the country's GDP in 2018¹⁵.
- **Ecuador:** GDP growth rate fell to 0.05% in 2019,¹⁶ and is set to decline by 11% in 2020. At the same time, the central government debt is 42.6% of the country's GDP in 2018¹⁷. The current national policy priorities include adopting fiscal sustainability and encouraging private investment while ensuring social protection. While some progress has been made to implement these reforms, the current COVID-19 pandemic and the decrease in oil prices are expected to affect the country's socioeconomic development and will pose challenges in the protection of vulnerable groups.

Each of these countries is responsible for hosting a significant number of refugees which comprise of at least 2% of their population. Table 4 summarizes the fiscal impact of the refugee crisis on each of the Benefitting Crisis.

¹¹ <https://www.imf.org/en/Countries/LBN#countrydata>

¹² <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/lebanon/overview>

¹³ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/colombia/overview>

¹⁴ <https://www.imf.org/en/Countries/COL#atagance>

¹⁵ https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/CG_DEBT_GDP@GDD/CHN/FRA/DEU/ITA/JPN/GBR/USA

¹⁶ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?locations=EC>

¹⁷ https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/CG_DEBT_GDP@GDD/CHN/FRA/DEU/ITA/JPN/GBR/USA

Table 5 Fiscal impact of refugee crisis

Country	Number of refugees in host country ^{18,19}	Proportion of country's population (%)	Estimated fiscal impact of the refugee crisis (USD billions) ²⁰	Estimated fiscal impact of the refugee crisis (% of GDP)	Total amount of GCFF concessional financing provided (USD, millions)	Total MBD financing made on concessional terms from GCFF (USD, millions)
Jordan	660,000	7.0	1.4	3.6	393	2,050
Lebanon	0.880,000	13.1	1.1 ²¹	2.3	155	745
Colombia	1,800,000	3.6	1.4	0.3-0.4	69	938
Ecuador	37,000	2.0	Unavailable	Unavailable	6	506

Source: Ipsos MORI analysis

The GCFF aims to support the critical financing needs of the Benefitting Countries impacted by the influx of refugees through the provision of concessional finance. The GCFF is structured to meet the support the financing needs of Benefitting Countries through the following features:

- The selection of Benefitting Countries takes into account the financing need of the prospective Benefitting Country. This is reflected in the supporting criteria which Supporting Countries are encouraged to consider when deciding to add a Benefitting Country, specifically the country's total financing needs and existing financing support (comprising of humanitarian and development support); the country's debt sustainability; and the socioeconomic impact of the influx of refugees on host communities of the country.²² These criteria are discussed at greater length in Section 6.3.
- The fund is structured to encourage Benefitting Country ownership. Benefitting Countries are members of the Steering Committee and a Benefitting Country representative co-chairs the Facility alongside a Supporting Country Representative. In addition, Benefitting Countries are responsible, alongside the respective ISA, for developing and submitting Funding Requests.

To date, the GCFF has allocated USD 622.75 million to Benefitting Countries, and the total value of projects financed is USD 4.24 billion. Figure 7 below shows the allocation of concessional financing to each Benefitting Country by year, as of June 2020.

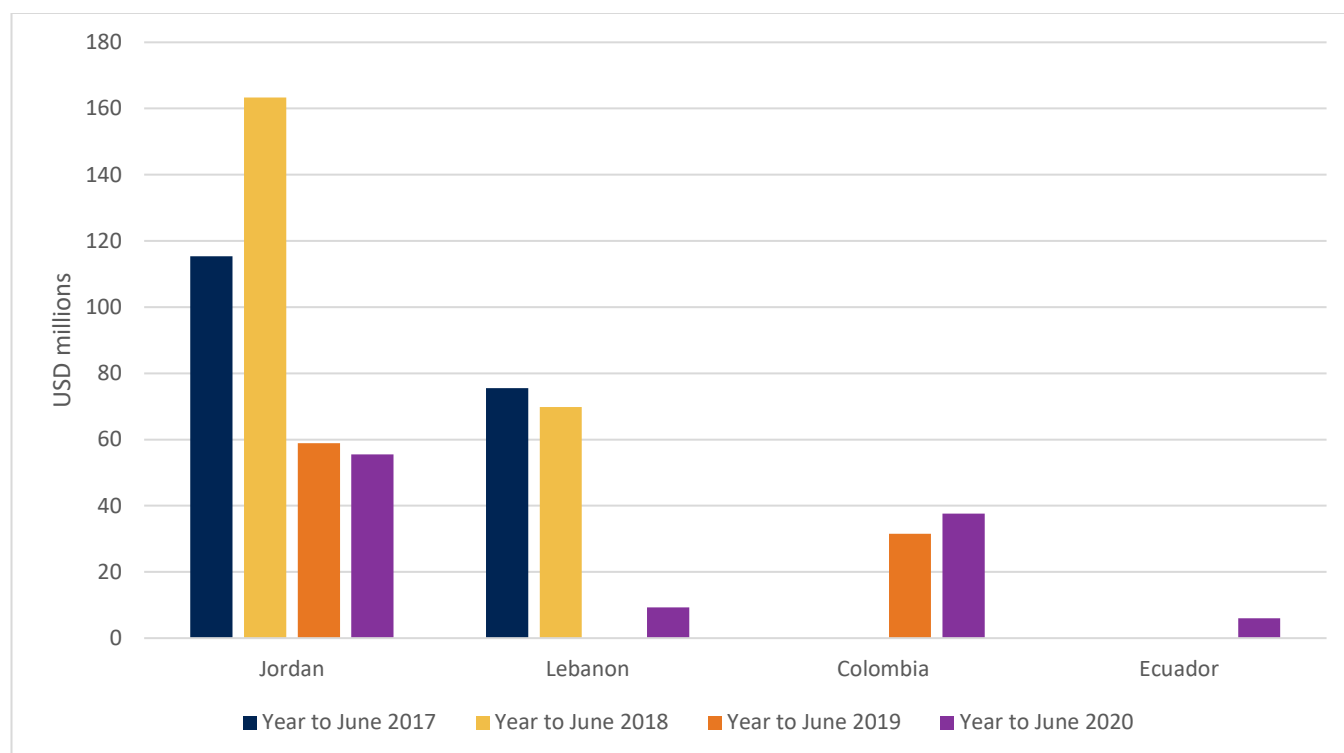
¹⁸ <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/5ee200e37.pdf>

¹⁹ This includes refugees registered as per UNHCR.

²⁰ Estimates made from different source and different years, as such should not be seen as directly comparable

²¹ World Bank 2013

²² GCFF Operations Manual, paragraph 9

Figure 7 Allocation of concessional financing to each Benefitting Country, by year (USD millions)

Source: Ipsos MORI analysis of GCFF Progress Reports

The vast majority of concessional funds that have been distributed as of June 2020 have been to Jordan (USD 393 million, representing 63% of total allocations) Lebanon (USD 155 million, 25% of allocations) with the newer members of Colombia and Ecuador having received a significantly smaller proportion of the concessional funds distributed, USD 69 million (representing 11% of allocated funds) and USD 6 million (representing 1% of allocated funds) respectively. This difference in distribution between MENA and Latin American members can be seen as reflecting the relative funding coverage gaps in the respective crisis, which in both absolute and percentage terms are significantly higher for the Syrian crisis, see Table 4.

Jordan has been the largest recipient of GCFF funding, receiving more than double the amount received by Lebanon. This significant difference is not reflected in the number of refugees hosted by each country or the percentage of the countries' population made up of refugees which are both higher in Lebanon. It is likely that the internal political situation in each of the two countries is partly responsible for the differences in funding received. Concerns over the political stability in Lebanon which have impacted the implementation status of GCFF funded projects as well as the long-term commitment of Lebanese authorities to pro-refugee policies has created concerns over the overall impact of the GCFF in the country which has impacted the willingness of Supporting Countries to support projects in Lebanon.

In addition to reflecting country need, the fact that Colombia and Ecuador are more recent participants to the GCFF can explain their relatively lower receipts of concessional funding. This is expected to change with the recent proposal of projects for approval from both Colombia (Resilient and Inclusive Housing Project) and Ecuador (the Third Inclusive and Sustainable Growth DPL).

However, some stakeholders also raised concerns that the asymmetrical structure of the GCFF's funding windows could be resulting in insufficient funding being allocated to Colombia and Ecuador (given the GCFF has funding windows dedicated to Jordan and Lebanon individually as well as a joint Jordan and Lebanon window, whereas there are no dedicated windows for Colombia and Ecuador, either individually

or jointly). This is exemplified in the case of Ecuador's Second Inclusive and Sustainable Growth DPL, which was initially targeting a much greater concessionality amount, but due to the timing of the DPL, eventually received a far smaller concessional component.

However, other stakeholders felt that the process of withdrawing funds from cascading windows sufficiently mitigates the risk that GCFF would disproportionately benefit Jordan and Lebanon in relation to Colombia and Ecuador.

In addition to making funding windows more symmetrical, other suggested alternatives to the current system include having windows dedicated to the specific refugee crisis as opposed to being country-specific.

The table below presents the total receipts for each window, as of June 2020, by Supporting Country. This illustrates the different levels of funding available for each Benefiting Country over the course of the program.

Table 6 Receipts for each window (USD millions) as of June 2020, by country

Country	Receipts for each window (USD millions) as of June 2020				
	Global	Lebanon/Jordan	Jordan	Lebanon	Total
Canada	13.0	30.5	0	0	43.5
Denmark	68.0	0	10.9	0	78.9
EC	0	5.4	0	0	5.4
Germany	0	75.7	26.9	0	102.4
Japan	14.6	60.0	25.0	0	99.6
Netherlands	3.5	23.2	0	34.8	61.4
Norway	3.4	43.0	0	0	46.4
Sweden	10	40.2	0	0	50.2
UK	10.5	0	164.8	0	175.4
US	0	0	35.0	0	35.0
Total	123.0	278.0	262.4	34.8	698.2

Source: GCFF Annual Report 2019-2020

As such, the evidence at this stage suggests that the GCFF does respond to a critical financing need in the Benefitting Countries, although the concessionality amount is small in relation to the fiscal challenge face by Benefitting Countries. However, this amount has contributed to over USD 4.2 billion in MDB financing made on concessional term. In addition, it is worth noting that the GCFF forms part of a larger landscape of support available, this is described in more detail in response to EQ2d at the end of this section. The extent to which Benefitting Country needs are met by the GCFF is also dependent on the Benefitting Country, which window it has access to, and the extent to which funding is available in these windows.

“The pot is not that large, so it does not allow us to do more. We would like to do more but there’s a constraint there.”

Has concessional financing been an appropriate tool to respond to these needs?

A central aim of the GCFF is to make development assistance more affordable to middle-income countries facing a refugee crisis. In order to do so, the contributions from Supporting Countries are used to increase the level of concessionality of loans from MDBs.

The concessional finance model was widely supported by stakeholders for its innovative nature by providing a means through which concessional finance can be provided to MICs who would not have been otherwise eligible for concessional finance, and for allowing a rapid response to the financial needs of the Benefitting Countries impacted by the influx of refugees and migrants. Some stakeholders also highlighted that the concessional finance model incentivized Benefitting Countries to design projects in a way that would benefit refugees and gave them the financial resources to do so, in a context where host communities may have otherwise resisted public funds being spent on refugees.

The financial situation of Benefitting Countries was described by stakeholders as a key consideration in the appropriateness of the tool. For countries with a moderate debt level, concessional finance was described as a useful tool, as it opens up new levels of finance at lower rates. For countries with potentially unstable debt levels, stakeholders raised questions over the appropriateness of the model. This is particularly the case for Lebanon, where the country’s debt position and economic situation has worsened significantly since the inception of the program. Many stakeholders expressed concerns as to whether debt financing remains the right option for Lebanon, given the severity of its political and economic situation. Given this situation, some stakeholders suggested that the possibility of including more grant funding in the program should be considered in Lebanon, especially for projects that have a particularly strong refugee focus; however, such a change would likely prove contentious given the MIC status of the recipients..

The effectiveness of the model is also seen to vary by the political climate related to refugees. As noted above, a key feature of the model is that it intends to encourage or incentivize MICs to borrow for investments that benefit refugees and migrant populations, as well as those communities that they reside in. It is seen to work best in the context in which the Benefitting Country government is open to “considering changing its political equation around hosting refugees, with the assistance of the outside donors”. However, many stakeholders raised doubts that this remains the case in Lebanon and highlighted concerns about the willingness of the Lebanese authorities to tackle economic, social and governance reforms that are needed and commit to pro-refugee policies in the country. Without a supporting political climate, the GCFF’s concessional finance offer may provide an insufficient incentive to support refugees in project design.

The withdrawal of the Lebanon Emergency Crisis Response Social Safety Net project from the GCFF by Lebanon and subsequent application for International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) financing without the refugee focus will be explored further.

Has the concessionality formula adequately served the needs of the Benefitting Country?

A key aspect of the concessionality formula is the commitment to the “not better than IDA” principle. Limiting the extent of the concessionality to the IDA level ensures that the participating MICs are not able to access finance at more favorable rates than those offered to low income countries. This is seen as a key commitment by a range of stakeholder. One impact of this principle on the concessionality formula is

that more significant levels of concessionality are only available for long-maturity loans as such the Facility is more suitable for long-term project financing.

With IBRD rates currently low, the difference between the rates available with the IBRD and GCFF have lessened, reducing the relative value of concessionality offered. Whether the concessional rates offered by the GCFF remain to be a significant pulling factor for Benefiting Countries to commit to favorable refugee policies in complex political contexts remains to be seen.

The concessional financing model has been seen as a success in providing a new tool for providing finance to MIC impacted by refugee crisis. It's continued relevance to Benefiting Countries both in terms of their long-term debt sustainability and commitment to refugee policies must be continuously addressed.

“[The concessional financing model] is very new, innovative, and different, and we welcome that because it allows us to use loans to mobilize resources.”

EQ2b Is the GCFF aligned to the critical programmatic needs for support of Benefitting Countries in their support to refugees and host communities and support the objective to “support middle income countries impacted by the influx of refugees through the provision of concessional financing and improved coordination for development projects addressing the impact of the influx of refugees” and what lessons can be learned to ensure the GCFF is country-owned?

The needs of refugees and host communities vary by country but involve the following:

Lebanon:

These are centered around the provision of basic needs such as food security, shelter, education, and health for Syrian refugees and vulnerable communities; as well as livelihoods and infrastructure development for the host community. In Lebanon, the Syrian refugee population is mainly concentrated in underserved rural and peri-urban areas²³, making it difficult for the government to deliver services due to a lack of sufficient infrastructure. The refugee crisis has further aggravated the worsening socioeconomic situation and is impacting the already high poverty and inequality levels in the country. The arrival of a large refugee community has placed a significant strain on Lebanon's resources and has put pressure on public services, with demand exceeding the capacity of the country's institutions and infrastructures. The social and economic development of the country has been further impacted by two recent events; the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and a recent explosion in Beirut. The pandemic is stressing Lebanon's public health system and hindering the country's efforts to decrease poverty rates, as it is expected to affect poorer households and the refugee population.²⁴

Following the onset of the refugee crisis, humanitarian actors such as the UNHCR and local NGOs provided basic health services to refugees alongside additional initiatives within the public health system.²⁵ However, the additional resources required to meet this demand put pressure on the public system and impacted the quality of services delivered to vulnerable Lebanese populations who could not afford private healthcare insurance.²⁶ The education sector also experienced a similar outcome, as, prior to the refugee crisis, the government was attempting to address the high number of out-of-school Lebanese children and

²³ *Health Service Utilization among Syrian Refugees with Chronic Health Conditions in Jordan*, Shannon Doocy, Emily Lyles, Laila Akhu, Zaheya, Arwa Oweis, Nada Al Ward, Ann Burton, 2016, Available at: <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0150088>

²⁴ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2020/04/02/world-bank-deploys-us40-million-in-emergency-response-to-help-lebanon-face-the-coronavirus-COVID-19-outbreak>

²⁵ *Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017- 2020 (2020 update)*, the Government of Lebanon and the UN, Available at: <http://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/74641.pdf>

²⁶ *Syrian refugees in Lebanon: the search for universal health coverage*, Karl Blanchet, Fouad M. Fouad and Tejendra Pherali, 2016, Available at: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/81285537.pdf>

low quality of education generally; but with the influx of Syrian refugees, the government lacked the capacity to provide adequate education services, especially in more rural areas of Lebanon.

Jordan

The needs in Jordan are similar to Lebanon but not as severe, and includes provision of basic services such as education, health, and shelter for Syrian refugees, as well as livelihoods and infrastructure development for the host community.

While the Syrian refugee population is mostly concentrated in developed urban areas, which has allowed the government to implement a more centralized response, providing adequate public services and infrastructure placed – and continues to place – a great strain on the country. The country has still experienced challenges in delivering health and education services, as well as providing energy and water supplies to both the Syrian refugee population and host communities.

Specific challenges include the incapacity of health programs to meet the needs of the population; the remaining gap in refugee camp's infrastructure, specifically shelter and road maintenance; and the insufficient budget that is affected access to education, child protection and a Sexual Gender Based Violence response for all refugees.²⁷

Similar to Lebanon, basic health services in Jordan are provided to Syrian refugees via UNHCR and NGOs, alongside additional initiatives from the Jordanian government with the aim of integrating them into the public health system. While government initiatives have been considered successful in that it has increased Syrian refugees' access to health services,²⁸ the increased demand has also negatively impacted the host population, and roughly one third of the Jordanian population is estimated to not have access to universal healthcare coverage.²⁹ Additionally, the quality of the public education system has also declined concurrently with the influx of Syrian refugees and the government has had to adopt a double shift policy for schools where there is a high concentration of refugees (mainly in urban areas).³⁰ Finally, Jordan is an energy insecure country, and imports 96% of its energy requirements. The influx of refugees increased the need for energy to supply domestic consumption and sustain service provision, representing an increased cost of USD 7.1 billion during the first five years of the crisis.³¹

Colombia

In Colombia, this centers around the protection needs to vulnerable populations and Venezuelan migrants and refugees, including livelihood and education, as well as state institution strengthening.

Refugees in Colombia are mainly concentrated in only a handful of *departamentos* at the Colombian-Venezuelan border, with the country furthermore hosting transitory migrants on their way to Ecuador or other countries, as well as 'back-and-forth migrants'. The impact of the unprecedented number of refugees

²⁷ <https://reporting.unhcr.org/jordan>

²⁸ *Health challenges and access to health care among Syrian refugees in Jordan: a review*, Wireen Dator, Hamzeh Abunab, Norenia Dao-ayen, 2018, Available at: <http://www.emro.who.int/emhj-volume-24-2018/volume-24-issue-7/health-challenges-and-access-to-health-care-among-syrian-refugees-in-jordan-a-review.html#:~:text=Jordan%20has%20one%20of%20the,a%20similar%20way%20as%20Jordanians>.

²⁹ Jordan Response Plan for the Syria Crisis 2018-2020, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Ministry of Planning and Cooperation, available at: <http://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/JRP-Executive-Summary-Final-Copy.pdf>

³⁰ *Refugees, Identity, and the Fight for Education: A Study of the Cultural and Political Context of Education Policy for Syrian Refugees in Neighboring Host Countries*, Kristen Cain, 2020, Available at: https://research.library.fordham.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1042&context=international_senior

³¹ Jordan Response Plan for the Syria Crisis 2018-2020, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Ministry of Planning and Cooperation, available at: <http://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/JRP-Executive-Summary-Final-Copy.pdf>

is disproportionately affecting poor and vulnerable host communities, leading to competition for services and jobs.³² The pressure on Colombia, and especially on the specific *departamentos* to provide the necessary public goods and on the local labor markets is significant.

According to a study conducted by the World Bank on the impacts of migrants in Colombia, the inflow of migrants is pressuring public institutions and services such as health, housing, education, social security and WASH, among others, and is further accelerating the demand in the job market, which impacts the level and quality of employment.

Ecuador

In Ecuador, this mainly concerns the provision of protection needs to transient and vulnerable populations, as well as strengthening of state capacity to improve regularization.

As in other host countries, the rapid inflow of migrants has **strained institutional capacity** and has challenged the public services' ability to meet their demand, including health, education and housing services. Given the increase in the number of refugees who decide to stay in Ecuador instead of travelling to Peru or other third countries the country is facing the need to adapt its social services to meet migrants' and host communities' basic needs; the percentage of refugees who decide to stay in the country has increased from 17% in 2018 to 26% in 2019.³³

Relation of the GCFF portfolio to the identified needs

The GCFF project portfolio contains a mixture of new projects, projects financing an existing service (such as the Jordan Emergency Healthcare project or the Lebanon Health Resilience project), and several projects supporting Benefiting Country governments in implementing reforms.

Furthermore, the projects are all centered around providing public services or improving the macroeconomic situation, which are broad goals that will help the Benefitting Countries struggling financially to cope with the fiscal strain placed on them by the number of refugees. As projects originate from the Benefitting Country they can be seen as directly addressing a need that has been identified by the country. This is partially true for Development Policy Loans (DPL) which allow Benefitting Countries the flexibility to address the needs they see as most relevant as well as supporting key policy reform. The high levels of country ownership in projects is seen as a key strength of the program.

The table below outlines how the projects in the GCFF portfolio aim to tackle the challenges that have been identified in Benefitting Countries.

³² GCFF Annual Report 2018-2019, The World Bank Group, available at: https://globalcffi.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/GCFF_Annual-Report_2019_191125_FINAL_DIGITAL.pdf

³³ *ibid*

Table 7 GCFF portfolio relation to identified country need

Country	Summary of specific country needs related to refugee crisis	Project name	Relation of the project to identified country need
Jordan		Economic opportunities for Jordanians and Syrian refugees (program for results)	Boosting economic growth and particularly abilities for Syrian refugees to engage formally in the labor market are important for Jordan given the sheer number of refugees it hosts.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing of basic services such as education, health, and shelter for Syrian refugees 	Ain Ghazal Wastewater Project	Wastewater is a major challenge for Jordan (acknowledged in their Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda) and the influx of Syrian refugees greatly increases the stress on the already strained system. The project would increase capacity in North-Central Jordan, a region with a particularly high proportion of refugees, who for the vast majority reside in towns and are therefore users of municipal services.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing energy and water supplies to both the Syrian refugee population and host communities 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child protection and a Sexual Gender Based Violence response for all refugees 	Energy and water development policy loan	The DPLs gave the Government some necessary space to address structural cost recovery issues while continuing to provide these key services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased demand for domestic energy consumption 		The reforms supported by the DPL planned to help the country meet the additional demand while restoring supply security and financial sustainability and improve efficiency.
		Jordan emergency health project (and additional financing project)	Ensures the provision of health care services to refugees and also addresses inefficiencies in the system in an aim to create a more sustainable and resilient health system in the medium to long term – to move from a humanitarian approach (Emergency Health) to a development solution.
		Jordan West Irbid wastewater project	Addresses a key need of waste water management which is recognized as a key infrastructure challenge for Jordan.

			<p>The region which the project targets (North of Jordan) hosts the largest number of refugees, which has put a great stress on the wastewater infrastructure systems.</p>
		Jordan education reform support (program for results) (and additional financing project)	<p>Aims to improve access to early child education, improve student assessment and teaching and learning conditions for children in Jordan, including Syrian refugee school age children</p>
		Jordan first equitable growth and job creation development policy financing	<p>Reducing business costs and improving market accessibility will improve productivity; creating flexible and integrated labor markets and better, more efficient social assistance will allow more Jordanians and Syrian refugees to work</p>
		Jordan Youth, Technology and Jobs	<p>Addresses the issue of youth employment and labor market problems exacerbated by the influx of Syrian refugees.</p>
Lebanon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing basic needs such as food security, shelter, education, and health for 	Lebanon roads and employment project	<p>In the road sector, investments needed to cope with the influx of Syrian refugees</p> <p>In addition, the project is expected to create direct short-term jobs for Lebanese host communities and Syrian refugees</p>

Syrian refugees and
vulnerable communities

- Infrastructure development

- High and increasing poverty
and inequality rates

- Labor market opportunities

Lebanon health resilience
project

The project will support Lebanon by addressing health service capacity constraints of Primary Health Care Centers (PHCCs) and Public Hospitals.

Greater Beirut Public
Transport Project

Addresses infrastructure challenge by providing clean, affordable, and reliable transportation to middle-and low-income Lebanese and Syrians.

National Jobs Program for
Results (canceled)

Aimed to tack rregional disparities in peripheral areas, where labour market outcomes are worst

Municipal Investment
Program

Addresses the strain placed on local authorities who play the key role in managing the increased demand for services, jobs and the rise of social tensions due to rapid influx of displaced population.

Colombia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of services such as health, housing, education especially in the specific <i>departamentos</i> most effected Provision of sufficient labor market opportunities 	<p>Colombia second fiscal sustainability, competitiveness, and migration development financing</p> <p>Improving Quality of Healthcare Services and Efficiency in Colombia</p>	<p>The Program aims to support regularization and integration of Venezuelan migrants, including refugee populations, foster productivity and growth.</p> <p>It is expected that these measures will provide a path to access basic public services, including health and education, while also providing a path for migrants to help them to generate some kind of income that integrate them into the local labour markets.</p> <p>Addresses the provision of health care and social services for migrants and host communities.</p>
Ecuador	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of services such as health, housing, education 	<p>Second Inclusive and Sustainable Growth Development Policy Financing</p>	<p>The operation combines crisis-response measures with structural reforms that will help strengthen Ecuador's economic position to navigate the COVID-19 crisis and its aftermath and aims at supporting the country in maintaining an open and generous refugee policy</p>

Source: Project Funding Requests, Ipsos MORI analysis

According to the individual Funding Requests, projects align with wider national and regional strategies of all actors involved (ISAs, BC governments, other development partners). For example, the Program for Results: Economic Opportunities for Jordanians and Syrian Refugees, the Program for Results: Jordan Education Reform Support Program and the First Equitable Growth and Job Creation Programmatic Development Policy Financing all align with Jordan's 2025 vision. The Youth, Technology and Jobs project also specifically aligns with Jordan's broader initiatives and visions of building a digital economy. ISAs also ensure alignment with other multilateral initiatives in the corresponding regions, such as the Jordan Compact. The Program for Results: Economic Opportunities for Jordanians and Syrian Refugees for example specifically singles out those aspects needed to increase competitiveness and provide more private sector employment opportunities in line with the objectives of the Jordan Compact not covered by other donor initiatives.

Certain issues have been raised as to whether within country the funds are allocated to the most relevant Government Ministry. An example of this is the Jordan Health Initiative, Supporting Countries expressed concerns as to whether the funding allocation was benefitting the Ministry of Health as planned, as a result initial effort was made, when additional funding was requested, to ensure that a greater proportion of the funding allocation went directly to the Ministry of Health. Such issues will be explored further for the Final Report.

Meeting the needs of refugees

A key consideration across stakeholders has been the extent to which the GCFF projects have met the needs of refugees. Analysis of both Steering Committee meeting minutes and stakeholder interviews suggest that Supporting Countries have emphasized the importance of GCFF funded projects having a demonstratable impact on refugees. The impact on refugees will be a key focus of the Impact Evaluation to be included in the Final Report, however early findings suggest that the extent to which the focus on refugees has been included in the project design varies considerably by project.

While some projects such as those providing health services or work permits to refugees have a clear and direct focus on refugees the link is less direct in some infrastructure projects and some DPLs.

"Some of the projects might have struggled a little bit with the balance between benefitting host communities and benefitting the refugees."

The table below describes how the portfolio of GCFF projects aims to specifically meet the needs of refugees. It shows that projects aim to meet a variety of refugee needs, such as access to the labor market and economic opportunities and access to healthcare and education services. These needs match closely with the needs addressed in the literature. A refugee focus has been included in projects across the portfolio; all of projects' Results Framework, with the exception of the Energy and water development policy loan (Jordan), includes indicators specifically related to the project's impact on refugees. In general, projects target refugees broadly rather than specifically targeting them, and no projects exclusively target refugees. In general, the projects that include the strongest focus on refugees/migrants are those that have components providing work permits for refugees/migrants; these include projects such as the Program for Results: Economic Opportunities for Jordanians and Syrian Refugees, the First Equitable Growth and Job Creation Programmatic Development Policy Financing (Jordan) and the Second Fiscal Sustainability, Competitiveness, and Migration Development Policy Financing (Colombia). The majority of projects, however, provides benefits for either all residents of a country, or at least all residents in a certain

region (depending on the project). More detailed analysis can be found in the Portfolio Analysis included in Annex 8.

Table 8 GCFF portfolio - addressing the needs of refugees

Project name	Country	How the project aims to meet the needs of refugees	Refugee specific indicators from PDO Objectives
Economic opportunities for Jordanians and Syrian refugees (program for results)	Jordan	Providing economic opportunities for both Jordanians and Syrians by reforming Jordan's labor market, improving Jordan's investment climate, and attracting and retaining domestic and foreign investments, especially in manufacturing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work permits issues to Syrian refugees • Number of officially established household enterprises, of which Syrian refugee owned • Number of jobs created
Ain Ghazal Wastewater Project	Jordan	Providing financing for the construction of a new wastewater conveyor to accommodate a higher wastewater flow triggered by the influx of Syrian refugees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct project refugee beneficiaries • Jobs provided or created for refugees
Energy and water development policy loan	Jordan	Improving financial viability and increase efficiency gains in the energy and water sectors in Jordan through tariff adjustments and supply diversification, among other strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
Jordan emergency health project (and additional financing project)	Jordan	Supporting the Government of Jordan in maintaining the delivery of primary and secondary health services to poor uninsured Jordanians and Syrian refugees by funding support care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of health services delivered at MOH secondary health care facilities to registered Syrian refugees, male/female • Number of health services delivered at MOH primary health care facilities to registered Syrian refugees, male/female • Percentage increase in proportion of pregnant Syrian women accessing their first antenatal care visits during the first trimester
Jordan West Irbid wastewater project	Jordan	Providing financing for the rehabilitation of the wastewater treatment system in the north of Jordan, which has been strained due to the influx of Syrian refugees in the north of Jordan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct project refugee beneficiaries • Jobs created during the construction phase for refugees • Refugees trained (number)

Jordan education reform support (program for results) (and additional financing project)	Jordan	Supporting the Ministry of Education to expand access to early childhood education, and to improve student assessment, as well as teaching and learning conditions for Jordanian and Syrian refugee children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of Syrian refugee children enrolled in Kindergarten 2 (KG2)
Jordan first equitable growth and job creation development policy financing	Jordan	Supporting equitable growth and job creation by reducing business costs, improving market accessibility, creating integrated labor markets, and improving fiscal sustainability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work permits issued to refugees
Jordan Youth, Technology and Jobs	Jordan	Increasing access to digitally-enabled income opportunities for youth in Jordan including Syrian refugees to boost the digital economy and improve the delivery of selected digitalized government services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct project refugee beneficiaries Refugees trained Refugees gaining new employable digital skills reporting new economic opportunities Number of refugee students receiving digital skills curriculum in schools Number of refugees using Tech Hubs Number of refugees with digital skills benefiting from technology adoption by non-profit company/civil society organizations (CSOs) Refugees population receiving improved access to education through project Refugee SMEs supported with business matchmaking
Lebanon roads and employment project	Lebanon	Improving road sections from all Lebanese regions, especially in rural areas, creating short-term jobs in the construction industry for Lebanese and Syrians and substantial additional jobs in supply chain industries, engineering and consultancy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jobs provided to or created for refugee populations Roads rehabilitated or constructed, benefitting refugees (km)
Lebanon health resilience project	Lebanon	Enhancing the resilience of Lebanon's health sector through increasing access to quality healthcare services for those	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary care beneficiaries, displace Syrians

Greater Beirut Public Transport Project	Lebanon	<p>affected by the Syrian crisis, especially poor Lebanese and displaced Syrians.</p> <p>Improving the speed, quality and accessibility of public transport in Beirut and the city's northern entrance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jobs provided to or created for refugees
Municipal Investment Program	Lebanon	<p>Improving municipal services and local economic opportunities in secondary cities and promoting the involvement of the private sector in the participation and delivery of municipal infrastructure and services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct project refugee beneficiaries Refugee SMEs supported Jobs provided to or created for refugees Roads rehabilitated or constructed, benefitting refugees (km)
Colombia second fiscal sustainability, competitiveness, and migration development financing	Colombia	<p>Maintaining fiscal sustainability and supporting the regulation and integration of refugees and migrants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of migrants from Venezuela receiving services from the National Employment Agency. Number of Venezuelan migrants on the RAMV (Registro Administrativo de Venezolanos).
Improving Quality of Healthcare Services and Efficiency in Colombia	Colombia	<p>Strengthening the health sector and improving access to quality healthcare for Venezuelan migrants regularly registered through the special residency permit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refugees population receiving improved access to health services through project PEP holder migrants from Venezuela enrolled in the mandatory social security system
Second Inclusive and Sustainable Growth Development Policy Financing	Ecuador	<p>Reducing barriers to private sector development and protecting poor and vulnerable against the negative impact of the changes in fuel prices and their living standards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of migrants covered by the migration registry

Source: GCFF Progress Reports, Project Monitoring documentation, Ipsos MORI analysis

Extent to which these needs have been met

As many of the projects in the GCFF's portfolio are at the early stages of implementation and many of the impacts are medium/long term, it is not possible to make a complete assessment of the extent to which the needs of refugees in Benefitting Countries have been met. A more detailed analysis of the impacts will be made in the Final Report, including a greater focus on projects in Colombia and Ecuador.

However, stakeholders raised considerable concerns as to the extent to which the needs of refugees in Lebanon have been met due to implementation delays. Largely due to the ongoing political uncertainty in Lebanon, there have been substantial delays in parliamentary approval and implementation of projects. This is reflected in the low disbursement rate (5%) of projects in Lebanon and the cancellation in July 2019 of the National Jobs Program for Reform project as the operation exceeded the timeline for declaration of effectiveness following the respective ISA's policies and procedures.

Table 9 provides a summary of the progress towards projects' development objectives for each of the underlying operations in Lebanon and delays experienced by the projects.

Table 9 Progress towards objectives of underlying operations in Lebanon

Project name	GCFF Approval date	Project start and close data	Disbursement rate (as of June 2020)	Project Development objective	Progress towards objectives ³⁴
Roads and Employment Project	29 th October 2016	June 2017 – June 2022	7.6%	(i) improve transport connectivity along select paved road sections; (ii) create short term jobs for Lebanese and Syrians.	Moderately satisfactory: The project is likely to achieve the majority of its major objectives efficiently with moderate shortcomings.
Health Resilience Project	6 th April 2017	March 2020 – June 2023	10.1%	To increase access to quality healthcare services to poor Lebanese and displaced Syrians in Lebanon.	Moderately satisfactory: The project is likely to achieve the majority of its major objectives efficiently with moderate shortcomings.
Greater Beirut Public Transport Project	17 th January 2018	March 2018 – December 2023	4%	(i) improve transport connectivity along select paved road sections; (ii) create short term jobs for Lebanese and Syrians.	Moderately satisfactory: The project is likely to achieve the majority of its major objectives efficiently with moderate shortcomings.
Municipal Investment Program	18 th October 2019	Not yet effective. Closing December 2025	0%	Enhance livability in secondary cities and expand sustainable financing options for municipal investments in the country.	Not yet effective
National Jobs P4R (Cancelled July 2019)	23 rd March 2018	Cancelled	n/a	Create jobs in the private sector for unemployed and inactive Lebanese, as well as for Syrian refugees, in accordance with Lebanese laws and regulations.	Project cancelled

Source: GCFF Progress Report 2020

³⁴ As reported in the 2020 Progress Report

Project delays

A number of projects in Lebanon have experience delays, most commonly at the project implementation stage. Delays are most commonly the result of difficulties in procurement, exogenous factors such as changes in Government and political insecurity and the COVID-19 pandemic. The following projects have experienced delays:

- **Roads and Employment:** There have been delays in approvals to the project – while presented in 2016 and approved by the GCFF in October 2016, ISA approval was only obtained in June 2017, and the project was not declared effective until October 2018. This delay was linked to delays in the elections of the parliament and the formation of the government. In addition, since the project effectiveness, Lebanon has experienced severe social unrest, resulting in the closure of government offices including Council for Development and Reconstruction for several weeks causing delays to the procurement process. This challenge was compounded by the recent lockdown due to COVID-19. This project is expected to finish on time despite delays in project approval.
- **Health resilience project:** The project was approved by the WB and IsDB in June and July 2017, respectively. Due to government deadlock and parliamentary elections, project effectiveness was delayed until November 2018. After the formation of the new government in February 2019, all these activities were put on hold. Meetings between Ministry of Public Health and World Bank resumed in May 2019 to discuss project preparatory activities but delays in project implementation continued. In March 2020 the government submitted a request to restructure the project in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The project was restructured to include government capacity to respond to COVID-19 as a Project Development Objective and component (which had funds allocated). Since implementation of project activities was delayed from 2018 (project effectiveness) to 2020, the Results Framework was amended to adjust the targets of the indicators. Despite these delays the project is expected to finish on time.
- **The Greater Beirut Public Transport Project:** The project took around 17 months from board date to effectiveness linked to the delays in the formation of the government during that period. In addition, since the project effectiveness, Lebanon experienced severe social unrest resulting in the closure of government offices including Council for Development and Reconstruction for several weeks. As a result, the procurement process was halted. In addition, COVID-19 has impacted the procurement process. The project duration will likely be extended as a result.
- **Municipal Investment Program:** The project has not begun implementation and awaits loan negotiations with the Government of Lebanon. Originally intended to start in 2019 and last until 2025. New project duration unknown.

Greater progress is considered to have been made towards meeting the needs of refugees in Jordan, where 69% of funds have been disbursed to date. Table 10 provides a summary of the progress towards project's development objectives for each of the underlying operations in Jordan.

Table 10 Progress towards objectives of underlying operations in Jordan

Project name	GCFF Approval date	Project start and close date	Disbursement rate (as of June 2020)	Project Development objective	Progress towards objectives ³⁵
Economic opportunities for Jordanians and Syrian refugees (program for results)	27 th September 2016	October 2016-December 2023	96%	Improve economic opportunities for Jordanians and Syrian refugees	Satisfactory: the project is likely to achieve almost all or exceed its major objectives efficiently without any significant shortcomings
Ain Ghazal Wastewater Project	28 th July 2016	January 2017-January 2021	0%	Support the strengthening of Jordan's resilience to the Syrian refugee crisis by addressing urgently needed municipal infrastructure rehabilitation	Moderately satisfactory: The project is likely to achieve the majority of its major objectives efficiently with moderate shortcomings
Energy and water development policy loan	1 st December 2016	December 2016 - December 2017	100%	To improve the financial viability and increase efficiency gains in the energy and water sectors in Jordan	Satisfactory: the project is likely to achieve almost all or exceed its major objectives efficiently without any significant shortcomings
Jordan emergency health project (and additional financing project)	6 th April 2017	July 2017-October 2023	59.5%	Maintain the delivery of primary and secondary health services to poor uninsured Jordanians and Syrian refugees at the Ministry of Health facilities	Moderately satisfactory: The project is likely to achieve the majority of its major objectives efficiently with moderate shortcomings

³⁵ As reported in the 2020 Progress Report

Project name	GCFF Approval date	Project start and close date	Disbursement rate (as of June 2020)	Project Development objective	Progress towards objectives ³⁵
Jordan West Irbid wastewater project	20 th April 2017	December 2017- December 2022	0%	Strengthen of Jordan's resilience to the Syrian refugee crisis by addressing urgently needed municipal infrastructure rehabilitation	Satisfactory: the project is likely to achieve almost all or exceed its major objectives efficiently without any significant shortcomings
Jordan education reform support (program for results) (and additional financing project)	29 th October 2017	December 2017-May 2023	61%	To expand access to early childhood education, and to improve student assessment and teaching and learning conditions for Jordanian children and Syrian refugee children	Moderately satisfactory: The project is likely to achieve the majority of its major objectives efficiently with moderate shortcomings
Jordan first equitable growth and job creation development policy financing	27 th June 2018	July 2018-June 2020	100%	To support in (i) reducing business costs and improving market accessibility, (ii) creating flexible and integrated labor markets and better, more efficient social assistance, and (iii) improving fiscal sustainability	Satisfactory: the project is likely to achieve almost all or exceed its major objectives efficiently without any significant shortcomings
Jordan Youth, Technology and Jobs	20 th March 2020	April 2020-March 2025	0%	To increase access to digitally-enabled income opportunities for youth in Jordan including Syrian Refugees and improve the delivery of selected digitized government services	N/A

Source: GCFF Progress Report 2020

The following projects in Jordan have experienced delays:

- **Ain Ghazal Wastewater Project:** Delays have occurred at various stages of project implementation; in the mobilization of support consultants (the selection of the Design, Implementation and Supervision Consultant was terminated due to a procurement issue), unexpected levels of clarification requests, and COVID-19 measures limiting public sector working. As a result, the closing date of the project has been extended from 1 Jan 2021 to 31 July 2022. Current timelines for

construction are subject to COVID-19 measures allowing equipment and material imports and potential travel of teams to the country/project sites.

- **Jordan Emergency Health Project:** Capacity building processes were launched later than planned due challenges related to COVID-19 and the Government's introduction of co-payments for health care services, which was eventually reversed. However, with the Additional Financing new implementation arrangements were made and the project is expected to deliver all project activities by the project closing date, subject to the impact of COVID-19.
- **Jordan West Irbid Wastewater:** Implementation of the project has been delayed for over 2 years due to a revision of the project scope. EBRD consultants recommended a revised technical solution to the original one proposed by the WAJ. The revised project was declared effective on 30 April 2019 and is now underway. An updated Procurement Plan was approved by the Bank on 8 August 2019. The project closing date has been extended to take into account the delays from 31 December 2021 to 31 December 2022.

Barriers to refugee engagement

In projects that take a more blanket approach by boosting provision of a public service, barriers to refugee access are less project-specific but would instead be at a national policy level (such as the policy change in the form of either the reversal of pro-refugee policies or the enactment of policies that limit the access of refugees to certain services). Benefiting Countries are required to affirm their commitment to principles that contribute to long-term solutions benefitting both refugees and host communities as well as demonstrating their commitment to progressive policy or legal reforms with regard to refugees, including, for example, on freedom of movement, identification documents and residency permits, access to the formal labor market and labor rights, access to education, social services and basic infrastructure. The case of the Jordan Emergency Health Project demonstrates the importance of this commitment to the success of the Facility; in this project's case, the Government's introduction of co-payments for health care services, which was eventually reversed, created additional barriers for refugee engagement.

In some projects, Benefiting Countries formally reaffirm their commitment going forward to pro-refugee policies, such as in the case of the Second Inclusive and Sustainable Growth Development Policy Financing Project. Responding to concerns raised by Supporting Countries at the Steering Committee meeting around the continued commitment of the Government of Ecuador (GoE) to maintain a refugee friendly policy, the country submitted a formal Statement of Intent, to affirm their commitment to pursue the protection, regularization and integration of people in human mobility status, particularly Venezuelan migrants and refugees.

Have the critical needs of female refugees been supported?

Several projects have specific components that address the barriers experienced by women in accessing benefits of projects, as outlined in the table below. There are varying degrees to which projects aim to meet women's needs. Some, such as the Greater Beirut Public Transport project, have sub-components which were designed in a gender-sensitive way to ensure women will be able to access the project's benefits. Other projects, such as the Jordan Youth, Technology and Jobs project or the Jordan Emergency Health project include sub-components addressing and thus benefitting women directly.

Inclusion of gender aspects into project design are emphasized by the GCFF. The Steering Committee, when approving projects, often gives attention to gender-sensitive approaches or insists on the inclusion thereof in projects in pipeline development. In the case of the Jordan Emergency Health project for

example, approval by Canada was made contingent on the project design applying a gender-sensitive approach, and the help of gender specialists in country was offered to ensure this. As one project-level stakeholder on the Benefitting Country's side reported, social (and environmental) safeguards are not something they are used to consider in project design. The Steering Committee's involvement therefore proved critical to ensure these considerations were met (including consulting women in the project scoping phase). The project-level stakeholder also noted that this focus on social safeguards was something not common with other donor agencies they worked with.

However, due to their nature, two types of projects did not include any specific provision to meet women's needs or address barriers preventing them from benefitting from the project: the DPLs, and both projects aimed at improving wastewater infrastructure (the Ain Ghazal Wastewater project and the West Irbid Wastewater project).

Table 11 GCFF portfolio – addressing the needs of women

Project name	Country	How the project aims to meet the needs of women	Gender specific indicators	Have barriers to women's participation been identified?
Economic opportunities for Jordanians and Syrian refugees (program for results)	Jordan	Promoting women's economic empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officially established household enterprises disaggregates by female engagement. 	Yes - Childcare and transportation are identified as barriers to women's access to participate in the labor market. There is also a difficulty in hiring more Jordanian and Syrian women as the industrial estate has become more heavy-industries-centered
Ain Ghazal Wastewater Project	Jordan	The project does not specifically target women's needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct project refugee beneficiaries disaggregated by gender Direct project host community population beneficiaries disaggregated by gender Jobs created during the construction phase for refugee and Host Community populations disaggregated by gender 	No
Energy and water development policy loan	Jordan	The project does not specifically target women's needs	None	No
Jordan emergency health project (and additional financing project)	Jordan	Improving maternal health and providing help to victims of physical or spousal sexual violence (and gender-based violence in general), and support for gender-sensitive services to those in need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage increase in proportion of pregnant Syrian women accessing their first antenatal care visits during the first trimester Maintaining number of health services delivered at MOH primary and secondary health care facilities to female uninsured poor Jordanians, 	Yes - Barriers to accessing care for women such as transport or costs have been identified

Project name	Country	How the project aims to meet the needs of women	Gender specific indicators	Have barriers to women's participation been identified?
			and female registered Syrian refugees.	
Jordan West Irbid wastewater project	Jordan	The project does not specifically target women's needs	None	No
Jordan education reform support (program for results) (and additional financing project)	Jordan	Strengthening the MOE's Gender Unit by mainstreaming gender activities such as investing in training and gender-specific modules in school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage point reduction in the dropout rate of Syrian refugees are disaggregated by gender 	Yes - Barriers to gender acknowledged through the fact that a gender-sensitive approach is taken throughout the project design
Jordan first equitable growth and job creation development policy financing	Jordan	The project does not specifically target women's needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in growth of formal, private, part-time workers disaggregated by gender 	No
Jordan Youth, Technology and Jobs	Jordan	Specific targeting of women through interventions, provision to specifically engage women, such as childcare support to enable them to attend trainings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of beneficiaries and individuals trained reporting new income opportunities disaggregated by gender Number of students (grade 7-12) receiving digital skills curriculum in schools disaggregated by gender Number of beneficiaries using Tech Hubs disaggregated by gender Number of individuals with digital skills benefiting from ITO/BPO businesses supported or from technology adoption disaggregated by gender 	Yes - barriers facing women in the Jordanian labor market are acknowledged in the project design and specific provisions built in to overcome these

Project name	Country	How the project aims to meet the needs of women	Gender specific indicators	Have barriers to women's participation been identified?
Lebanon roads and employment project	Lebanon	Establishing a goal of 50% of female beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of start-ups supported with business matchmaking disaggregated by gender Number of direct project beneficiaries disaggregated by gender 	No
Lebanon health resilience project	Lebanon	Identifying project-relevant gaps between males and females and taking action to address these and improve empowerment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of beneficiaries who will have access to the essential healthcare services package (% of female of total beneficiaries) 	No
Greater Beirut Public Transport Project	Lebanon	Increasing women's ridership on public transport by increasing safety and contributing to women's empowerment by providing affordable and independent mean of transportation to women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of female ridership in the formal public bus system (BRT and regular buses) per weekday Share of passengers satisfied with quality of formal bus system disaggregated by gender 	Yes - project design specifically targets overcoming women's barriers to accessing transport such as low safety and harassment concerns
National Jobs Program for Results	Lebanon	Applying a gender lens to the different interventions to ensure access for women was addressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of entrepreneurs with business plans supported by the Entrepreneurship Fund was to be disaggregated by gender Number of direct beneficiaries benefitting from improved ALMP services was to be disaggregated by gender 	Yes – Job barriers amongst women acknowledged
Municipal Investment Program	Lebanon	Ensuring participation of women in community consultations by organizing all-inclusive consultations where women's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of sub-projects with gender-dimensioned design 	Yes – not specified

Project name	Country	How the project aims to meet the needs of women	Gender specific indicators	Have barriers to women's participation been identified?
		concerns are integrated in sub-project identification and financing gender-sensitive infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People provided with improved urban living conditions disaggregated by gender • Percentage of women beneficiaries in participating secondary cities reporting improved municipal services 	
Colombia second fiscal sustainability, competitiveness, and migration development financing	Colombia	The project does not specifically target women's needs	None	No
Improving Quality of Healthcare Services and Efficiency in Colombia	Colombia	Providing technical assistance to interventions addressing gender-based violence and identifying project gaps between males and females to improve empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of women with breast cancer detected in early stages, up to stage IIA, at the time of diagnosis; • Percentage of municipalities with an intersectoral mechanism to respond to gender-based violence in place 	No
Second Inclusive and Sustainable Growth Development Policy Financing	Ecuador	The project does not specifically target women's needs	None	No

Source: GCFF Progress Report, Project Monitoring Documentation, Ipsos MORI analysis

EQ2d What complementarities, synergies, overlaps or disconnects are there between the GCFF and other funds and programs addressing the refugee crisis?

Global initiatives

There have been several key global initiatives drafted by the UN to help address the growing number of refugees worldwide. The New York Declaration is a set of commitments for Member States adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 19 September 2016.³⁶ This includes commitments to strengthen and facilitate emergency responses to refugee movements, provide funding to host countries, explore additional avenues for refugees being admitted to third countries, and support the development of a Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework for large refugee movements. While it will take time for the impact to fully materialize, UNHCR has noted the following changes as of 2018:³⁷

- The EBRD has rolled out a EUR 900 million Community Resilience financing package to support host communities in Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon; this is covered more thoroughly below.
- The EU has established the EU Regional Trust Fund in the MENA region to support refugees and host communities of the Syrian Refugee Crisis; this is again covered more thoroughly below.
- Support from specific country governments, including development funding from donor countries.³⁸

The Global Compact on Refugees is a resolution drafted by UNHCR which was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 17 December 2018.³⁹ This resolution sets out a framework for increased responsibility sharing among host countries by strengthening the resilience of refugees and host countries through development cooperation opportunities. It is essentially a global blueprint for governments, development actors, the private sector, and multilateral institutions for addressing refugee crises with sustainable solutions and equitable actions. Specifically, the overarching aims of the compact are to more formally adopt the aims set out in the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, including: i) ease pressure on host countries; ii) enhance refugee self-reliance; iii) expand access to third-country solutions, and; iv) support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity.

While the Compact has seen success in certain areas – including adoption of recommendations by the African Union and over USD 6.5 billion devoted to development in refugee-hosting countries by the World Bank and other development banks⁴⁰ – three EU member states and the United States notably voted against the compact, with a further five EU member states abstaining from voting.⁴¹ In addition to this, the compact is voluntary and non-binding in nature drawing questions as to its effectiveness. Finally, there has been some criticism directed towards the compact, with claims that it has is designed to protect high income countries from burden sharing by focusing on refugee resilience and community development in host communities.⁴² Despite these criticisms, however, the Compact has been broadly recognized as one of the most important steps in international refugee protection since the adoption of the 1951 Refugee Convention.⁴³

³⁶ <https://www.unhcr.org/uk/events/conferences/5b8d1ad34/commitment-action-highlights-progress-towards-comprehensive-refugee-responses.html>

³⁷ *ibid.*

³⁸ This includes Denmark, Germany, Canada, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Japan, Korea, Sweden, Norway and Spain.

³⁹ <https://www.unhcr.org/5c658aed4>

⁴⁰ <https://academic.oup.com/ijrl/article/30/4/575/5310191>

⁴¹ <https://picum.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/GCR-and-GCM-joint-event-report-1.pdf>

⁴² <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2019/06/07/how-to-make-concrete-progress-on-the-global-compact-on-refugees/>

⁴³ <https://academic.oup.com/ijrl/article/30/4/575/5310191>

Regional initiatives

There are several regional initiatives and funds designed to address both the Syrian and Venezuelan refugee crises.

The Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) is a regionally coordinated plan for the Syrian refugee crisis, and is nationally led by Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt. This plan aims to integrate development and humanitarian assistance activities and funding through two interlinked components, one which addresses the protection and assistance needs of refugees in host countries across all sectors, and another which addresses the resilience and stabilization needs of vulnerable communities across all sectors as well.⁴⁴ It is essentially a regional mechanism which directs funding towards different sector based on decision committees within each country. The plan has requested USD 5.5 billion and received USD 2.3 billion USD as of 2019.

As the plan is founded in the principle of national ownership, funding is directed through government institutions. How this looks is dependent on the circumstances of each country:

- The Government of Lebanon established an Inter-Ministerial Committee on Displaced to direct funding through the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan a joint strategic framework between the Government of Lebanon, the UN, and NGOs. Key priorities outlined in this plan include livelihood and education for refugees and host communities (this plan is covered more thoroughly below in section 4.2.3).
- The Government of Jordan currently directs funding through the Jordan Response Platform for the Syria Crisis, a strategic partnership mechanism between the Government of Jordan, donors, the UN, and NGOs. This funding is dispersed based on the Jordan Response Plan, which details specific aims for each sector (this plan is again covered more thoroughly below in section 4.2.3).

The Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan is a regionally coordinated plan for the Venezuelan refugee crisis and presents a framework agreed upon by 95 organizations from 16 different countries. The plan sets out an inter-agency strategy for responding to the crisis and includes a broad package of interventions in the areas of direct emergency assistance and protection for refugees and migrants, socio-economic and cultural integration, and strengthening the capacity of host governments. The plan includes detailed regional and national platforms, which participating organizations must adhere to upon joining the plan. For the GCFF benefiting countries, the specific support involves:

- In Colombia this includes a request for USD 316 million of funding, the majority of which will be directed towards direct emergency assistance (55%) and socio-economic cultural integration (28%). For refugees specifically, this includes support for access to livelihoods, protection (including violence and trafficking), health, and food security; for host communities, this includes support in terms of livelihoods, access to basic services, and housing, as well as support to education and health facilities.
- In Ecuador this includes a request for USD 117 million of funding, most of which will be directed towards direct emergency assistance (53%) and socio-economic cultural integration (23%). For refugees specifically, this includes access to WASH, shelter and healthcare, as well as proper

⁴⁴ <https://www.unhcr.org/589497237.pdf>

documentation, regularization and access to asylum and residency. For the host country, this includes strengthening government institutions to support the registration process.

The EU Regional Trust Fund provides grants and has allocated EUR 1.512 billion towards projects which respond to the Syrian crisis in Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, and Iraq. Disbursal of funding is allocated based on decisions by the Fund's Operational Board (which includes the European Commission, 15 EU Member States, and Turkey) based on priority sectors of basic education, higher education, health, livelihoods, WASH and protection. Thus far, the fund has allocated over 67 funding projects,⁴⁵ notably:

- In partnership with UNICEF, the fund has allocated EUR 108 million towards investment of future generations of children and young people in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey affected by the crisis. Programming includes access to education and vocational training, psychological support, and protection against early child marriage and labor.
- In partnership with UNICEF and the Ministry of Education in Turkey and Lebanon, the fund has allocated EUR 90 million to quality education initiatives, psychosocial-care, and protective services for refugee communities across Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey.
- In partnership with GIZ, Expertise France, and AECID Spain, the fund has allocated EUR 75 million to improving school conditions, accessing economic opportunities, local administration, social cohesion and dialogue facilitation for refugee and host communities across Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey.

The EBRD has also directed EUR 900 million towards building resilience in Turkey and Jordan to address the Syrian crisis. Support for funding is a mix of EBRD funding and donor contributions, including provided by the European Union, the World Bank, and the United Nations, and covers three urgent priorities in the two countries, including:

- Infrastructure development, including a EUR 50 million loan to the city of Amman to modernize the landfill which services the capital and nearby countries.
- Small and medium-size enterprise growth, including efforts to develop credit lines for lending to small and medium-sized enterprises in refugee-hosting communities in Turkey and Jordan.
- Access to employment and skills, including initiatives to increase the quality of local vocational training based on employers' skills requirements.

Country-specific initiatives

In addition to the above regional plans, Benefiting Countries also have specific in-country response plans to guide their operations. These are country-specific coordinating mechanisms, which are designed to filter and direct funding from donors towards specific sectors; the exact eligibility criteria and process for this are determined by each country.

The Lebanese Crisis Response Plan outlines the financing, strategy and management structure for the country response to the Syrian crisis. Financing of the plan will be provided on an appeal basis through pooled funds such as the Multi-Partner Trust Fund managed by the World Bank, and the UN-managed Lebanon Humanitarian Fund and Lebanon Recovery Fund. Any participating UN Organization that has

⁴⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/trustfund-syria-region/sites/tfsr/files/madad_fund_signed_contracts_0.pdf

signed a Memorandum of Understanding is eligible to submit project proposals for these funds.⁴⁶ Key strategic objectives for the plan include:

1. Ensure protection of vulnerable populations, including access to legal status, admissions and resettlement, as well as access to civil documentation for Syrian refugees; increased capacity for Lebanese, Palestinian and Syrian communities to identify protection concerns; and support for the government to enforce protection laws.
2. Provide immediate assistance to vulnerable populations, including displaced Syrians, vulnerable Lebanese, and Palestinian refugees. This broadly encompasses assistance for reducing hunger, homelessness, and health complications; service delivery in informal settlements; and responsiveness to emergency humanitarian needs.
3. Support service provision through national systems by strengthening national and local capacity to ensure access to education for all children; widen social safety nets; provide affordable healthcare, especially for children, women, older persons, and persons with disabilities; and strengthen government ownership.
4. Reinforce Lebanon's economic, social and environmental stability by expanding opportunities for livelihood and improving local development through job creation, support to small and medium-size enterprises, promote sustainable agriculture production, and reduce environmental degradation.

Projects are coordinated through a joint partnership approach, where leadership is provided by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) and UN, coordination is provided by the Inter-Sector Working Group consisting of MoSA, UNHCR, and UNDP, and specific sector expertise is provided by Sector Steering Committees, supported by working groups from national and international partners.

The Jordan Response Plan (2020 – 2022) outlines the financial needs, strategy and structure of the country response to the Syrian crisis. The plan has outlined a total budget requirement of USD 6.6 billion over three years (around 2 billion per year). The plan outlines a number of components to success including:

- Overall objectives, which align with current Jordan policies, SDGs, and the Global Compact on Refugees.
- Sector compositions, which includes resilience and refugee/humanitarian pillar embedded across all sectors, and a budget support pillar focused on compensating the treasury for losses.
- Response type, including refugee needs, host community needs, and infrastructure/institutional capacity development needs.
- Investment in seven sectors, including the public sector (such as transportation, energy and the environment), economic empower sector (such as food security and livelihoods), education, health, WASH, social protection and shelter.

Implementing partners, including government institutions, UN Agencies, and national and international NGOs, are required to submit their project through a government-owned system, where foreign funding is approved by the Government of Jordan.

⁴⁶ <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/LRF00>

The specific national response plans for Colombia and Ecuador are guided by the Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan. The response in Colombia is guided by the Colombian Government with support of the interagency Group for Mixed Migration Flows (GFMM). Their key strategic objectives include:

- Provide and improve access to critical goods and services, including strengthening the capacity of the state to provide these goods and services at the national and local level.
- Increase integration opportunities for refugee and migrant populations, including access to employment, resources, and livelihoods.
- Mitigate protection risks, improve access to basic services, and provide a response to protection needs.

Since 2019, GFMM aimed to ensure that the above efforts also directly benefited host communities. This was implemented via an area approach, with support given to all individuals, regardless of their nationality.

The strategy in Ecuador is supported by the GTRM and is directed towards both Venezuelan migrants and refugees (including those in transit and those settling in Ecuador), and host communities. Specifically, the response strategy aims to focus on:

- The protection and integration of all population groups, including access to services.
- Provision of technical assistance, equipment and staff to state institutions to improve the regularization process and strengthen the national asylum system.
- Direct assistance will focus on the promotion of livelihoods, access to financial services, social cohesion, and access to basic services.

In addition to the above, the GTRM response was also founded on principles of promoting age and gender equality mainstreaming, as well as promoting the centrality of protection for affected populations

GCFF coherence

The GCFF is unique in that it is a global facility; other funds and programs tend to be region-specific (such as the regional response plans), and if they are global, tend to focus more on shaping policy and dialogue as opposed to providing funding (such as the Global Compact and New York Declaration). It is also unique in that it provides loans at concessional rates to MICs.

The GCFF is similar to two other initiatives developed by other MDBs:

- The European Investment Bank's (EIB) **Economic Resilience Initiative** (ERI) has invested EUR 5.25 billion across 59 projects in 12 countries within the Western Balkans and MENA-region. To date, roughly EUR 400 million has been invested towards 16 projects across Lebanon and Jordan. Most of these funds were raised from EU member states and represented minimal overlap with GCFF donor countries. The process for providing financing for this initiative is slightly different from the GCFF in that it accounts for the country context, which includes the number of refugees in the country; alongside project characteristics, which includes the impact the project is likely to have on refugee communities. The specific projects funded through this initiative are similar to the GCFF in that it supports infrastructure and job-creation initiatives which are meant to benefit both refugee and host communities; this includes developing industrial zones in Lebanon and creating microfinancing

operations for women in Jordan. However, the ERI has a slightly “broader” mandate than the GCFF in that it invests in the private sector alongside public sector projects. It should be noted, however, that the GCFF is also considering extending eligibility to include private sector projects.

- The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development’s (EBRD) **Refugee Crisis Response** has also directed EUR 900 million towards building resilience in Turkey and Jordan to address the Syrian crisis. Support for funding is a mix of EBRD funding and donor contributions. Some projects falling under this initiative are co-financed through the GCFF; however, the exact amount of funding and specific project(s) which are co-financed could not be identified through the document review. The response is similar to the GCFF in that it aims to cover three urgent economic priorities in the two countries, including:
 - **Infrastructure development**, including a EUR 50 million loan to the city of Amman to modernize the landfill which services the capital and nearby countries.
 - **Small and medium-size enterprise growth**, including efforts to develop credit lines for lending to small and medium-sized enterprises in refugee-hosting communities in Turkey and Jordan.
 - **Access to employment and skills**, including initiatives to increase the quality of local vocational training based on employers’ skills requirements.

In addition to this, the GCFF also aligns with a number of other global and regional policies described in the above section which aim to address this crisis, including:

- Flexibility in focusing on different sectors as opposed to one specific sector, similar to the EU Regional Trust Fund;
- Being country-owned and led, similar to the two regional response plans for the Syrian and Venezuelan crises, and;
- Focusing on both refugee and host communities as opposed to solely refugee communities, similar to the New York Declaration and Global Compact.

This evaluation question will be explored further for the Final Report, in particular in regard to complementarities, synergies, overlaps or disconnects of the individual projects in the GCFF portfolio with projects implemented by other actors.

6.3 Country selection

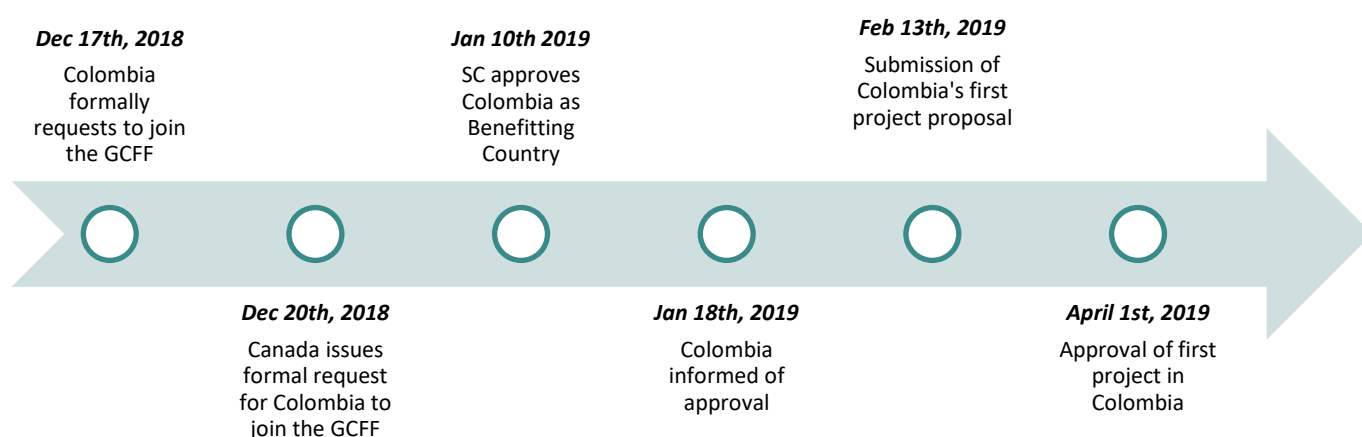
EQ1d To what extent has the process of country approval been carried out efficiently and effectively?

Originally focusing on the Syrian refugee crisis and supporting Lebanon and Jordan, the Concessional Finance Facility was extended to a global scope in September 2016 by allowing it to support eligible MICs anywhere in the world. The Operations Manual outlines the criteria and consideration, as well as the process by which additional Benefitting Countries may be added to the GCFF. To date, two countries have been approved as additional Benefitting Countries of the GCFF: Colombia in January 2019, and Ecuador in September 2019.

The process of country approval requires the Benefitting Country to express interest, whereupon a Supporting Country needs to act as “sponsor” by submitting a request for the country to join to the Coordination Unit.

In the case of Colombia’s joining the GCFF, the below timeline showcases that the process of approval, once formally initiated, was efficient and timely, with Colombia being informed of membership approval one month after it requested to join. For both Colombia and Ecuador, Canada took on the role of sponsor- this stemmed from their existing engagement and operations in the LatAm region and thus familiarity with the Venezuelan refugee crisis, as well as due to their position as co-chair of the Steering Committee at that time.

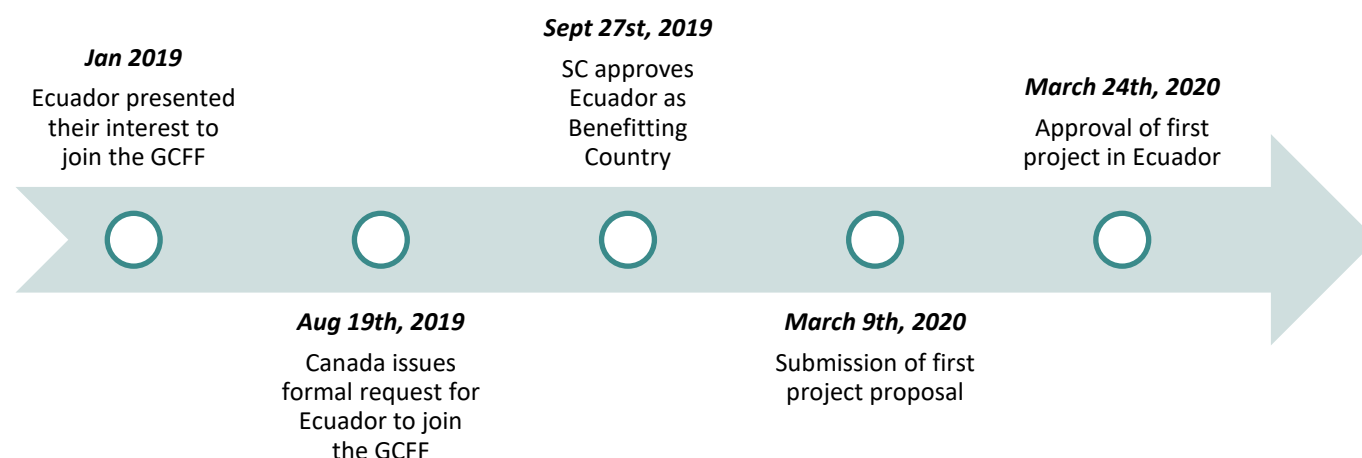
Figure 8 Timeline for Colombia joining the GCFF



Source: Ipsos MORI review of SC Meeting minutes, progress reports, Funding Requests, and CU correspondence

In the case of Ecuador’s inclusion into the GCFF, more time elapsed between the initial expression of interest to join the GCFF and its membership approval, as well as in its first project approval, as can be seen in Figure 9.

Figure 9 Timeline for Ecuador joining the GCFF



Whereas there was general agreement across the Steering Committee that both Colombia and Ecuador merited inclusion in the GCFF and fulfilled the criteria outlined in the Operations Manual, there was a hesitancy amongst other Supporting Countries to support their inclusion. Some stakeholders explained that this was because the region is less of a policy priority for most European Supporting Countries, coupled with the fact that the GCFF, due to its initial set-up, had stronger MENA expertise and much less familiarity with the Venezuelan crisis context. While these considerations did not ultimately prohibit the inclusion of either Colombia or Ecuador, they represent informal eligibility criteria currently not reflected in the Operations Manual.

Ecuador's membership timeline was longer than that of Colombia. The case of Ecuador required more discussion by the Steering Committee, as its commitment to refugees was a point of concern for several Supporting Countries, voiced in the Steering Committee's meeting in September 2019. While the discussion leading to a decision on country approval were generally considered efficient and effective by stakeholders interviewed, as there was agreement that the countries for debate fulfilled the criteria and inclusion was warranted, the set-up of the Steering Committee in its current form, with the prospective Benefitting Country in attendance, was considered by some to prohibit frank discussion, and thus to inhibit an efficient decision.

Nevertheless, some stakeholders consider the different strategic and policy aims of the Supporting Countries a strength - while it does play a role in the country selection process, the inclusion of two Latin American countries, a region considered to be a lower priority for most Supporting Countries shows that this has not been a significant barrier to membership, and the mix of Supporting Countries across regions and with different strategic foci allows for the GCFF to be a global instrument, helping ensure that there will be some funding for each region available.

"I don't think that you should make it too dependent on the donor policies. You believe the concepts, and that's something that you want to support. Maybe this year we don't have funding, maybe next year we have other governments and there will be funding for that region."

However, while country selection is a formal process ending with approval and inclusion (or rejection) of a new Benefitting Country, eligibility for funding in reality has an informal second layer due to the Facility's multiple funding windows. Some stakeholders raised concerns that, in effect, country selection is continually made through Supporting Countries' decisions as to which window to provide funding to.

This calls into question the benefit of adding additional Benefitting Countries without sufficient funding commitment from Supporting Countries. Insufficient funding results in insufficient concessionality loan amounts being provided, which lowers the financial benefit of the GCFF to Benefitting Countries as well as limits the leverage the GCFF can exert to push for refugee-friendly projects and policies. Thus ultimately, country selection only appropriately serves the GCFF's objectives if formal approval is accompanied by sufficient funding availability.

Another issue raised by some stakeholders with regards to the country selection process is that there is no process to deselect countries from the program, and some Supporting Countries felt that a discussion about adding such a process is needed due to concerns about the continued commitment of Benefitting Country governments to pro-refugee policies. In this context, the multiple funding windows help Supporting Countries target funds to Benefitting Countries that they feel are more aligned with the eligibility criteria set out in the Operations Manual in terms of their commitment to pro-refugee policies.

A further concern raised was that the process of country approval in its current form does not give the Coordination Unit a formal, proactive role in monitoring refugee crises and reaching out to potential new Benefitting Countries, but rather relies on Supporting Countries and ISAs to facilitate the inclusion of additional Benefitting Countries. This means that it is not possible to offer immediate support to countries when they are first impacted, which one Benefitting Country has raised as a challenge. While the Venezuelan refugee crisis was already highlighted in the 2017-2018 GCFF annual report as placing great strain on neighboring countries, naming both Ecuador and Colombia, and internal documentation shows that the inclusion of Colombia was being discussed as early as October 2018, the formal process for Colombia's approval did not kick-off until December 2018. In the case of Ecuador, the timeline was longer still, with the first project approval granted in March 2020 whereas political instability started contributing to a growing displacement crisis in Venezuela as early as 2016, 4 years prior.

EQ2c To what extent has country selection appropriately served the objective “to support middle income countries impacted by the influx of refugees through the provision of concessional financing and improved coordination for development projects addressing the impact of the influx of refugees.”

There is broad consensus among stakeholders interviewed that the current country selection is in line with the facility's objective and global scope. The objective of the GCFF aligns with the financial needs of the Syrian and Venezuelan crises in terms of the coverage of funding still required for both crises, and the impact on Benefitting Countries in terms of the number and proportion of refugees relative to their population. Both the expansion to include Colombia and Ecuador was supported by stakeholders, as both fulfilled the criteria outlined in the Operation Manual (see EQ2a for further discussion).

While the world is currently affected by several refugee crises, both the Syrian and the Venezuelan refugee crisis are the most underfunded and where host countries are MICs, justifying the GCFF's focus on these two regions. Despite receiving nearly USD 2.2 billion, the Syrian crisis continues to remain underfunded in terms of coverage, with 42% of the requested funding provided. Furthermore, Lebanon and Jordan continue to be the most impacted countries, with the Syrian refugee population accounting for 15% and 7% of their populations respectively. Another MIC impacted by Syrian the crisis which is not a Benefitting Country is Turkey.

There is a similar situation in Latin America with the Venezuelan crisis, which also remains underfunded in terms of coverage, with 53% of the requested 737 million USD currently received. Colombia and Ecuador are both severely impacted by this crisis, with Colombia currently hosting a large proportion of refugees, and Ecuador being subject to a large number of transient crossings of Venezuelan refugees to other countries. Notably, Peru has seen a large increase in the number of Venezuelan refugees, with the country currently hosting the second highest number in the region.

The below table gives a summary of middle-income countries, their refugee hosting burden, and the total ODA received in 2018.

Table 12 Middle-income refugee hosting countries and select indicators

Country	Economy ⁴⁷	Relevant Crisis	Number of refugees hosting (in millions) ^{48,49}	Proportion of country's population (percentage)	Total ODA received in 2018 (in
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⁴⁷ <https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519>

⁴⁸ <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/5ee200e37.pdf>

⁴⁹ This includes refugees registered as per UNHCR.

					billions USD) ⁵⁰
Turkey	Upper middle income	Syrian crisis	3.6	4.4	1.2
Colombia	Upper middle income	Venezuelan crisis	1.8	3.6	1.7
Pakistan	Lower middle income	Afghanistan conflict	1.4	0.7	1.4
Republic of Iran	Upper middle income	Afghanistan conflict	1.0	1.2	0.2
Lebanon	Upper middle income	Syrian crisis	0.9	13.1	1.4
Peru	Upper middle income	Venezuelan crisis	0.9	2.8	0.4
Bangladesh	Lower middle income	Myanmar crisis	0.9	0.4	3.0
Jordan	Upper middle income	Syrian crisis	0.7	7.0	2.5
Ecuador	Upper middle income	Venezuelan crisis	0.4	2.0	0.4

Source: Ipsos MORI analysis

6.4 Funding Applications

EQ1e. To what extent have funding requests been handled efficiently and effectively? Did applications for funding provide enough information, including regarding compliance with the ISA's policy and safeguards, to the SC to adequately inform allocation decisions?

Evidence from stakeholder interviews and the portfolio analysis provides mixed evidence as to whether funding requests are handled efficiently and effectively, but there is clear evidence that Steering Committee members wish for improvements to the information received to inform decision making.

The pipeline preparation stage's importance was highlighted by stakeholders interviewed, although there was mixed evidence from the document review and stakeholder interviews on **the efficiency of the presentations of the project pipelines to the Steering Committee**, and this was also seen to vary by project. Pipeline information is shared at Steering Committee meetings as well as more informally between meetings, with the Coordination Unit playing an important role in liaising bilaterally with ISAs and BCs on the one hand to identify their project pipeline, as well as with Supporting Countries on the other hand to highlight projects that individual countries would likely be interested in funding based on their strategic priorities. In some cases, Supporting Countries also reported liaising bilaterally with Benefitting Countries to scope potential projects. This informal bilateral engagement was described by stakeholders as a crucial process to provide Supporting Countries with project information ahead of their presentation for decision and to help the Benefitting Countries to provide sufficient information on the Funding Requests Forms, allowing for more efficient decision making. However, one stakeholder felt that this early engagement should involve all the Supporting Countries. They also stated that the sharing of information at this stage was inconsistent and unstructured, for example there were differences in the amount of information shared with Supporting Country Steering Committee representatives and their colleagues working in the

⁵⁰ Numbers are per the World Bank open data: <https://data.worldbank.org/>

Benefitting Countries, or the Supporting Country Steering Committee representatives would sometimes receive information at a different time to their colleagues 'in the field'. Furthermore, Benefitting Countries sometimes felt uninformed about project information, in contrast with the Steering Committee's need for all the available, relevant information to make informed decisions.

"Sometimes the donor group is being consulted and then it's very last moment and, in all honesty, sometimes they have the feeling that World Bank is not sharing all the information, or there are other discussions going on that they're not being involved in. So, that's sometimes a bit complicated."

In some cases, the Steering Committee meeting minutes provide evidence of extensive discussions about upcoming projects in the pipeline (such as the Jordan Youth, Technology and Jobs project) where the Steering Committee provides feedback and "pre-approval" ahead of the official submission to the Coordination Unit. This means that the Steering Committee members (specifically the Supporting Countries) are able to engage with Benefitting Countries on upcoming projects early on in the process.

However, some stakeholders reported that communications ahead of receipt of the Funding Request were insufficient, resulting in some projects being presented as a "fait accompli", reducing the ability of the Steering Committee to provide feedback and suggest changes. While some Supporting Countries reported having strong insights into some projects before the Funding Request was introduced, others reported that they were less aware, suggesting Supporting Countries engagement in the project design stage varies. One stakeholder reported that information shared in the pipeline phase should include the planned impact of the project.

In terms of timeliness, Supporting Countries felt that there is insufficient time for the Steering Committee to adequately scrutinize Funding Requests. The Coordination Unit shares the Funding Requests with the Steering Committee members ahead of the meeting (aiming to do this 14 days ahead, as prescribed in the Operations Manual).⁵¹ Analysis of program documents suggests that in the cases where Supporting Countries do not have substantive questions and where funds are immediately available, the time between submission of the Funding Request Form to the CU and the approval of concessionality is around two weeks. Steering Committee members emphasized the importance of this window in allowing them time to review Funding Requests ahead of the decision; however, in some cases, Steering Committee members reported that documents were not received within two weeks of the meeting.

"They provided us with documents regarding the financing needs and status before the steering committee meeting, but that has been very close up to the meeting. We've stressed that we need 2 weeks or more in advance of the meeting."

More broadly, several Steering Committee members reported that the time available for scrutiny was insufficient, even when the 14-day timeline had been adhered to. This was referred to as a particular problem in the cases of projects which required more discussion amongst Steering Committee members.

As a result of the short timeframe allocated to Steering Committee members to review Funding Requests, the Steering Committee's scrutiny function is reduced. When potential issues with projects have been

⁵¹ As Funding Requests include only the submission date to the CU and not dates shared with the SC, whether this 14-day period has been always met could not be established by the evaluation team. However, stakeholders interviewed reported that this timeline had generally been adhered to.

observed, for instance regarding safeguards, the Steering Committee has had limited time to give feedback and for Benefitting Countries to make the necessary amendments. One participant felt that the Steering Committee's limited time for review was ineffective, particularly in the context of a wider protracted crisis in the Benefitting Country. They reported that World Bank processes could be creating meaningless deadlines, and as a result impacting the quality of projects:

"We're talking about some crisis here that are becoming protracted. Why all the urgency to finalize something within a couple of days?... Sometimes it's not the Secretariat... it's different pressures that they are under. By and large, we should not be held hostage for... the Steering Committee to take a decision just before the financial year of the World Bank closes at the end of June. That's not a sound way of working on an instrument like this one."

Furthermore, there was extensive evidence from the stakeholder interviews that project documentation presented to the Steering Committee was considered insufficient by Supporting Countries. These concerns suggest that the Coordination Unit's early engagement to support Benefitting Countries and ISAs in strengthening the quality of Funding Requests was only effective in meeting Supporting Countries' requirements in some instances. However, other stakeholders suggested that Supporting Countries' information requirements are sometimes beyond what the Coordination Unit is able to provide as an intermediary and may be more appropriately directed to Benefitting Countries or ISAs, which may stem from a lack of awareness of the Coordination Unit's role (discussed further in Eq1j). This can also arise out of staff changes in Supporting Countries resulting in new staff needing to build their knowledge of the GCFF's processes.

Stakeholders reported the following issues with the project documentation they were provided and wider information requirements to inform decision making:

- **Cases of the Steering Committee not being presented with the complete project documents;**
- **A lack of detail relating to key project indicators, particularly the focus and impact on refugees,** as well as safeguards relating to gender and the environment which were reportedly only added for the ISA board stage. One stakeholder discussed how in the April 2017 Steering Committee meeting, Canada planned to veto the Jordan Emergency Health project which had insufficient gender safeguards, leading to the GCFF producing an annex on gender within 48 hours. This indicates that some projects are not prioritizing these areas in the project design stage, which could affect the quality of implementation in these areas. This was substantiated by the portfolio analysis, which found that in the case of the Municipal Investment Project in Lebanon, at the September 2019 Steering Committee the Supporting Countries called for additional information on the project's direct and indirect impact, notably for refugees and youth.⁵²
- **A lack of detail on the planned project monitoring arrangements** (identified by the project portfolio analysis);

⁵² As a result of these requests for additional information, Supporting Countries requested additional consultations to strengthen specific aspects of the program before proceeding to approval. It was therefore decided that subsequent to consultations planned in Beirut for October 4, the Government of Lebanon would recirculate through the CU project documentation for virtual SC approval with a reduced non-objection period of seven calendar days. The project was approved on 18 October 2019. In other cases where comments are less substantive, such as the Jordan First Equitable Growth and Job Creation DPL project, comments have been addressed during the SC meeting and the approval made in the same meeting.

- **A lack of detail on how the project will comply with the ISA's policies and safeguards** (identified by the project portfolio analysis);
- **Lack of clarity on the Benefitting Countries' funding priorities**, in cases where Benefitting Countries are presenting multiple Funding Requests.

"In [one] Steering Committee... three proposals were being presented by the government of Jordan and you were sitting back afterwards not really knowing, what's the priority if they don't have full funding for this. We asked them later on and it became clear from the World Bank what the priorities were, so it's not a big issue. It was good to see, having a brief understanding about these upcoming proposals from the government of Jordan, so I think it was useful."

- **A need for the CU or the ISA to share their recommendations or prioritizations**, in cases where Benefitting Countries are presenting multiple Funding Requests.
- **A need for Benefitting Countries to share more detail on their overall funding needs**, to inform contextual understanding of the total demand and the extent to which the GCFF can support; and
- **A need for the GCFF to share more detail on their overall funding needs**, to inform contextual understanding and future planning by Supporting Countries.

"Sometimes I have felt a bit of a lack of information when it comes to the financing needs of the Bank or the GCFF. So, what I've done myself because of that, I contacted the Bank ... just to know where we are in terms of financing needs and financing status...I think the Bank could be more proactive in presenting us on a more regular basis instead of like I've done, contacting them and asking for this information. I think they could do it every 3 months or just to have us regularly updated."

The issues raised by the stakeholders regarding project documentation and wider relevant information indicate potential problems with the non-objection model, in that Steering Committee members may not have sufficient information to make an objection, even if they have concerns. This is also discussed in EQ1i.

One stakeholder suggested improvements to the format of the Steering Committee meetings and the approach to sharing information could be made, in order to aid decision making. For instance, Project Funding Requests could be shared through a presentation, which would give Steering Committee members the opportunity to ask questions exploring the country context, particularly the political economy context.

"To ask a few questions sometimes is what you really need, to understand the context, the political economy of the situation. How does it play into political structures? Why is it difficult? What makes it complicated? To have this open discussion is always useful."

This stakeholder also referenced the value of having the UNHCR's input as an observer in the Steering Committee. They felt that it was necessary to strengthen the voices of refugees and displaced peoples in the Project Funding Requests.

EQ1h. To what extent has support during the preparation phase and project implementation, particularly from ISAs, been carried out efficiently and effectively?

It should be noted that this question will be explored further through ongoing interviews and the project case studies.

In the **preparatory phase**, the ISAs support Benefitting Countries with pipeline development. Stakeholders described that ISAs are able to use their own expertise as development banks to provide Benefitting Countries with advice on improving the quality of projects and tailoring the Funding Requests to meet Supporting Country requirements. They also support Benefitting Countries through scoping, for example by doing feasibility studies and assessments.

“Having a development bank as a channel is a very good thing because it helps the countries to really present good-quality initiatives, and it helps to also give to the donors tranquility that the resources are going to be executed with very good standards and high-quality standards.”

However, a significant portion of projects have faced delays early on, which may indicate insufficient preparation, which can lead to changes to the project, delays, and cost implications. One stakeholder reported that planned timelines were sometimes unrealistic, suggesting that the effectiveness of scoping could be improved.

Benefitting Countries also receive feedback from the Coordination Unit in the pipeline phase to ensure projects and Funding Requests meet the GCFF’s objectives and withstand donor scrutiny, as detailed in EQ1e.

Some Supporting Countries also play a role in the preparation phase. One Supporting Country reported that they used formal and informal processes to work closely with the Coordination Unit on some projects in the design stage. They identified bilateral meetings which took place between the Supporting Country and the GCFF, the GCFF and the Benefitting Country, and the Supporting Country and the Benefitting Country as a barrier to efficient support, with trilateral conversations only taking place on the initiative of the Benefitting Country. An additional barrier to support from Supporting Countries is the fact that the level of Supporting Country engagement varies according to the Supporting Country’s priority thematic areas and staff capacity. One stakeholder report that coordination and communication needed to be improved in order to involve more Supporting Countries, and increase dialogue with Benefitting Countries

A barrier to effective support identified by one stakeholder was insufficient collaboration with the UN in the preparation phase. This links to the findings relating to gaps in the Funding Requests, indicating that using the expertise of observers at the design phase could help to ensure Funding Requests contain sufficient information on the political economy and refugee contexts. For example, involving UNHCR stakeholders to a greater extent could help to ensure projects have a clear mandate to support refugees and host communities.

Within the **implementation phase**, the portfolio review and stakeholder interviews found that ISA support during implementation appears to match project requirements, most often consisting of technical assistance. They also offer support with monitoring and evaluation, audits, advice on procurement and general assistance during implementation. Where there are delays or issues due to political reasons, ISAs have used their leverage to influence Benefitting Country governments in some cases to overcome delays (as was the case in the Lebanon Health Resilience Project, for example, or in the Jordan Emergency Health Project). Project stakeholders interviewed thus far were satisfied with the degree of ISA

involvement and support, which varied (with one project stakeholder reporting that the ISA was carrying out the majority of the project development including the development of the monitoring and evaluation framework, and another project stakeholder reporting that the project was driving forward the work).

6.5 Governance and Management

EQ1i. To what extent has the Steering Committee been efficient and effective and fulfilled its roles as set out in the OM? Has decision making been timely?

The Steering Committee is the GCFF's decision-making body, comprised of representatives from each Supporting Country and Benefitting Country and Observers who provide expertise and guidance. It also serves as a platform to facilitate coordination among Benefitting Countries, Supporting Countries, ISAs and Observers, as well as other country-level stakeholders and in relation to other financing instruments. Stakeholders were asked for their views regarding the Steering Committee's effectiveness and efficiency in fulfilling its mandate, although each responsibility set out in the Operations Manual was not probed with all stakeholders.

Stakeholders described the Steering Committee as an effective governance body in which thoughtful, meaningful discussions provided robust scrutiny. Supporting Countries make allocation decisions on a consensus basis at Steering Committee meetings or on a no-objection basis by email, based on selection criteria. This process was broadly considered to work effectively and efficiently.

One stakeholder emphasized how the Steering Committee ensured that benefits to refugees and host communities were prioritized in discussions. They reported that Steering Committee members spoke to Benefitting Countries, ISAs and other partners about centering refugees and host communities in project proposals, pipelines and the overall policy framework. These discussions take place within Steering Committee meetings, and engagement outside the meetings with the different stakeholders.

"The Steering Committee and the Steering Committee members have actually done a really thoughtful and frankly at times time consuming job of working with the ISAs, with recipient countries and partners to make sure that the focus on the refugees and host communities remains at the forefront of discussions on proposals. We have had any number of very very difficult discussions... on both the general policy framework towards refugees and migrants as well as specific project proposals or specific pipelines."

Examples of where Steering Committee scrutiny have led to amendments to project design include:

- The Municipal Investment Project in Lebanon: When the Funding Request for this project was submitted to the Supporting Committee, the Supporting Countries expressed their overall support but requested additional information on the project's direct and indirect impact (particularly on refugees and youth); local capacity to deliver; and the approach to monitoring and evaluation. This led to consultations taking place in Beirut, followed by amends being made to project documentation which was recirculated for virtual SC approval with a reduced non-objection period of seven calendar days (see reference also in EQ1E and EQ3b).
- The Jordan Emergency Health project, which Canada planned to veto due to insufficient gender safeguards. This resulted in the GCFF producing an annex on gender (see EQ1E and EQ3b for more detail).

Stakeholders were positive on the consensus function of the Steering Committee. While members sometimes expressed different views, stakeholders reported that reaching a consensus was straightforward and had not raised any challenges. However, they warned that if the size of the Steering Committee grew, or the goodwill amongst members was lost, reaching a consensus could become more challenging. One caveat to this is that as discussed in EQ1e, some Steering Committee members identified gaps in project documentation received at this stage as well as gaps in other relevant information. This suggests that the non-objection model may adversely affect the process of scrutiny, as Steering Committee members may not have sufficient information to make an objection, even if they have concerns. However, other stakeholders highlighted constructive discussions taking place in Steering Committee meetings.

Some stakeholders cited the fact that the Steering Committee has turned down Funding Requests, or been unwilling to support Funding Requests, leading to their withdrawal, as a sign of the Steering Committee's authority and power to ensure Funding Requests were in line with GCFF objectives.

"Turning down a proposal after it's had a substantial amount of work by the ISA and the recipient country to develop it is no small feat."

Stakeholders were positive about **the structure and procedures of the Steering Committee**, seeing it as conducive to collaboration and efficient decision making. Having a Supporting Country and Benefitting Country co-chair the Steering Committee was reported to be effective as it gave ownership to the Benefitting Countries and ensured there was equality rather than a hierarchy which placed Supporting Countries above Benefitting Countries. This was perceived to aid collaboration and ensure all members felt their contributions to meetings were valuable. All the Supporting Countries on the Steering Committee also have an equal voice in decision making regarding funding allocations, regardless of contribution, which was seen to aid decision making, build a team spirit, and avoid disagreement. The size of the Steering Committee was reported to be small enough to avoid discussions being too complex and time consuming. This efficiency was also linked to the focused nature of the Steering Committee meetings, in which members worked through the agenda in the set time. The Steering Committee is reportedly efficient in debating and approving Funding Requests. Subsequently, funding can often be allocated immediately. One stakeholder described how this fed into the efficient design of the GCFF's windows: once Supporting Countries contribute to the windows, there is generally a pipeline of projects that immediately submit Funding Requests.

Informal meetings organized and attended by Supporting Countries were cited as one tool used to reach consensus in recent years. These informal meetings were reported to aid open discussion, leading to improved coordination and consensus being reached.

"I think this helped also to improve coordination among the donors, and also to harmonize the position of the donors. This led to a more open and frank discussion in the meetings, but this is only recently."

One stakeholder reported that these informal meetings should be formalized and take place every three months, regardless of whether there were projects for approval.

However, some stakeholders also highlighted weaknesses of the Steering Committee or suggested improvements to the Steering Committee in order to further improve effectiveness and efficiency. In particular, some stakeholders suggested a need for regional Steering Committees to account for the fact that some Supporting Countries only contribute to certain Benefitting Country windows or the Middle East Regional window. New regional Steering Committees were proposed as a more productive use of

Supporting Countries' time and the efficiency of decision making. Nevertheless, one stakeholder maintained that there was a need for the overall Steering Committee to remain as a structure, meeting annually.

"You have particular issues related to the Middle East and... particular issues related to Latin America... Having all countries around the table discussing project proposals... is not very productive... I think it's worth reconsidering regional sub-platforms and regional decision-making committees in order to improve efficiency, and also from a logistical point of view to ease the organization of meetings and decision-making."

This relates to another issue identified by another stakeholder relating to the regional expertise amongst Steering Committee members, with a greater focus on the Middle East than Latin America amongst many of the Supporting Countries. The stakeholder raised concerns that this results in a knowledge gap and could be affecting the quality of decision making on projects in Colombia and Ecuador.

One stakeholder identified another barrier relating to the attendees to the Steering Committee meetings: open and critical analysis of Funding Requests was hampered by the attendance of Benefitting Countries throughout the meeting. The stakeholder reported that Supporting Countries could be cautious of offending the Benefitting Countries, particularly if they had their own bilateral programs in place.

Despite the informal meetings of donors described above, feedback from some stakeholders on the composition of the Steering Committee indicated that there was still sometimes a lack of coherence from Supporting Countries. This links to reports from stakeholders that certain Supporting Countries were more engaged in the GCFF, driven by the ministries represented and their interests. Reduced coherence overall and reduced engagement from some Supporting Countries could be seen to impact the effectiveness of the Steering Committee, reducing the overall power of scrutiny.

"During the Steering Committee meetings, it was very evident that some of the donor states were much more invested in the instrument than others. Therefore, they brought a much more detailed vision and engagement to their questions than some of the others... So, we had a spread of participants and skill-sets within the GCFF Steering Committee."

Regarding the other members of the Steering Committee, stakeholders reported that the IDB and the UNHCR's membership on the Steering Committee was helpful as they used their experience to provide feedback and insight.

An additional issue identified by multiple stakeholders is virtual Steering Committee meetings. While they were aware that these were necessary due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, many stakeholders felt that once it is safe to do so, in person meetings should resume, on a yearly basis at least. For example, for meetings attended by up to 50 people, in person conversations were reported to be easier.

As discussed in more detail in section EQ1E, the **timeliness of decision making** was reported to be affected by the time Steering Committee members had to review Funding Requests and other documents. While the Coordination Unit aims to give them two weeks for review (as per the Operation Manual requirements), some stakeholders reported instances where they had received less than two weeks, and another stakeholder pointed out that the two weeks had to include dialogue, meaning Supporting Countries had to provide responses within one week; data has not yet been provided to allow the evaluation team to assess this. According to some stakeholders, the timeframe could lead to reduced scrutiny and

consultations; however, some reported this to be more of an issue in the past, suggesting that improvements have been made.

"I think there has been a feeling of the Steering Committee being rushed by not always having the information ahead of time in a timely manner that would allow for more detailed review and consultations... Sometimes those conversations [with other government members and colleagues in the Benefitting Countries] have been rushed to accommodate either the ongoing negotiations between the ISA and the recipient country, or the ISAs broader board and governance schedule."

Finally, the focused and efficient nature of Steering Committee meetings was raised by one stakeholder as a barrier to increasing coordination and building relationships.

Regarding the **information provided during Steering Committee meetings on project performance**, this was reported by some stakeholders to have improved but still be insufficient. They reported a need for information on the finances and impact in order for the Steering Committee to monitor performance and understand the overall contribution of the GCFF.

"I think we are missing the accountability for the success of individual projects. That needs to be strengthened further... it's not just funds disbursed, its targets met or not met, overall rating of project, so that we can build up a picture of, collectively, how has the GCFF portfolio done?"

Similarly, another stakeholder reported not having received an update from the GCFF on the projects in Lebanon since the August 2020 Beirut explosion. They desired an update on how GCFF funding was being spent and whether any of the projects were under consideration, and Lebanon's future as a Benefitting Country in the GCFF.

EQ1j. To what extent has the Coordination Unit been efficient and effective and fulfilled its roles as set out in the OM? Have internal GCFF resources been used efficiently?

The Coordination Unit supports the Steering Committee and liaises between the Trustee, ISAs and other stakeholders. It is also responsible for raising funds, organising and attending Steering Committee meetings as an Observer, providing guidance on the fund's processes and requirements, coordinating with the Trustee, and liaising with Benefitting Countries, ISAs and the Steering Committee on Funding Requests.

Stakeholders were broadly positive about the Coordination Unit's fulfilment of its role, particularly with regards to fundraising (as discussed in EQ1c), and efficiently organizing Steering Committee meetings. As described in the section on Funding Applications, the Coordination Unit was described in some cases as providing a high degree of support to aid Benefitting Countries and ISAs in developing Funding Requests, and quickly responding to Supporting Countries comments, and sharing these comments with other GCFF staff where relevant. Finally, stakeholders within the World Bank felt that the Coordination Unit worked well with other World Bank functions.

With regards to the Coordination's Unit capacity and resources, stakeholders were also positive. In terms of their human resources, one stakeholder from the Steering Committee suggested adding an additional member to the team to support with capacity issues, particularly coordination with Benefitting Countries. Another stakeholder highlighted that the Coordination Unit was able to bring in expertise from across the World Bank to support the GCFF, for example on specific sectoral areas relevant to projects, enhancing the added value of the World Bank as Secretariat.

Some stakeholders felt that the Coordination Unit should take on additional responsibilities beyond those set out in the OM. One stakeholder stated that the Coordination Unit could improve its work on increasing coherence and promoting coordination across parties, although the strength of its relationships within the World Bank with relevant ISA teams were highlighted. Many stakeholders wanted the Coordination Unit to provide more information, for example project updates, which is beyond the Coordination Unit's control and responsibility. Further, as discussed in EQ3e, some Supporting Countries desire the Coordination Unit to take on a greater role for monitoring and reporting on facility-level and project-level risks.

At this stage, no further evidence is available relating to the efficiency and effectiveness of the Coordination Unit and the use of internal GCFF resources. This will be explored through the remaining stakeholder interviews.

EQ1k. To what extent has the Trustee been efficient and effective and fulfilled its roles as set out in the OM? Have resources been used efficiently and decision making been timely?

The Trustee is responsible for administering the Trust Fund through receiving funds from Supporting Countries, holding funds under the terms of the Contribution Agreement, and disbursing and returning funds. It is also responsible for determining funding availability and notifying the Steering Committee for decisions on Allocations. Limited views were shared in stakeholder interviews regarding the efficiency and effectiveness of the Trustee, and this will be explored further in stakeholder interviews and case studies. As of June 2020, 100% of allocated funds had been disbursed from the Trustee to the designated ISA.

The CU commended the support provided by the Trustee in inputting into concessionality calculations and financial reporting in particular, and the Trustee stated that they faced no resource constraints.

One challenge raised with regards to disbursement is that Supporting Countries' practice of timing its funding contributions to align with specific projects could create pressures for the Trustee. Although the Trustee encourages Supporting Countries to start the process of making funding contributions early, to allow enough time for administration and processing, some Supporting Countries do not do this in advance of the Steering Committee making a funding allocation decision, putting pressure on the Trustee to process allocations quickly, without leaving any time for dealing with issues which might arise. This suggests that improvements could be made to the process of Supporting Countries making funding contributions with enough notice to reduce the pressure on the Trustee.

EQ3e To what extent have risks at the overall Facility level been discussed by the relevant stakeholders and appropriate mitigation measures put in place?

Risks identified in the GCFF Annual Report 2019 include:

- A serious political and economic situation in Lebanon with heightened macro-financial risks and depleted infrastructure (now compounded with the impacts of the Beirut explosion and increased political instability). This is further put under strain by the Syrian refugee crisis. At the time of the 2019 Annual Report, Lebanon was the third most indebted country in the world, with negligible GDP growth rates and a large trade deficit.
- High public debt and protracted low growth was hampering Jordan's economy, also exacerbated by the Syrian refugee crisis.

Several risks were identified by stakeholders in interviews. These included:

- The current economic situation and the implication of this both for Benefitting Countries' budgets and ability to take on additional debt, as well as for Supporting Countries' ability to provide funds.
- Competing demands and changing interests of Supporting Countries.
- New refugee crises changing the level of need for the GCFF.
- Political commitment of Benefitting Countries.

However, stakeholders consulted felt that there had been very limited discussion of risks and that there was a greater need for reporting on and discussing Facility-level risks. An example of this was the explosion in Beirut in August 2020, which some Supporting Countries raised as an example of a risk that they felt they should have received communication on from the Coordination Unit.

Further, many Steering Committee members felt that they were not sufficiently updated on progress of project implementation and any potential delays or risks at project level, and they looked to the Coordination Unit to provide this information. In response, the Coordination Unit had developed an enhanced template for project reporting to meet Supporting Countries' information needs, although some Supporting Countries continue to desire additional information. The discussion of risks to implementation, looking across the Facility, was raised as a point of improvement and highlighted as an aspect that ought to be strengthened going forward.

6.6 ISA involvement

EQ1m From a cost perspective, how efficiently have ISAs been able to leverage their existing operations?

A key strength of the GCFF program has been the ability to use contributions from Supporting Countries to leverage finance from MDBs. Through this mechanism a total of USD 4.28 billion of financing for development projects has been leveraged through USD 622.75 million in Supporting Country contributions. This function is seen as a key aspect of the GCFF's value proposition to Supporting Countries.

"People look to FIFs for financial innovation and donors like that there is innovation going on, makes it easier for them to sell it internally rather than just providing grants. They like the idea of providing grants, leveraging the lending power of the MDBs. It has been one of the selling features of the GCFF."

In addition, GCFF structure utilizes ISAs' infrastructure, procedures and practices and as such the costs of managing the loans are reduced. This is seen as a key strength of the program and ensures that Facility is managed cost effectively. At a project level, ISAs provide technical assistance in certain aspects, such as M&E, but implementation of project delivery is largely the responsibility of recipient agencies within Benefitting Countries.

"The high reliance on ISA practices is a strong feature of the GCFF."

Additionally, at a higher level, ISAs have worked to ensure project funding. For instance, when the West Irbid wastewater project increased in cost after being approved, the ERBD (the respective ISA on this project) was able to provide additional funds to meet the funding gap. Project costs increased from EUR 44 million to EUR 53.2 million. While not part of the intended financing structure, the EBRD Shareholder Special Fund stepped in to provide EUR 5.9 million to cover part of this increase, while the EBRD itself increased its loan as well.

ISAs have also leveraged their influence to ensure a policy environment that enables the success of projects. For example, the World Bank, acting as the ISA for the Jordan Emergency Health project, worked alongside other development actors to find a solution to reduce the barriers put up by a policy change that made healthcare significantly more expensive for the project's target groups and making the project thus unfeasible.

The role of ISAs in project implementation will be further explored in Phase 2 of the evaluation which will have a greater focus on project implementation.

EQ11. What are the key factors that prevent certain Implementation Support Agencies (ISAs) from participating to a greater extent in the GCFF?

The World Bank acts as the ISA for the majority of projects on the GCFF (the ISA for GCFF projects of a total value of USD 4.01 billion. The IsDB and ERBD were both more active in the earlier stages of the Fund; however, neither have submitted a new Funding Request since 2017, while the EIB has not been involved in any Funding Requests. The IsDB has been the ISA for GCFF projects totaling USD 130 million, and the ERBD USD 50.14 million.

Stakeholders generally felt that this lack of wider project engagement from ISAs beyond the World Bank does not prevent the GCFF from meeting its overall objective, however there is a consensus that the Facility would benefit from taking advantage of the open architecture of the GCFF as a FIF and having wider ISA involvement. Stakeholders involved in the early stages of the GCFF described that broader participation of ISAs had been desired in order to meet the scale of the challenge of refugee crises (which is beyond that which can be addressed by the World Bank alone), and to facilitate learnings and coordination.

The following were identified as factors that prevent greater participation from ISAs:

- **Restructuring at Islamic Development Bank:** The IsDB was initially very active in the program, having been instrumental in the founding of the Facility. However, its participation in projects has declined recently. Part of the reason for this is internal restructuring that occurred in 2018, resulting in a reduction in their overall portfolio which impacts their capacity to participate more actively in the GCFF.
- **Concessionality formula:** EBRD and EIB loans are structured differently to loans provided by the World Bank; generally, the maturity of provided loans is significantly shorter than those provided by the World Bank. As such, they benefit less from the concessionality formula⁵³ taking into account the IDA level floor, which has lessened the incentive for BCs to take out GCFF loans through the EBRD and EIB, as it diminishes their relative pricing advantage.
- **Participation in similar initiatives:** The EBRD operates a similar fund for refugees, a EUR 900 million investment plan, Building Resilience in Host Countries, which combines EBRD funds and donor contribution to help alleviate the refugee crisis in Jordan and Turkey. In addition, the EIB operates its own Fund, the Economic Resilience Initiative (ERI)⁵⁴; the ERI is part of the European Union's response to the challenges in the Southern Neighborhood and Western Balkans, such as

⁵³ The longer the maturity the higher the NPV,¹ as such the longer maturity loans receive a greater amount of concessionality. Long maturity loans can also be considered to have intrinsic concessionality as the maturity is greater than is available at market rates.

⁵⁴ <https://www.eib.org/en/about/initiatives/resilience-initiative/index.htm>

forced displacement and migration, economic downturns, political crises, droughts and flooding. The ERI operates a different concessional model which has made it more attractive to the EIB.

- **Development Policy Loans (DPL):** The Facility has seen an increased demand from Benefitting Countries for DPLs as a financing instrument. This approach favors using the World Bank as the respective ISA, as this funding instrument is not used by the other ISAs.
- **World Bank experience and expertise in Latin America:** Relative to the other ISAs, the World Bank has the most experience in Latin America. As such, the World Bank has a comparative advantage for supporting any Funding Requests submitted by Colombia and Ecuador.

6.7 Outreach and Coordination

The GCFF aims to improve coordination between Benefitting Countries, Supporting Countries, ISAs and others to ensure better coordinated, well-designed solutions across the humanitarian-development nexus for emerging refugee crises. Humanitarian actors and development actors address the same issues, but with a short- and long-term view respectively. To align those responses is key for a comprehensive solution, and the GCFF provides a vehicle for those actors to come together. Additionally, the GCFF brings together several MDBs as well as Supporting Countries, connecting a range of players in the fragmented donor landscape. Through its provision of concessional financing, the GCFF also aims to leverage pro-refugee policies from Benefitting Countries as well as from ISAs, aiming to change the discussion and perception around refugees in such contexts in the longer term.

EQ3a To what extent has the GCFF influenced the global policy discussion on the needs of refugees and host communities? What types of positive or negative effects?

Since its inception, the GCFF set out to enhance its collaboration with the UN, recognizing that the protracted nature of refugee crises required the inclusion of both development and humanitarian actors. The GCFF was described as a unique platform bringing together UN representatives, MDBs and Supporting Countries. Its collaboration with the UNHCR and the UNDP has allowed the GCFF to take part in global discussions on the needs of refugees and host communities. Through this collaboration, the GCFF is joining UN summits related to refugees and migration and thus linking with global policy development. The expansion of the CFF to the GCFF for example was launched at the Nations General Assembly in September 2016, alongside the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants.

World Bank stakeholders also highlighted that the GCFF's approaches of using concessional finance in MICs and working with actors across the development and humanitarian spheres have driven a shift in the World Bank's own strategy toward refugees, as evidenced in its Strategy for Fragility, Conflict, and Violence 2020–2025⁵⁵. The GCFF's approach is also inspiring the creation of a new Global Public Good Fund. However, beyond this, concrete examples of the GCFF leading to a shift in global policies toward refugees have not yet been identified by the evaluation, although some Supporting Countries noted that it had provided another option for them to provide support to refugees.

Nevertheless, some stakeholders feel GCFF's influence on global policy discussions could be strengthened by engaging and aligning its work more closely to pre-existing initiatives such as the Global Compact on Refugees. The Compact's aims are similar to those outlined in the GCFF, including focusing on both refugee and host communities, creating great potential for synergies, especially as most of the

⁵⁵ World Bank Group Strategy for Fragility, Conflict, and Violence 2020–2025 (English). Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/844591582815510521/World-Bank-Group-Strategy-for-Fragility-Conflict-and-Violence-2020-2025>

GCFF's Supporting Countries endorsed the Global Compact. They suggested that using Supporting Countries' commitments to such initiatives could be a useful leverage for securing additional funding commitments.

EQ3b To what extent has the GCFF been able to inform and influence the operations of the ISAs and the policies of Benefitting Countries? To what extent has the Facility's communication/outreach approach been effective? Has the dialogue between the CU, SC, ISAs and Benefitting Countries translated into increased attention for refugees and hosting communities in Benefitting Countries?

Several examples of the GCFF's influence on Benefitting Country policies directly through project design were identified. For instance, the GCFF made funding for the Second Inclusive and Sustainable Growth Development Financing Project in Ecuador contingent on assurance of continued commitment to refugee-friendly policies. Another often-cited example includes the Jordan Emergency Health project: in February 2018, the co-payment rate for health services for Syrian refugees increased from 20% to 80%, significantly restricting access to health care for Syrian refugees. Successful lobbying by project ISA representatives contributed to a reversal of this policy. The topic of the facility's impact on policy changes will be explored more in-depth in phase 2 of the evaluation.

Examples were identified where the GCFF has been able to directly influence ISA policies and ISA operations. During the initial discussions of establishing the GCFF, Supporting Countries insisted that the IsDB incorporate social and environmental safeguards into project design. While this stipulation only applies for projects put forward for GCFF funding, it is considered a first step in building institutional knowledge and wider-reaching changes in the organization's project design approach. Another example is that the GCFF's emphasis on inclusion of gender-sensitive approaches led to changes in the design of the Jordan Emergency Health Project, which would otherwise have employed a gender-blind design. Similarly, concerns raised by the Steering Committee when discussing the Lebanon Municipal Investment Program led to a revised project proposal (although this project ultimately is not effective yet).

However, the GCFF's ability to influence either ISA or Benefitting Country policies only goes so far. One of the factors limiting its influence is the Steering Committee's no-objection basis for approving projects. Some Supporting Countries stated in interviews that they had hesitated to object against certain projects or to insist on either environmental or other safeguards, given that such an objection would have prevented the whole project from progressing. Furthermore, some Supporting Countries stated that the fact that project approval is discussed in Steering Committee meetings where everyone is present, including Benefitting Country and project representatives, further adds a barrier to prevent frank and open discussions.

The concessional finance offer is intended to provide an incentive for Benefitting Countries to adopt pro-refugee project designs. However, this means that the GCFF's influence over projects depends on the strength of the concessional finance offer, and this must be considered in the context of each Benefitting Country's political and economic situation. The case of Lebanon was repeatedly raised by stakeholders as an example of this calculation (that the provision of funding at low interest rates would be enough to "pay" for the costs of pro-refugee policies) not providing sufficient incentive. Most recently, Lebanon decided not to proceed with seeking GCFF funding for its Emergency Crisis Response Social Safety Net project, a decision attributed to the realization that approval would not be granted due to an unwillingness to substantially include refugees as beneficiaries.

Lastly, as highlighted by project stakeholders, there are varied levels of awareness of the GCFF amongst Benefitting Countries' different ministries. Stakeholders felt that this was due to a lack of initial communication and introduction by the GCFF, the fact that each ministry's involvement with GCFF varies

from project to project, and personnel changes especially due to political reshuffling. This lack of awareness leads to stakeholders in-country not being aware of GCFF projects at all, or not fully understanding the GCFF's requirements (particularly pro-refugee requirements) and their linkages to other government activities, creating inefficiencies in instances.

EQ3c To what extent did the GCFF drive additional funding, contribute to scaling operations, create a multiplier effect, incentivize cooperation among ISAs and Benefitting Countries, etc.?

The GCFF's main way to drive additional funding, contribute to scaling operations, create a multiplier effect, and incentivize cooperation among ISAs and Benefitting Countries is through providing a platform for donors, ISAs, Benefitting Countries, but also actors in the humanitarian and development sectors to come together. However, there were mixed views regarding the effectiveness of the GCFF as a platform for collaboration.

Stakeholders appreciate the intention behind this platform, and all view the benefit of including different partners with different views. They highlighted that the GCFF was unique in bringing together donors, recipient countries, UN agencies, and MDBs to collaborate and share lessons learned. Observers are able to bring in their specific expertise to support Steering Committee decision-making, such as in the instance of the approval of Colombia and Ecuador for instance, when the IMF, as well as the UNHCR, were invited to comment and provide analysis which was considered valuable. The primary tool to facilitate collaboration between these actors is the Steering Committee, which brings together representatives from Supporting Countries, Benefitting Countries, ISAs, the UNHCR, the UNDP, UN Resident Coordinators for each Benefitting Country, and the IMF. As noted in EQ1i, one strength is that the GCFF is fairly unique in bringing together donors and recipient countries on an equal footing, particularly given a Supporting Country and Benefitting Country representative each serve as co-chairs.

"The GCFF is a good platform for strengthening the relationships with other donors and it's a great excuse to build these relationships and also, again, in terms of being strategic and lessons learned, it's definitely worth our while to have these informal discussions and exchanges prior to the formal meetings."

The ability to informally converse and the good working relationship the GCFF facilitated was expressed to be valuable by Benefitting Country representatives, as it helped them 'speak the same language' and build a good case when it came to project approval.

However, some other stakeholders felt that the coordination aspect of the GCFF was not living up to its full potential, and that there were missed opportunities for potential synergies and collaboration overall. For example, some stakeholders felt that the participation of Observers could be expanded further through engaging the UNDP and UNHCR representatives in systematic consultations and the "day-to-day" work of the GCFF, such as by providing refugee assessments for each project. Currently, Observers view their contribution to be on an ad-hoc basis and didn't always see that their inputs and feedback being used in a meaningful way. Issues seem to particularly emerge at the country level, where it is envisioned that the different key stakeholders communicate and collaborate to align efforts. UN Resident Coordinators are often unaware of the current work of the GCFF and not involved in either communication or cooperation efforts or contributing to project development. Stakeholders reported that in cases where this communication and cooperation works well, this is due to preexisting personal relationships rather than formal structures in place.

“The two co-ordination systems governing the humanitarian and development side have remained fairly autonomous of each other.”

Additionally, as described in EQ1e, some Supporting Countries desired a greater degree of communication and opportunities to input into project design during the project preparation phase. They felt that more and earlier information would have enabled them to potentially better align their other operations with the GCFF’s efforts. One notable, positive exception to this is the GCFF donor coordination group set up in Lebanon, which emerged partly in response to Supporting Countries’ desire for greater communication regarding implementation and progress of GCFF work. Meeting bi-monthly, the donor coordination group provided a platform for detailed updates of projects as well as other development issues and helped in aligning and coordinating preparation for future work. This was viewed positively by Supporting Country representatives, who had a strong desire for it to be replicated in the other Benefitting Countries, although one stakeholder pointed out that other countries, notably Jordan, already have similar groups.

“[the GCFF Lebanon group] was a very important platform that we established because it was best practice. It has really proven to work extremely well with the donors and they’re regularly informed of implementation progress and other issues as well.”

6.8 Monitoring and reporting

Monitoring and reporting of the GCFF takes place on two separate planes. The first is the GCFF Results Framework that is outlined in Section 8 of the Operation Manual. This is centered on the primary function of the GCFF in raising, allocating and distributing funds. The Coordination Unit is responsible for reporting on the Results Framework indicators using information provided by the Trustee.

The second plane is the monitoring and reporting of the individual projects that receive GCFF funding, which is the responsibility of the Benefiting Country and the respective ISA.

GCFF monitoring consists of the following three key processes:

- **Project Tracking** – The CU tracks and compiles progress reports based on the information provided from the ISA. The CU distributes progress reporting to the SC on Concessionality Components and Grant Operations compiled from individual progress reports received from ISAs during the reporting period, and also shares information about progress of the Underlying Operations as reported by ISAs. Over time, the operational update may include a focus on problem cases to evaluate performance such as: (i) performance ratings provided in the individual progress reports; (ii) levels of disbursements; and (iii) lead time to effectiveness.
- **Reporting** - Each ISA is responsible for providing implementation support, including M&E of the Project performance. ISAs provide reporting on a six-month basis and following the completion of a project to the CU for distribution to the SC. Reporting is made using the relevant Reporting Template. The CU reports to the SC on progress of the Concessionality Components (and for information, on the Underlying Operations) and the Grant Operations based on information received from the ISAs and the Trustee.
- **Results Monitoring** - Progress in relation to the Results Frameworks included in the Funding Request are tracked by the ISAs and reported to the SC through the CU for informational purposes. The project Results Framework assess the extent to which Underlying Operations support the impact of the influx of refugees. This provides a common reporting framework which is based on information ISAs would be collection for their own reporting purposes, in order to provide specific information on

the impacts of GCFF funded projects. The OM includes the Results Monitoring Template, which requires the input of the unit of measurement, baseline, cumulative target values and intermediate results. In addition, the template provides a menu of sample indicators

EQ1b. How well did ISAs, working with Benefitting Countries, monitor, evaluate and report on the interim results of their activities?

Monitoring of projects' progress is generally the responsibility of the respective recipient organizations, oftentimes with support from ISAs, who leverage their existing expertise and knowledge in monitoring and evaluation to support these activities. At times, the monitoring and reporting system were codesigned by the Benefitting Country and ISA and then contracted out to external consultants to conduct. Although limited data is available from Benefitting Countries at this time, one Benefitting Country interviewed felt this arrangement worked well as it generated country ownership of the process while simultaneously ensuring provision of support when needed.

ISAs use the monitoring data to produce their own internal reports, before in turn submitting Progress Reports to the GCFF, which are discussed in more detail in EQ1g. The level of detail provided in these reports varies by project. Generally, Supporting Countries felt that the information provided in these reports was fairly limited and could be enhanced with the inclusion of further detail on the status of project implementation and progress towards objectives.

The extent to which these monitoring and reporting activities inform evidence-based decision making on the ground is considered by stakeholders to be limited. This is partly seen as a result of the novelty of the projects and in the case of Lebanon, lack of capacity from the relevant authorities; however, providing a greater focus on sharing lessons learnt and using them to inform future projects was seen as an area of which could be beneficial across the project portfolio

Despite the ongoing reporting commitments on the progress of projects in general the majority of governance mechanisms operate at a front end, or at the approval end of projects, with relatively less time looking at how the results materialize. This is seen as a problem across multilateral development banks, however it also applies in the case of the GCFF.

Project monitoring relies on leveraging the existing expertise and processes in the respective government departments of Benefitting Countries. Where processes are not already set-up to differentiate results by refugees or other groups such as women, it will require changes in the existing processes of monitoring project results.

The extent to which it is possible to extensively monitor the results of projects – and especially, the results of projects for refugees – depends to a large extent on the nature of the project. For certain interventions, for instance issuing work permits to refugees, it is relatively straight forward to measure the number of refugees impacted by the intervention; however, for projects in health or education that are open to host communities as well, it is harder to clearly differentiate the impact on refugees.

Several projects where the World Bank is the ISA consist of Development Policy Loans (DPLs) which present additional challenges in monitoring and reporting results, as the funds contribute to the Benefitting Country's general budget, making it difficult to trace impacts on refugees and attribute results to the GCFF. There is therefore a tradeoff between providing DPLs which have the advantage of being quick to implement (a key consideration when dealing with the influx of refugees in Benefitting Countries) and

flexible, both of which make them desirable to Benefitting Countries, versus the associated difficulty in measuring results, which is an important priority for Supporting Countries.

There is considerable interest amongst Supporting Countries in ensuring that robust monitoring, evaluation and reporting on the results of the GCFF funded projects, while accepting that many of the projects are long term and thus will have impacts that will continue into the medium to long term. Further, there is a strong desire among Supporting Countries for greater levels of disaggregation of results in particular by refugees and by gender. This level of interest has resulted in increased time in the Steering Committee meetings being dedicated for ISAs to report directly to the Steering Committee members on the status of projects, as well as requests to the Coordination Unit to provide more detailed progress reports. This has led to greater attention to identification of intended results in the project design phase, but as discussed in EQ1e, there are still gaps in this information provided by Benefitting Countries and ISAs.

EQ1g To what extent has GCFF project monitoring been carried out efficiently and effectively?

Progress Reports submitted to the GCFF are completed according to a template that is consistent across projects. These take on two forms: first, a short progress reporting update, submitted every six months, consisting of eight open-ended questions asking about progress to date and challenges to implementations. Second, a more detailed Progress Report provides an update on the progress made (including M&E data, disbursement progress, actions to be taken, and a more detailed update on implementation and any possible delays), and this is submitted every six months to the CU. These Progress Reports are included as Annexes to the biannual GCFF Progress Report. Whereas the Progress Report template was set out in the Operations Manual, the additional template was developed by the Coordination Unit in response to requests for additional information from the Steering Committee, and thus includes qualitative assessments of the project status and performance.

ISA monitoring, evaluating and reporting on interim results follows each ISA's own procedures and works well according to these, but there is little alignment in ISA monitoring between the different GCFF projects, such as tailoring indicators more specifically to the GCFF Results Framework suggested indicators. This makes overall aggregation of results difficult; however, due to the diverse nature of the project portfolio:

- The monitoring data provided in these Progress Reports is presented according to the ISA frameworks and thus differs by ISA. For instance, the World Bank presents a results frame according to Project Development Objective (PDO) Indicators by Objectives / Outcomes, Intermediate Results Indicators by Components and Disbursement Linked Indicators. The IsDB reports on Indicators and Intermediate Results Indicators, while the ERBD presents PDO Level Results Indicators and Intermediate Results (as outlined in the Supplemental Information in Operations Manual).
- The Results Framework indicators differ on a project to project basis. In general, most projects contain some indicators that are similar to those presented in the Menu of Suggested and Sample Indicators presented in the GCFF Operation Manual; however, in almost all cases the wording is altered to make it specific to the project. Overall, the majority of indicators used are not taken from the Menu of Suggested and Sample Indicators in the GCFF Operation Manual, and disaggregation of indicators by gender, as presented for the indicators in the Operations Manual, is not common place.

EQ3f Is the current results framework fit for purpose? How can it be improved? a) What options could be developed to update the Results Framework to more effectively monitor the impact on refugees and host communities, and how practical are these options? b) What steps/data would it take to develop a dedicated M&E framework to be designed for the GCFF in addition to the project-level M&E framework ensured by ISAs? c) How can the updated M&E framework take into consideration gender-disaggregated data and environmental indicators?

The Results Framework indicators support the overall objective of the Facility to *support middle income countries hosting refugees through the provision of concessional financing and improved coordination for development projects addressing the impact of the influx of refugees* by focusing on the financial results of the Facility, as described in EQ1a. Further to this, as detailed in EQ1g, Progress Reports detail the GCFF projects' status and their results in addressing the impact of the influx of refugees.

The current results framework can be considered fit for purpose when looking at the key function of the GCFF to mobilize and allocate funds to MICs experiencing an influx of refugees (Indicators 1,2 and 3).

A secondary function of the GCFF is to improve coordination efforts amongst stakeholders operating within the humanitarian/development space. Indicator 4 of the GCFF Results Framework made an attempt to do this by measuring the percentage of survey respondents indicating that the GCFF contributes to MDB and UN coordination to address refugee impact. Two small surveys were conducted with limited feedback and reporting on this Indicator has ceased.

Third, the GCFF's intends to achieve outcomes for refugees and host communities, as set out in the Theory of Change. The Results Framework does not seek to measure the impact of the program on refugees, which is often a priority for Supporting Countries.

When the GCFF was created, there was discussion as to whether there should be a separate GCFF reporting function, alongside that provided by ISAs, however, it was agreed that that would be too resource intensive. In addition, as the GCFF was a new instrument there wasn't a clear idea on exactly what projects or what kinds of projects would be financed, and how they would be framed. As such it was decided that that the Facility should rely on the monitoring and evaluation frameworks in the ISAs themselves for implementation and results monitoring. With the continued expectations of Supporting Countries to observe to measured impacts of the program, a key considering moving forward is whether this model of reporting results remains satisfactory to members of the Steering Committee or whether the GCFF should take greater ownership over monitoring the results of projects funded through the Facility.

"I think for the backward looking, the Results Framework has been good enough; for the forward looking, it's not enough."

To observe the impact on refugees it is necessary to look at each of the GCFF projects individually. The challenge is to find a means of aggregating indicators at a project level into something that is meaningful for the Steering Committee. This is complex because projects are different and measurements of success for impact are different. Stakeholders highlighted that to achieve this, it will likely be necessary to reassess the way individual projects are monitored and attempt to achieve greater coordination and standardization. Consideration of this is an ongoing task of the evaluation; looking at the way other organizations have addressed a similar problem, such as the Results Framework used by the UNHRC, may provide examples of best practice and lessons learnt that can be used in the GCFF Results Framework moving forward.

“To what extent does the GCFF need to take ownership of project results? I think, for donors who have put money into it, we do want to know what has occurred with GCFF that would not have occurred without it.”

Another gap highlighted is that GCFF Results Framework indicators do not touch on certain aspects prevalent in many projects (environmental aspects, improvements in business environment, etc.). This may hinder the ability of the GCFF Results Framework to aggregate project-level data and fully understand the GCFF’s impact.

Finally, some stakeholders expressed a desire for an updated Results Framework to take into consideration gender-disaggregated data and environmental indicators which are priorities for many stakeholders. This is already happening to a greater extent at project level, for instance, the World Bank now have 100% climate tagged projects, but will be important to consider how to best incorporate on a wider level.

7 Summary of Interim Findings and Lessons Learned

This section summarizes the findings and lessons learned to date. As data collection for this evaluation is ongoing, these are subject to change in subsequent reports and should be considered for discussion purposes only at this stage.

Fundraising and mobilization

The ability of the GCFF to quickly mobilize funding has been highlighted as a key strength of the program. Fund raising was particularly successful in the first two years of the program and has subsequently slowed. Fundraising has been more successful in responding to the Syrian refugee crisis than it has in response to the Venezuela migrant crisis.

Fund raising efforts will likely face additional challenges as a result of additional competition for donor funding in order to support countries combatting Covid-19 and due to increased constraints on donor budgets. It will be necessary to overcome these challenges in order for the GCFF to achieve the commitment made to mobilize more than USD 1 billion over five years for Lebanon and Jordan and another USD 500 million for the Global Window.

An informal process has also emerged where Supporting Countries time their financial contributions to the GCFF when a project of interest is ready for approval, potentially undermining the global eligibility principles of the program. Several stakeholders highlighted that greater consistency and predictability in financing would be beneficial for the long-term planning of the Facility.

Addressing the needs of benefitting countries and refugees

Extent to which the GCFF has met the needs of Benefitting Countries

The GCFF has been successful in responding to the critical financing needs of Benefitting Countries experiencing a significant influx of refugees which had significant impacts on host countries. The role of the GCFF funds in contributing to stabilizing the situation in Lebanon and Jordan at the onset of the Syrian refugee crisis has been highlighted as a particular success.

The fact that Benefitting Country ownership of GCFF projects is ensured in the structure of the program – through Benefitting Countries developing Funding Requests and participating in its governance structure – is seen as an important factor in ensuring that all projects reflect a country need as opposed to the priorities of external actors.

Extent to which the GCFF has met the needs of refugees and host communities

The extent to which the GCFF has met the needs of refugees and host communities will be assessed further in the final report, which will include a greater focus on the impact of the program. Efforts have been made to ensure project design features a refugee focus, while also providing support to host communities where relevant. A need for enhancing program monitoring to better understand impacts on refugees has also been highlighted.

However, many of the projects, especially in Colombia and Ecuador remain at early stages of implementation, and many of the projects results are medium to long term, and significant concerns have been raised as to the limited impact of projects in Lebanon due to implementation delays there.

Relevance of the concessional formula to meeting Benefitting Countries' needs

The concessional finance model has been a success in terms of making a new, innovative funding tool to the international community that was previously not available to provide support for middle income countries providing a global public good by supporting refugees and forced migrants. The GCFF was able to quickly raise and mobilize funds from donors and was seen to have provided a significant role in stabilizing partially Jordan and Lebanon. Supporting Countries have also considered the concessional finance model as helpful in incentivizing Benefitting Countries to include pro-refugee elements in project design, and to leverage additional funding from ISAs. By allowing MICs to take on loans at concessional rates, it has also been considered appropriate to the financial context of Benefitting Countries.

On the other hand, the concessional formula has been a barrier to greater participation in the GCFF by ISAs other than the World Bank. The ongoing The GCFF is currently reviewing the concessional formula. Its relevance for Benefitting Countries moving forward is under question as a result of the following factors:

- **Low IBRD rates:** With IBRD rates currently low and the GCFF rates constrained downwards by the IDA floor, the level of concessionality available through the program has been squeezed, thus reducing the GCFF's offer to MICs. This lessens the Facility's ability to incentivize a significant focus of refugees in projects.
- **Debt levels of some Benefitting Countries:** There are concerns as to the debt sustainability in Lebanon, and to a less extent Jordan. As such there are questions over the desirability of Lebanon taking on additional debt.

As a result of these factors, the possibility of incorporating grant funding to the program to a greater extent has been raised by a range of stakeholders.

Country selection

The country selection process is largely considered to be effective, and the current Benefitting Countries were considered those most appropriate for the GCFF. The process is Benefitting Country-driven, with aspiring members approaching the GCFF, but combines Supporting Countries' considerations through their sponsorship of Benefitting Countries and approval of membership. Sponsorship by a Supporting Country is seen as a necessary function of the process to ensure that finance is mobilized, and countries are not approved without the prospect of significant contributions in their windows. However, the GCFF may be able to more effectively draw on the expertise of both the Steering Committee members and Observers to more quickly identify crisis hotspots and engage with potential Benefitting Countries earlier, to allow their needs to be met more rapidly.

Several stakeholders raised that the GCFF does not currently have the option for Benefitting Countries to be deselected from the program if the conditions in the country no longer reflected those outlined in the Operations Manual in terms of their commitment to pro-refugee policies, so this could be considered going forward.

Funding application process

Overall, while Supporting Countries expressed satisfaction that the GCFF's project portfolio was aligned with the GCFF's aims, some concerns with the funding application process were highlighted.

First, the sharing of Benefitting Country pipelines at an early stage is highly valued by Supporting Countries and provides the opportunity for the Supporting Countries to plan funding strategically and means interested Supporting Countries could engage in the design process. However, the sharing of project

pipelines was described as inconsistent and unstructured, and sometimes left the Supporting Countries feeling uninformed.

Second, there was conflicting evidence from stakeholders from the Steering Committee and the Coordination Unit as to whether the Steering Committee received Funding Requests and relevant documents two weeks in advance. Even where two weeks was provided, this was deemed insufficient in some cases, and reduced the Steering Committee's scrutiny of projects.

Third, some stakeholders felt there were gaps in project documentation, for example a lack of detail on the project context, key project indicators, planned monitoring arrangements and the funding priorities of Benefitting Countries. This indicates a need for the Funding Request form to be reviewed to ensure greater consistency in the information provided by Benefitting Countries and ISAs, utilization of the expertise within the Steering Committee, as well as information on Benefitting Countries' priorities to support future planning by Supporting Countries.

Greater collaboration with observers such as the UN in the pipeline phase could help to ensure Funding Requests contain sufficient information and have clear objectives aligned with GCFF objectives. Other groups offering support include the Coordination Unit, Supporting Countries, and external partners.

ISA involvement in the program

A key strength of the GCFF structure has been its ability to leverage MDB financing on concessional terms. This is considered a key appeal of the program for Supporting Countries. The amount of MDB financing in GCFF funded projects has already exceeded the original target set by USD 1.2 billion.

In addition, the GCFF structure utilizes ISA procedures and practices and as such the costs of handling the loans are greatly reduced. This is seen as a key strength of the program and ensures that Fund is managed cost effectively.

At a project level ISAs provide technical assistance in certain aspects, such as M&E, implementation is largely the responsibility of recipient agencies.

The majority of GCFF projects are implemented by the World Bank. As the GCFF has developed, there has been decreased involvement from the IsDB, ERBD and EIB. As such the GCFF's open architecture has not been utilized to the extent envisaged at the inception of the program. The concessionality formula was highlighted as a key reason for this, and the evaluation team understands the formula is currently under review. Other reasons for a potential lack of involvement of other ISAs include their greater interest in other similar Facilities and the preference for DPLs as a financial tool, and this will continue to be explored by the evaluation.

Outreach and coordination

Coordination

The GCFF is considered to provide a new and unique platform for a wide range of stakeholders to engage and discuss priorities in addition to knowledge and expertise sharing. In particular, bringing together stakeholders across the development-humanitarian nexus at the Steering Committee is seen as a key strength.

However, many stakeholders felt that this important function could be further taken advantage of to provide benefit both to the program and also benefit wider actions in the humanitarian and development space.

Greater inclusion of UN agencies was one area that was specifically highlighted as of particular added value to the program. Outside of the Steering Committee meetings, GCFF-related collaboration tended to be bilateral. An exception to this is the GCFF Lebanon Group, which coordinated GCFF stakeholders based in Lebanon around the GCFF supported projects and provide a platform to discuss medium term developmental issues affecting displaced people and host communities.

As such, further opportunities for high level coordination could be explored. These could potentially serve a dual purpose of also providing greater levels of information on project implementation which has been Supporting Countries have a strong desire for.

Influence on Benefitting Country policies

Benefitting Countries were identified to have introduced a number of pro-refugee policies and incorporated pro-refugee elements in project design, as a result of the GCFF. However, it is unclear at this stage it is unclear whether Benefitting Countries' involvement in the GCFF has led to any wider policy shifts, and this will be explored further in the remainder of the evaluation.

One barrier to influence is a lack of awareness of the GCFF amongst the recipient governments' different ministries, arising from lack of direct engagement of all relevant ministries in the GCFF and personnel changes. This lack of awareness leads to stakeholders not being aware of GCFF projects at all, or not fully understanding what the implications thereof would be on other work.

Influence on ISA practices

The GCFF has directly influenced ISA policies and operations. The inclusion of the IsDB into the GCFF was contingent on incorporation social and environmental safeguards into project design. While this stipulation only applies for projects put forward for GCFF funding, it is considered a first step in building institutional knowledge and wider-reaching changes in the organization's project design approach.

In addition, the project has given opportunity to ISAs to have greater involvement in the development-humanitarian space, providing opportunities for skill and expertise development in this area.

Global Policy Outreach

In terms of global policy outreach, the GCFF has attended global fora on refugees, and its advocacy is also leading to the establishment of a new World Bank Global Public Good Fund.

Governance and management

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee was considered to be an effective governing body by stakeholders interviewed. It was deemed conducive to partnership working and efficient decision making (in terms of the chairs, the equal weighting of Steering Committee members, the size of the Steering Committee, and the efficient approach of the meetings). Potential barriers to efficiency were identified in the lack of regional Steering Committees, a larger concentration of expertise relating to the Middle East rather than Latin America, and the lack of a separate, formal space for Supporting Countries to critique projects. Supporting Countries benefitted from informal meetings which helped them reach consensus.

Coordination Unit

Stakeholders were generally positive about the efficiency and effectiveness of the Coordination Unit, although potential capacity issues were identified, particularly given stakeholders' expectations for the Coordination Unit to be more involved in project design and monitoring.

Trustee

The limited evidence relating to the efficiency and effectiveness of the Trustee indicated that disbursement was effective, and the Trustee was supporting stakeholders with timely provision of information and processing of transfers. The Trustee faced challenging time pressures when Supporting Countries attempted to make funding contributions at short notice in order to ensure their funding was reaching newly approved projects.

Monitoring and Reporting

GCFF Results Framework

The GCFF Results Framework is considered to be fit for purpose as a tool of assessing the amount of funds raised, allocated and distributed as part of the GCFF; however, there is an appetite among Supporting Countries for measurement of the overall impact of the GCFF on refugees and host communities.

While ISAs and Benefiting Countries assume the responsibility for monitoring activities, there is a desire for the GCFF to play a role in reporting aggregated results from across the program's portfolio to provide stakeholders with an indication of the overall impact of the program. This is acknowledged as a complex challenge as a result of the diversity of GCFF funded projects. As such, it will be important to engage a wider range of stakeholders in the process and take lessons learned from similar approaches in the development and humanitarian space. This approach may necessitate greater coordination of project reporting which is currently the responsibility of the project ISA and respective Benefiting Country.

In addition to this top-level reporting, there is also a desire for greater inclusion of qualitative data which will provide more detail on how the projects are having an impact on the ground and the means through which they are improving the lives of refugees and host communities.

Project Monitoring

Project monitoring provides updates on the implementation status and progress towards objectives of individual projects. There was a desire across stakeholders to have access to more information on individual projects as the information provided currently is considered to be fairly brief. In addition to providing more detailed progress reports, stakeholders would also benefit from more frequent and detailed updates on the project status and progress towards objectives. This is one aspect that is considered to have improved throughout the duration of the program. An area which has not yet been addressed, however, is ongoing assessment of Facility-level risks.

More extensive reporting on project implementation status and progress towards objective would also provide greater opportunities to take lessons learned which can be applied in other projects.

Furthermore, there was a desire amongst stakeholders for continued focus on the impacts on refugees to be fully incorporated into the project monitoring frameworks. The complexity of this depends to a large extent on the nature of the project, with some tools such as DPLs more difficult to directly link to impact on refugees than others.

In addition to disaggregation by refugees, greater disaggregation by gender and greater inclusion of environmental indicators were raised as key factors by some stakeholders.

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