

Independent Evaluation of the One UN Climate Change Learning Partnership's Fourth Phase: 2017-2020

Management Response

September 2020

Geneva, Switzerland

Programme undertaking	UN CC:Learn Secretariat, Green Development and Climate Change Programme Unit, UNITAR		
Name of project focal point	Angus Mackay		
Name of project undertaking	Independent Evaluation of the One UN Climate Change Learning Partnership's Fourth Phase: 2017-2020	AGB #	C2017.TARGC023.CHADC
Name of evaluation	Independent Evaluation		
Date:	September 2020		

Management Response for the UN CC:Learn 2017-2020 Phase Evaluation Recommendations

SECTION I – Comments on Findings, Conclusions

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SECTION II - RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Management Response and Planned Action				Update on status in 2021 (planned, under implementation, implemented)
	Accepted Partially Accepted Rejected	Proposed action	Budget allocated (if necessary)	Status (planned, under implementation, implemented)	
1. Sustainability: Establish a significantly increased sustainable source of funding	Partially accepted		None	Planned	
<p>UN CC:Learn is highly relevant and coherent, very efficient, and effective and has mobilised three times the resources as SDC’s core contribution. However, it struggles to be sustainable or have impact at sufficient scale and is not funded or structured to meet the need or demand for climate change learning.</p>	<p>Comments:</p> <p>We agree that funding for this area of work should be increased to be able to meet the large demand for climate change learning. In turn, this is crucial to build the knowledge and skills needed to effectively address climate change.</p> <p>As mentioned, this highlights the relevance of UN CC:Learn work. However, it is important to note that this major task cannot be undertaken by UN CC:Learn alone. Also, when considering funding related to UN CC:Learn, we do not agree that it should necessarily flow through UNITAR/CC:Learn accounts. The programme acts as a means to stimulate action and finance in multiple ways. In addition there is a difference between increasing funding and sustainable funding. The two are not the same. Many of</p>				

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<p>The Project Document attests that over 40 countries would like to join UN CC:Learn, whilst existing National and Regional Partners want additional resources and support. Activities need additional funding to replicate them or to transfer them to other formats, as has been achieved with Youth Climate Dialogues. And yet the project operates in limited 3-4 year cycles, with no long term goal or certainty of continuation. UNITAR, together with the other UN CC:Learn partners, should identify significant additional sources of funding. The following options could be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Garner country and Global Partner support for a UNFCCC intervention to establish a Global Fund for CC learning ● Review mechanisms for establishing UN CC:Learn as something more permanent than a project ● Review UN CC:Learn’s work against Global Partners’ work to identify opportunities for direct and parallel funding ● Review government and industry spending across sectors in countries and identify synergies, opportunities for collaboration, and funding opportunities. National 	<p>the ideas listed are well taken and most have been explored already. We propose to look again into the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss with global partners more options for direct funding. This already happens in the sense that we work to develop courses and activities in those areas that meet the specific mandates of these organisations, however we will explore with the partners ways in which such arrangements could be made more recurrent. Note the specific challenges of accessing funding under Covid related uncertainty. - The national level picture and identifying locally available funding is of interest, however these would not be funds that would pass through UNITAR or the CC:Learn project. Therefore they would appear as country based cofinancing. This is linked to the idea of having more locally based staff as this is the prerequisite for this recommendation. - We are not aware of any specific sources of financing that we have missed and that global partners advise exist. We will follow up on this with the partners. With regard to Donors it would be useful to know which ones in particular. - The GCF point is well taken. We have applied this approach in Niger and Egypt. Again this does not necessarily lead to CC:learn increasing its financial envelope. - Consider hiring a staff dedicated to supporting the integration of climate change learning into project proposals under major climate funds, if additional resources will allow it. 	
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<p>Partners report that vast quantities of money are being spent across energy, agriculture and health sectors, related to climate change, but without consideration of CC learning, which is detrimental to UN CC:Learn’s work, but could present a substantial opportunity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donors and some Global Partners advise that there are funding sources that could be accessed for capacity building of national and regional training institutions • The GCF advises that UN CC:Learn can seek to partner countries and Global Partners in applying for GCF funds, including funds to spend nationally, regionally or sectorally on CC learning. It further advises that UN CC:Learn / UNITAR could apply to become a delivery partner for their Readiness programme <p>Supporting the above, the project would benefit from a clear definition of co-financing, agreed with the UNITAR Finance and Budget Unit, ensuring co-financing and in-kind contributions are recorded in line with Finance policy.</p>					
Recommendation	Accepted Partially accepted Rejected	Proposed action	Budget allocated (if necessary)	Status (planned, under implementation, implemented)	Update on status in 2021

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						(planned, under implementation, implemented)
2.	<p>Theory of Change: Develop an evidence-based theory of change Global, Regional and National Partners observed that elements of UN CC:Learn’s work are unclear. Examples were given of lack of clarity around the project logic, ways of working, end goal and UN CC:Learn’s value proposition. Some GPs struggled to articulate the benefits of working with UN CC:Learn. Partners could not describe what project success would look like. Some partners described aspects of UN CC:Learn’s work as being reactive, responding to one off donor or partner opportunities. Partners could see links between the two project outcomes, but couldn’t articulate how they worked together towards the overall project goal. One partner attested that UN CC:Learn is innovative within individual project activities but it is not visibly looking for an opportunity to become a game changer. Course participants described UN CC:Learn as “trying to reach everyone with everything”.</p> <p>This finding echoes the mid-term evaluation, which noted that the link between outcomes could be stronger and benefit from increased synergies, and that the logframe is inadequate for communicating, monitoring and measuring the project’s potential</p>	Accepted	Review ToC	None	Planned	
		<p>Comments:</p> <p>We accept this but at the same time we believe that the programme is clear about what the end point is for this initiative. One of the main factors that has lead to this feedback, we feel, is the turnover of focal points within the global partners as well as the fact that some of the focal points for specific activities developed in collaboration with global partners are not the focal points for the UN CC:Learn Partnership within these same partners, so only involved partially. We think that a new approach might include more regular contact with UN CC:Learn focal points (although this is more easily said than done) but equally to arrange the Global Partners around specific outputs rather than as a more general reference group. This would have the effect of having greater clarity.</p>				

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	<p>impact. That evaluation recommended development of a detailed theory of change that identifies the project's impact pathways, assumptions, underlying project logic, and external influences. Section 4 of the Project Document is entitled Theory of Change, but states no theory, only a limited problem analysis, value proposition and list of intended impacts. The need for an effective ToC remains and is considered useful for the project's future direction.</p>					
Recommendation	Accepted Partially accepted Rejected	Proposed action	Budget allocated (if necessary)	Status (planned, under implementation, implemented)	Update on status in 2021 (planned, under implementation, implemented)	
3.	<p>Operational Model: Review the operational model and develop a strategy to support increased scale, reach, sustainability and effectiveness</p> <p>In support of UN CC:Learn's work becoming more sustainable, and following development of an evidence-based theory of change, it is recommended that UN CC:Learn's operational model is reviewed. This review would explore how UN CC:Learn can scale up its work, achieve greater reach, and ensure effectiveness and sustainability of the work in countries and regional hubs.</p>	<p>Partially accepted</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>Overall, we agree with the principle that the operational model should be adapted as the programme evolves. We provide more specific responses in each case below.</p>		None	Under implementation	

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<p>This could include reviewing some of the following options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider establishing South-South peer to peer learning as a requirement for work in every country • Consider exiting national work and moving to a regional operational model, with national work facilitated through peer support and greater alignment with regional organisations • Consider a localisation model. Some National, Regional and Academic Partners believe UN CC:Learn’s work would be more sustainable if it worked entirely through country or regional actors instead of controlling activities from Geneva. They propose UN CC:Learn’s role should be as experts in in-country / region capacity building, and experts in understanding how effective change happens over time. They propose that UN CC:Learn should research and develop methodologies on effective capacity building and effective virtual expert accompaniment • Review the efficacy of decentralising the Secretariat and recruiting staff in regional hubs. This is likely to strengthen contextual understanding, local relationships, and address the Geneva-centric decision making that stakeholders say 	<p>This is already underway. An example would be the work ongoing between Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi, but also through the West Africa Hub. However, UN CC:Learn will look into opportunities to continue to strengthen peer to peer learning among its partner countries.</p> <p>The strength of our work is in the support it can provide to countries. We are doing this in a partial way in West Africa and this may be the right way to go once a critical mass of countries in the region have engaged bi-laterally. However starting up in new regions (eg Central Asia) in our view requires at least a few bi-lateral engagements before moving to a more regional model.</p> <p>We would certainly like to consider this. That said the CC:Learn staff are already very few in Geneva and it would not be possible to reduce staff time there (particularly in view of the broader point about increasing demand and ambition). However we do agree that a balance needs to be struck in allocating any additional funding available between regional and central capacity.</p> <p>Not effective in our view. There is very little to decentralise in Geneva. We have one P3 funded 75% of the time and all others at less than 50%. Certainly future growth, accompanied with additional funding, should focus on building up staff in the regions as indicated above.</p>	
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<p>is stifling some activities. Regional stakeholders are advocating for UN CC:Learn to establish more regional hubs and increase peer support. Regions would like to see their capacities strengthened. They reference regional platforms on Gender and WASH that started as UN funded initiatives and have now become self-sustaining. The Southern African Hub recommends it is supported in operating through SADC, to achieve wider reach and sustainability. The SICA hub is struggling to make progress due to regional political change and insufficient UN CC:Learn support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the SGM format and frequency and membership. Review opening up the SGM to more academic, business and NGO partners. Stakeholders stated that the SGM is very nice, but ineffective because it only happens once a year and is so long and intense that it loses the opportunity to support the project. Partners propose more frequent, shorter SGMs, even suggesting they could be considered as an innovation hub, to encourage co-creation • Negotiate global and national collaboration with Global Partners (see Recommendation 4). 	<p>We agree with this review and propose to have groupings linked to specific outputs and outcomes, based on a different format. A small group will still be needed to approve the workplan and this could be set up on a rotating basis, or partners could provide input through an online exchange. We also agree that other non UN actors could be involved however it is important to point out that CC:Learn was established as a One UN initiative. This is because the knowledge transmitted through learning products needs to be backed by the UN system. We do not have the resources, for example, to fact check. Furthermore the original idea (still relevant) was to provide a single entry point into the UN's resources not a single entry point into global resources more generally.</p>				
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	Rejected			(planned, under implementation, implemented)	(planned, under implementation, implemented)
<p>4. Partner Collaboration: Strengthen collective understanding of the UN CC:Learn global partnership to improve clarity, reach and effectiveness</p> <p>Whilst most Global Partners described effective collaboration with UN CC:Learn, some mentioned lack of clarity regarding the purpose and effectiveness of collaboration. They attested that collaborations were one-off, with no follow up or continuity. They are unclear regarding what CC:Learn wants or how to collaborate effectively or sustainably. Some partners believe UN CC:Learn lacks capacity to build sufficient understanding of its Global Partners and therefore fails to build effective collaboration with enough of them. Partners said they cannot see UN CC:Learn visibly looking for an opportunity to become a game changer. The following actions could be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNITAR could call a meeting with Global Partners and strategically think through who to partner with to achieve the scale and reach of CC learning that is needed. Partners suggested GEF and GCF should be in such a meeting 	Partially accepted		None	Planned	
	<p>Comments:</p> <p>This is well noted. We feel that, some of the factors that have lead to this feedback are the historical development of the programme, as well as, as mentioned above, the turnover of focal points within the global partners and the fact some of the focal points for specific activities developed in collaboration with global partners are not the focal points for the UN CC:Learn Partnership. See more detailed responses below.</p> <p>Noted and we agree. However, we also note that UNCC:Learn alone cannot, and has not the ambition, to meet all needs for climate change learning globally.</p>				

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consider meeting with the World Bank, FAO and WHO to learn from their long term collaboration ● The partnership could be strengthened with a Principles of Working Together document, forging a collective understanding of the partnership, including its scope, scale, types of CC Learn partners, roles, business model, etc, and incorporating some of the other points in this list ● Establish global collaboration agreements for regional and country work with Global Partners, linking outcomes ● Establish processes for UNCTs to identify and link UN CC:Learn work with their own CC work and resources ● Systematic promotion of global resources amongst UNCTs ● Develop a global course on national learning strategy development, linking the two outcomes ● Support national stakeholders to identify and regularly engage with all UN agencies working on climate change 	<p>Not sure how this would be different to the point above</p> <p>Noted and we agree. This would be an elaboration of the existing letter of engagement sent by the new partners to join the partnership and would build on existing documentation (e.g. project document, TORs for partner focal points).</p> <p>Noted. This has been tried during this phase without yet receiving a positive answer. Options will be explored again.</p> <p>Noted. This is essentially what happens at country level already. This area is a little beyond the scope of this evaluation and the evaluator may not have formed a detailed understanding of how national projects function in relation to UNCTs.</p> <p>Noted. This can be strengthened.</p> <p>Noted as a possibility.</p> <p>Noted.</p>	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoUs should always be written for ongoing collaboration, not for the development of individual resources • MoU's should commit GPs to providing ongoing funding to cover core costs and regularly update learning resources • Clarify roles, responsibilities, and technical sign-off responsibilities within Global work ToRs, before project start up • Explore opportunities to collaborate on national CC learning with UNESCO or UNICEF. UNESCO is mandated to work on education which can include school curricula. 	<p>The reality is that UN CC:Learn is unlikely to turn down funding if offered by a global partner and where a specific service is being requested. What we can do is to clarify in each case that a more long term collaboration would be favourable and to offer some possible avenues.</p> <p>Very unlikely.</p> <p>Not sure we fully understand. These items are covered in our standard UN to UN agency agreements and accompanying ToRs. We propose to review these formats and see where clarifications could be made.</p> <p>Already underway. As an example, we partnered with UNESCO Office, Jakarta to organize youth training on climate change for university students in Indonesia.</p>					
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>Accepted Partially accepted Rejected</p>	<p>Proposed action</p>	<p>Budget allocated (if necessary)</p>	<p>Status (planned, under implementation, implemented)</p>	<p>Update on status in 2021 (planned, under implementation, implemented)</p>	
<p>5. Completing the last mile: Make the impacts of climate change on vulnerable groups and opportunities to empower explicit across all of UN CC:Learn's global, regional and national work</p> <p>The project document for the current phase contained 5 strategic considerations. Two of these were "leave no one behind - reach the farthest first" and gender equality. Some notable progress has been made on gender equality, although</p>	<p>Accepted</p>		<p>None</p>	<p>Under implementation</p>		
	<p>Comments:</p> <p>We certainly agree with the main idea behind this recommendation. We are particularly concerned also with the digital divide and that as UN CC:Learn alumni increase globally so does that gap in knowledge with those that are less able to access online resources. Specific responses below.</p>					

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<p>more remains to be done. Leave no one behind has been partially addressed in terms of website accessibility, and some increased visibility of indigenous and minority groups. Partners at all levels want climate impacts on the most vulnerable groups and opportunities to empower them to become resilient, to be made visible across all UN CC:Learn resources and activities. This could include the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train staff and partners in using a new mandatory checklist on all activities ensuring the most vulnerable or excluded people are identified and given a real voice in the development of learning resources, strategies and action plans • Collaboration with SCRPD-UNDESA on funding resources on the intersection of climate change and disability • Translate resources into more languages • Develop resources on climate change and intersectionality, covering intersections such as gender, ethnicity, disability • Learning from YCDs, develop Gender Climate Dialogues, Disability Climate Dialogues, Community Climate dialogues • Develop offline content for poor internet locations. This could 	<p>Noted. This is a much bigger issue than a checklist. What this is talking about is the co-creation of training materials that take into account the perspectives of the vulnerable. This is a structural issue that would require wholesale changes in the way in which education materials are planned. At the present the West African Hub is founded on the concept of co-creation of training resources. We would propose to continue with this work and show case it to all partners. Other possible options will be also discussed with partners.</p> <p>Noted. We will follow up.</p> <p>This is already being done however the basic approach is to use UN languages only. More than this creates very significant workload when courses need to be updated or in standard trouble shooting actions.</p> <p>Noted. We would certainly propose more of a SDG linked approach here and this is already beginning to happen.</p> <p>Noted.</p>	
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	<p>include an app containing CC learn resources; and resources for radio; television; written media; community dramas; and for non-smartphones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train partners in developing low budget community video diaries to demonstrate CC impacts and responses • Find a sustainable funding sources for YCDs and other types of Climate Dialogues • Develop more activities for teacher engagement in CC learning <p>Recruit someone with community organising skills to connect with and mobilise local, minority, and other vulnerable groups through local social media initiatives and connect stakeholder groups with each other, to share their own CC learning and experience using UN CC:Learn's resources. This would connect the two project outcomes and help to generate more bottom up content and peer to peer learning within and between communities and sectors</p>	<p>There are already downloadable versions of content. We'd also like to explore public radio and the production of blogs as a versatile medium that can be used in low bandwidth conditions.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>This could be done at national level and possibly at regional level.</p>	
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