TAAS-0072: Support for Strengthening Climate Finance Activities in Nepal

Report on Training Workshop on Institutional Capacity Self-Assessment for Potential NIE for GCF (28-29 Mar 2017)

Submitted by:

Nepal Development Research Institute (NDRI), Nepal

in collaboration with:

Prakriti Resources Centre (PRC), Nepal

नेपाल विकास अनुसन्धान प्रतिष्ठान
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Nepal Development Research Institute

Prakriti Resources Centre

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This project, TAAS-0072: Support for Strengthening Climate Finance Activities in Nepal, was undertaken in close coordination with the Government and the private sector, and was supported by Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN).

The work was led by Nepal Development Research Institute (NDRI) in collaboration with Prakriti Resources Centre (PRC).

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Acronyms:

AEPC:	Alternate Energy Promotion Centre
AgDB:	Agricultural Development Bank
CDKN:	Climate and Development Knowledge Network
GCF:	Green Climate Fund
GoN:	Government of Nepal
IECCD:	International Economic Cooperation Coordination Division
LDC:	Least Developed Countries
MoF:	Ministry of Finance
MOI:	Ministry of Finance
MoPE:	Ministry of Population and Environment
NAPA:	National Adaptation Program of Action
NAMA:	Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions
NDA:	National Designated Agency
NDRI:	Nepal Development Research Institute
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organization
NIE:	National Implementing Entity
NPC:	National Planning Commission
NTNC:	Nepal Trust for Nature Conservation
PRC:	Prakriti Resources Centre
SIDS:	Small Island Developing States

1 Introduction

A self-assessment training workshop on accreditation potential of National Implementing Entities (NIEs) for Green Climate Fund was organized on 28-29 March 2017 in Grand Hotel, Kathmandu. The objectives of this training workshop held as part of the CDKN funded project 'TAAS-0072: Support for Strengthening Climate Finance Activities in Nepal' were as follows:

- Enhance the understanding of the potential NIEs on the access procedures and requirements of GCF
- Support potential NIEs in the self-assessment of their respective institution as per GCF's accreditation criteria and requirements
- Enhance the understanding of potential NIEs on linkages between national development priorities and GCF's objectives/impact areas
- Facilitate self-assessment of the institutional capacities of potential NIEs and recommend prioritized capacity development initiatives

Refer to Annex I for program schedule and Annex II for list of participants.

At the outset of the first day, Dr. Jaya Kumar Gurung, Executive Director of Nepal Development Research Institute (NDRI) welcomed all participants to the training workshop and provided an overview of the objectives and expected outcome of the training workshop. This was followed by the technical sessions. On the second day, self-assessments by the potential National Implementing Entities (NIEs) were undertaken using GCF's self-assessment tool.

2 Technical Sessions

The first day of the training workshop was divided into the following three sessions[1]:

- Session 1: Linkages of National Policies/Strategies to Climate Finance (CF)
- Session 2: GCF Accreditation Requirements
- Session 3: GCF Funding Opportunities

Session 1: Linkages of National Policies/Strategies to Climate Finance (GCF)

Mr. L. B. Khatri, Under Secretary, International Economic Cooperation Coordination Division (IECCD), Ministry of Finance (MoF) made a presentation on GCF and the role of Ministry of Finance as the National Designated Authority (NDA) for GCF. He described the various components of the GCF, and informed the audience of the active steps MoF has been taking to promote climate finance related activities in Nepal. Since 2013, it has been implementing a budget code system to track all climate related projects. The Government of Nepal (GoN) has also made a policy provision of channeling at least 80% of the available climate finance to climate vulnerable communities. Nepal is thus operationalizing GCF to meet the growing financial needs for national adaptation and mitigation priorities. Despite sincere efforts by MOF, he pointed out that an understanding of GCF in the government and outside is still poor in Nepal. MoF is now taking more responsibility for mainstreaming climate funds in the development process. He then summarized the main roles of MOF as NDA as follows:

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[1] The presentations of the sessions can be downloaded from: **http://www.ndri.org.np/b.html**

i.) Serve as the point of communication (interface) with the Fund,
ii.) Provide leadership on the deployment of readiness and preparatory support funding in the country,
iii.) Provide broad strategic oversight aligned to national CC priorities,
iv.) Convene national stakeholders including public, private and civil society,
v.) Facilitate accreditation process of potential National Implementation Entities (NIEs),
vi.) Provide 'Nomination Letters' to potential NIEs for accreditation,
vii.) Facilitate development of GCF funding proposals,
viii.) Provide 'No Objection' letter to programmes /projects, and
ix.) Facilitate implementation of GCF funded projects/ programmes in the country.

He also presented the governance mechanism of NDA under MOF, consisting of the Climate Finance Steering Committee, NDA, Climate Finance Unit and Technical Committee. He strongly urged the potential NIEs to work hard to understand the GCF requirements and accreditation process as the standard of requirements needs to be met by all National Implementing Entities (NIEs). He also informed that MoF is implementing the GCF Readiness Programme to help in strengthening the national capacities to effectively and efficiently plan for, access, manage, deploy and monitor climate finance through the GCF.

The second presentation of the Session was by Mr. Rishi Raj Koirala, Joint Secretary Ministry of Industry (MoI) on "Private sector investment in Nepal and GCF: Challenges and Opportunities". He discussed the role of the private sector investment in Nepal and the opportunities from GCF. He emphasized the need for awareness and preparations needed to help achieve climate resilient development and access climate finance. In order to meet the target of 7.2% growth rate as envisaged in the current 14th three year plan, the total investment required is above 2,400 Billion NRs during the three year plan period. The plan seeks around 54.7% investment from the private sector (84% in manufacturing sector). This is however hindered mainly by lack of infrastructure, political instability, limited financial access and inefficient private sector which have been crippling the country's economy. Also, the limited financial access has been attributed to low domestic savings and low foreign direct investment (FDI). However, GCF provides opportunities like the US$ 100 million that has been set aside for SME Pilot program under Private Sector Facility (PSF) to respond to climate change. PSF aims to enhance private sector-led adaptation and mitigation activities at the national, regional and international levels. GCF encourages resources for capacity development, technology development and technology transfer as well as innovative and replicable approaches. As such, GCF is an attractive proposition for the private sector and GON must educate and create awareness of the private sector to tap GCF to make investments even where there is market failure.

The third presentation of the session was from Dr. Ram Prasad Lamsal, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Population and Environment (MOPE) on "Mainstreaming of UNFCCC Objectives into National and Sectoral Development Policies/Strategies/Plans". He discussed that the parties to UNFCCC are bound to follow its mandate and are obligated to provide finance to developing countries for climate change mitigation and adaptation. He also discussed that Nepal, in addition to being an LDC, is highly vulnerable towards the effect of climate change and there are many instances of observation of changing climate, like increased temperature, decreased food production, loss of ice caps and increased frequency of natural disasters. According to MoPE, the key sectors vulnerable to climate change are water resource and energy, forest and biodiversity, agriculture, infrastructures and urban settlements, public health, climate induced hazards, and tourism. In order to address climate change impacts, institutional arrangements, policy framework and different programmes and projects have been launched. Climate Change Council, Climate Change Management Division, and Climate Finance Managements Section are the key institutional arrangements placed at MOPE. Likewise, policies like Climate Change Policy, National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA), Location Adaptation Plan of Action (LAPA), REDD strategy, Climate change budget code, and Low Carbon Economic Development Strategy (LCEDS) have been formulated or drafted. A number of projects have been implemented and others are in the pipeline in line with these policies/strategies.

Session 2: GCF Accreditation Requirements

The first presentation of the second session by Chiranjibi Gautam, a senior climate change expert based at NDRI, included two parts- (i) GCF Fiduciary Requirements and National System and (ii) Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) and Gender Requirements and National System. Details of the detailed Fiduciary, ESS and Gender Policy requirements and current national systems were explained in these presentations.

In the second presentation of the session, Dr Ram Prasad Dhital, Executive Director of Alternate Energy Promotion Center (AEPC) shared his organization's experience with the accreditation process for GCF. AEPC is an independently functioning government institution established by the Government of Nepal with the objectives to promote the use of renewable energy technologies. He explained that any public or private agency is eligible to get accredited as an NIE, provided it has a legal status in Nepal. An institutional system with robust policies, procedures and guidelines and a track record demonstrating that it can implement these policies, procedures and guidelines are required. AEPC had added advantage for NIE accreditation as it is a Government institution with dedicated Climate and Carbon Unit, and it possesses a proven track record of climate change related activities. It has already received nomination letter as NIE and is at the first stage of GCF Accreditation. He also shared his experiences of the process which included the following:

- The accreditation process has been expedited as there is a dedicated Climate and Carbon Unit that is coordinating the accreditation process
- There was a need to document the procedures by preparing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to demonstrate that the Center meets the fiduciary, ESS and Gender requirements
- There was need to strengthen the internal control by internalizing compliance unit to meet the accreditation requirements
- As the policy/program/ report/documents under use were all in local Nepalese language, there was need to re-organize, translate and code these different documents to submit to GCF

Continuous internal discussion of the process at various stages were required for feeding the information in the Online Accreditation System of GCF

Session 3: GCF Funding Opportunities

The following three presentations were made in the third session:

1) Introduction to Reusable Guide for Climate Funds (GCF) by Mr. Raju Pandit Chhetri and Mr. Prabin Singh, PRC

2) Priorities for Nepal: Adaptation and Mitigation by Dr. Divas B. Basnyat, Team Leader, NDRI
3) GCF Funding: Regional Experiences by Ms. Areej Riaz, CDKN

The first presentation of this session by Raju P. Chhetry, PRC, walked through the content of the Reusable Guide for accreditation to GCF under preparation by the project team. The presentation started with a brief introduction to the purpose and scope of the climate funds, especially the GCF, and then the accreditation process and the three stages of accreditation, namely, stage 1: pre-accreditation, stage 2: accreditation review process and decision, and stage 3: final validation and legal arrangements, which were described.

The second presentation by Dr Divas B Basnyat, Team Leader, NDRI described the opportunities that existed for Nepal on the eight strategic impact areas for mitigation and adaption based on the national policies and priorities in the key sectors of Nepal.

In the third presentation, Ms. Areej Riaz of CDKN shared some regional experiences of CDKN in climate finance related activities. CDKN aims to help decision-makers in developing countries design and deliver climate compatible development. However, the type of projects implemented by CDKN varied from country to country. In Nepal, a major focus was on adaptation to climate change in key sectors like hydropower, agriculture and irrigation. The experience of CDKN in Asia, Africa and Latin America showed that with challenges due to climate change, there are opportunities for getting ahead in the global economy if countries transition quickly to a low carbon development path. Around US$ 5 trillion are invested annually in key development sectors in the world, like agriculture, water, energy, forestry, buildings and industry, and transport etc. On top of that, additional investment of about US $ 0.7 trillion every year will be required for green growth (climate resilient) scenario. The presentation also provided an overview of climate finance activities in different parts of the world and how Nepalese private sector can benefit from climate funds like GCF. Lessons and barriers to accessing climate finance based on surveys from other countries were also shared. The presentation ended with the steps to identify and take advantage of climate related opportunities, which are enumerated as follows:

- Build partnerships with other businesses, associations, NGOs, government, development partners
- Secure buy-in from the top for climate-related activities and investment
- Set up a climate change cell within your organization to develop capacities to harness opportunities
- Develop a platform for interested businesses to encourage policymakers to create an enabling environment

3 GCF Accreditation Self-assessment

The second day of the training workshop was used for self-assessment by the participants using the GCF online toolkit (http://www.greenclimate.fund/partners/accredited-entities/self-assessment-tool-questionnaire).

Participants representing different potential NIEs went through the on-line questionnaire and shared the challenges they face while filling it. Apart from the basic information to be filled, the participants went through the various requirements on the fiduciary, environmental and social safeguards, and gender policy.

4 Discussion Session

Question and answer (Q & A) sessions were organized at the end of each session. The summary of the discussions in the Q & A sessions are summarized below:

1) Overview on GCF and its Elements

One of the preliminary queries of many participants was what GCF was and its source of funding and how to tap it. The presenters further clarified the elements of GCF, accreditation requirements and funding opportunities. It was reiterated that GCF aims to promote a paradigm shift towards low-emission and climate–resilient development pathways by providing support to the developing countries. In allocating its resources, the Fund aims for a 50:50 balance between mitigation and adaptation over time. It pursues to disburse US$100 billion climate finance per year by 2020. As of December 2016, donor countries have pledged a total of $10.3 billion to the Fund. Unlike other climate funds, the governing body of GCF has 24 members ,12 from developed countries and 12 from developing countries to promote equal say of both developed and developing countries. GCF has an enhanced direct access modality under a country driven approach whereby the fund-recipient country gets to decide and implement the investment opportunity.

2) Challenges and Opportunities for engaging with GCF

GCF aims to allocate at least half of its resources for adaptation to least developed countries (LDCs), Small Island developing States (SIDS) and African States. Also, with Nepal being an LDC, the fees for the basic fiduciary standards are waived off. Since, Nepal has been able to tap the largest amount of climate funds among LDCs, it shows that Nepal has a higher prospect of being able to tap GCF. Neelam Sharma from AEPC emphasized that despite bigger prospects, Nepal has had a bitter experience with CDM where it has not achieved great success with it. Although, huge efforts had been made earlier from private sector, it became evident private sector were not ready for it.

A solution of sorts offered by GCF is 'direct access of funding through NIEs. This shall enable NIEs to enhance their capacity to better use the fund in their strength as grants, concessional loans etc., aiming to achieve the greatest impact in terms of climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Also, the bigger challenge is to get accreditation by meeting its fiduciary standards and environmental and social safeguards through a process of accreditation. It is a known fact that Nepal does not have very strong institutions with proper governance. Moreover, as remarked by Ram Chandra Khanal, CDKN, due to lengthy and cumbersome accreditation procedures, many of the institutions, especially the private sector with lesser exposure to such criteria, may tire out. Hence, it is in the best interest for the potential NIEs to be aware of the nitty gritty of accreditation process.

3) Private Sector in Nepal and GCF (Commercial Banks)

MIEs like WB, ADB, and IFC are accredited to GCF. Also, there are instances where National banks have been accredited to GCF for example XacBank LLC (XacBank) and a national private sector entity in Mongolia which has been accredited to GCF. Through GCF, XacBank has access to financial instruments such as concessionary loans (senior), guarantees and equity. Similarly, the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) in India has been accredited to GCF. It has submitted a concept note on 'Mitigating climate change and enhancing adaption for farmers through agro-forestry in

Haryana.' Also it has experience in tapping other climate funds. Korea Development Bank (KDB), is another GCF accredited national entity known for their climate change and socially responsible investment. Hence in Nepal too, commercial banks are suitable institutions for NIEs as main drivers of economy. Although, currently commercial banks are focused on asset management, their focus on climate resilient development shall provide them better opportunities to tap GCF directly or indirectly. Commercial banks are strong in fiduciary standards but may need some capacity enhancement in terms of environmental and social safeguards, and gender policy compliance.

5 Feedback from the Participants

A post-workshop feedback questionnaire was filled by the participants to assess the capacity development needs of the potential participants (mainly private sector and government sector promoting private sector investment and participation). Eight participating organizations filled and sent their response to the questionnaire. Out of them, two were banks, three were government agencies, two were private sector entities (Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industries- FNCCI and Federation of Cottage and Small Industries- FNCSI) and one was an autonomous government institute which is in the early stages of accreditation process.

All eight responded that they meet the fiduciary requirements but half of them thought they needed to develop more procedures to fully meet the requirements. Similarly, all except one (who was not sure) met the specialized fiduciary requirements, but five of the eight thought they would need some form of restructuring. Only half of the respondents think they meet the environmental and social safeguard requirements. But most of the respondents (five out of eight) think they will need some restructuring and additional procedures to meet the ESS requirements. Similarly, while most (six out eight) think they meet the gender policy requirements, all except two think they will need additional procedures to meet the full requirements.

The key feedbacks from the participants are captured in the responses to the following three questions below:

1.0 How helpful did you find this workshop in enhancing your understanding of the Green Climate Fund and various access modalities?

a. *The workshop enabled us to understand the bank's possibilities to access the Green Climate Fund and its effective uses toward combating climate changes.*

b. *Workshop was good enough to convey the importance of the GCF to finance climate change projects. It was somehow useful to understand the access modalities. Moreover, it was good to know the "behind-the-curtain" discussion on enhanced direct access modality.*

c. *This workshop was really helpful in understanding the basics of Green Climate Fund and how it worked, moreover, the training session also cleared our view on recent climate change scenarios and what was being done globally for mitigation and adaptation, especially in developing countries.*

d. *GCF and access modalities have been cleared in many aspects and procedures.*

e. *This workshop has been very much fruitful for understanding GCF and its working modalities in Nepal.*

f. *Very helpful*

g. *The workshop was very helpful in enhancing my understanding of the GCF. It helped me get to know the basic concept of GCF and be familiar with it.*
h. *I came to know about GCF after the training.*

2.0 Please list out the capacity development needs that you would like GCF Readiness program to support:

a. *Risk Assessment.*
b. *Environmental, Social and Gender studies.*
c. *Identifying program and project level indicators.*
d. *Support NIE accreditation.*
e. *Training relevant staffs to appropriately address ESS requirement of the proposals channeled to GCF.*
f. *Orientation on general approach to frame GCF project concept and the full funding proposal.*
g. *Hands on training on proposal development.*
h. *Specific project screening training to the prospective NIEs.*
i. *Specific trainings in regard to climate resilience technology in infrastructure projects*
j. *Field trips to success ventures for exposure and skill development*
k. *How the private sector be a part of GCF either in accreditation or project management.*
l. *Overall and general concept about the GCF to the persons who are likely to get involved in the accreditation process.*
m. *Training on the accreditation process for GCF.*
n. *Training to the personnel of Environment section*
o. *We need readiness program for up scaling to partner in developing and implementing projects not for NIE*

3.0 Any other feedbacks/suggestion?

a. *The process seems quite a long one due to which we have difficulty to precisely forecast the data on several occasion. We would appreciate if the same could be shortened and the accreditation process could be done in more stages*
b. *The training was targeted for the private sector. It was though interesting to have good number of participants in the training, I felt that even wider range could have been encompassed that would include the entrepreneurs and small businesses.*
c. *The training was focused on requirements regarding NIEs. However, I felt that this could be something that the NDA should have taken lead in. For the organizations like NDRI, I would suggest to prepare private sector with their capacity to develop bankable project concept notes and the proposals. Provided that the prospect of getting NIE accreditation is less than being a project developer, I would suggest the organizers look into it for future.*
d. *It is fine as of now, look forward to such trainings in the future as well.*
e. *We expect regular communication and engagement on GCF related programs.*
f. *As GCF is a new and a rising term the scenario is that there is still lots of confusion regarding the accreditation and also how the fund works and till the concepts and process are clarified to all the respective entities, the confusion is likely to exist. However, the workshop to some extent has made us clear about the confusion and*

also it is believed that conducting these types of workshops in future will also help us enhance our knowledge and be familiar to the process so as to deal with the hustles easily.

g. *One facilitator to support the preparation of proposal*
h. *Need table talk (one-to-one meeting)*

6 Summary and Conclusion

Both days of workshop were well attended by potential implementing entities from the private sector and the government ministries promoting private sector investments in Nepal. Eight participating organizations (2 banks, 3 public sector agencies, 2 private sector entities and 1 autonomous government agency) responded to the post workshop questionnaire and reported that their understanding of climate change and available climate funds improved after the workshop.

Out of the eight organizations responding to post-workshop questionnaire, all eight responded that they meet fiduciary requirements for NIE accreditation but half reported as needing some sort of restructuring to improve fiduciary standards. Half of them assessed themselves to meet the environmental and social safeguard (ESS) and gender requirements, but they all need restructuring to further improve their compliance.

Feedback from the participants shows that the workshop met its key objectives of enhancing the understanding of the potential NIEs on the procedures and requirements of GCF, and on linkages between national development priorities and GCF's objectives/impact areas. It also provided a hands-on experience to the participants to self-assess their respective institutions on GCF's accreditation criteria and requirements.

Annexes

Annex I Program Schedule

Training Workshop Program

Day 1: March 28, 2017: Time: 9.30 to 17.00		
Time	Program	Resource Person
9:30 to 10.00	Registration of Participants	NDRI
10.00 to 10.05	Welcome and Introduction of Training Workshop	Dr. Jaya Gurung, ED, NDRI
Session I: Linkages of National Policies/Strategies to Climate Finance (GCF)		
10.05 to 10.30	GCF and Role of NDA	Mr. Lal Bahadur Khatri, Under Secretary, MOF
10.30 to 10.55	Private Sector Investment in Nepal and GCF: Challenges and Opportunities	Mr. Rishi Raj Koirala, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Industry
10.55 to 11.20	Mainstreaming of UNFCCC Objectives into National and Sectoral Development Policies/ Strategies/Plans	Mr. Ram Prasad Lamsal, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Population and Environment
11.20 to 11.40	***Discussion on Session I***	
Session II: GCF Accreditation Requirements		
11.40 to 12.05	GCF Fiduciary Requirements and National System	Mr. Chiranjibi Gautam, NDRI
12:05 to 12:30	GCF ESS and Gender Requirements and National System	Mr. Chiranjibi Gautam, NDRI
12.30 to 13.45	***Lunch***	
13.45 to 14.15	Accreditation to GCF: Experience of Potential NIE	Mr. Ram Prasad Dhital, ED, AEPC
14.15 to 14.35	***Discussion of Session II***	
Session III: GCF Funding Opportunities		
14.35 to 15.05	Introduction to Reusable Guide for Climate Funds (GCF)	Mr. Raju Pandit Chhetri and Mr. Prabin Singh, PRC
15.05 to 15.30	Priorities for Nepal: Adaptation and Mitigation	Dr. Divas B. Basnyat, NDRI
15.30 to 16.00	GCF Funding: Regional Experiences	Ms. Areej Riaz, CDKN

16.00 to 16.30	***Discussion on Session III***
16:30 to 17:00	***Wrap-up: Summary of Day 1***
17:30 to 19:30	***Reception Dinner***
End of Day 1	

Day 2: March 29, 2017 10:00 – 13:45		
10.00 to 10.15	Introduction to GCF Accreditation Self-Assessment Tool	Mr. Chiranjibi Gautam, NDRI
10.15 to 11.30	Self-Assessment Exercise	All participants
11.30 to 12.00	Capacity Needs of Potential NIEs	Discussion facilitated by NDRI
12:00 to 12:20	**Summary of Training Workshop**	
12.20 to 12.25	Remarks	Dr. Ram Chandra Khanal, CDKN
12.25 to 12.30	Closing Remarks	Mr. Lal Bahadur Khatri, Under Secretary, MOF
12:30 to 13:30	**Lunch**	

Annex II: List of Participants

Date: 29 March

Venue: Grand Hotel, Kathmandu

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Second Day – 29 March 2017

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Annex III: Photos