

IMPLEMENTATION RESEARCH AND EVALUATION STRATEGY GLOBAL FINANCING FACILITY FOR WOMEN, CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

INTRODUCTION

In countries supported by the Global Financing Facility (GFF), there are significant opportunities to strengthen the design and conduct of implementation research and evaluation (IR&E) to meet priority learning needs and strengthen accountability. There is also considerable scope for improving the extent to which studies are utilized when completed. Underinvestment in learning at multiple levels hinders the ability of policymakers, managers, service providers, and other key stakeholders to generate and use evidence and learning to inform decisions and improve programs and outcomes.

Through the IR&E strategy described in this document, the GFF aims to initiate a shift whereby IR&E studies are conceptualized, developed, and conducted in a manner that is forward-looking, timely, embedded within programming, and optimally useful to managers and decision makers at different levels, with active fostering of learning within and among countries. Strategic use of forward-looking IR&E approaches is critical for advancing the overarching reform agenda that the GFF supports through its country-led model for improved health for women, children, and adolescents.

The core components of the IR&E strategy outlined in this document include principles on which the strategy is grounded, definitions, objectives, action areas, integration into investment case (IC) processes, criteria for prioritization, learning topic areas, considerations related to methods and data sources, and guidance and oversight by the GFF Results Advisory Committee.

Principles of GFF IR&E Strategy

As part of the World Bank Group, the GFF operates under the aegis of World Bank systems and policies, including safeguards for use of resources and accountability mechanisms for achievement of measurable results. The GFF also espouses the core principles for evaluation articulated in [World Bank Group Evaluation Principles \(2019\)](#).¹

These core principles include:

Utility—Evaluation utility refers to the relevance and timeliness of evaluation processes and findings to organizational learning, decision making, and accountability for results.

Credibility—Evaluation credibility is grounded in expertise, objectivity, transparency, rigorous methodology, and ethical and competent conduct

Independence— Evaluation independence is in place when process is free from undue political influence and organizational pressure

The GFF IR&E strategy is further informed by the following additional principles, which are complementary to those defined by the broader World Bank Group:

Country leadership and alignment—The GFF aims to strengthen country leadership of IR&E and the learning and improvement agenda that IR&E helps advance, with strengthened alignment of partners around country-led processes. This includes the role of government, as well as in-country research and technical institutions, civil society, and others.

Gender-responsiveness, equity, and inclusion—The GFF promotes gender-responsive, equitable, and inclusive approaches to IR&E—as well as the use of IR&E to address knowledge gaps and enable learning on what works—to ensure that programs and policies contribute to improved gender-responsiveness, equity, and inclusion.

Responsiveness to decision-making and learning needs—GFF support for IR&E is focused on specific decision making and learning needs critical for maximizing impact.

Adaptiveness and flexibility—GFF support for IR&E is adaptable and flexible in responding to needs in a dynamic and context-specific manner.

Strengthening country capacity and systems—Throughout all GFF-supported activities, opportunities will be leveraged to help strengthen the capacity of local systems, institutions, and stakeholders.

Considerations Related to Definitions and Frameworks

The IR&E literature abounds with nuanced definitions of key terms as well as corresponding conceptual frameworks. For the purposes of this strategy, the GFF embraces competence development and action-oriented learning to drive decisions about the suitability of one guiding framework or another. The GFF adheres to the broad definition of evaluation defined in the [World Bank Group Evaluation Principles \(2019\)](#):

“A systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed process, project, program, theme, strategy, or policy, and of its design, implementation, and results, in relation to specific evaluation criteria”

Drawing from two well established definitions of IR in the literature ([Peters et al, 2013](#); [Theobald et al. 2018](#)), the GFF’s approach is consistent with following core definitional elements:

- A focus on a broad range of factors that affect implementation (the how and why) and its outcomes
- Central role of context in understanding how to adapt and improve implementation
- Integration of research and policy and practice processes
- Multi-disciplinary approaches and teams that engage decision-makers/implementers
- Application of knowledge/evidence for program improvement

Where relevant, this strategy promotes the use of frameworks which provide structure for the systematic examination of key causal linkages and the various factors at play within systems.

Objectives of GFF IR&E Strategy

Objective 1: Strengthen country leadership of the design, conduct, and use of IR&E that supports a learning and improvement agenda, with strengthened alignment of partners around country-led processes.

Objective 2: Advance learning and improvement agendas aimed at strengthening IC development and implementation processes, including country stakeholder convening mechanisms.

Objective 3: Generate knowledge and enable learning regarding what works in different contexts and how, in relation to the key thematic areas expected to influence progress along the critical path to improved health and wellbeing of women, children, and adolescents.

Objective 4: Strengthen transparency and mutual accountability for achievement of measurable results within the GFF Partnership, while elucidating areas for adaptation and improvement.

Objective 1 aims to articulate the foundational importance of strengthening country leadership of IR&E and the learning and improvement agenda it supports as the critical starting point for engagement and throughout each step of the process (see figure 1). Donor practices and funding structures often fail to strengthen country leadership and systems and exacerbate fragmentation. This objective supports a shift in perspective from strengthening donor IR&E to helping countries strengthen their own IR&E processes and systems, to advance a country-led learning and improvement agenda.

Objective 2 speaks to integration of IR&E as a core component of country-led IC development and implementation, including inclusive stakeholder convening processes through country platforms and other relevant mechanisms. IR&E activities have tended to come late and, in a manner, inadequately connected to ongoing IC and stakeholder engagement processes. This objective supports a shift toward a more integrated and prospective approach to supporting a learning and improvement agenda aimed at strengthening IC development, implementation processes, and associated mechanisms.

Objective 3 aims to generate knowledge and enable learning in specific thematic areas by fostering a coherent portfolio of country-led IR&E activities. The thematic areas prioritized are those with known knowledge gaps on the critical path to improved health and wellbeing of women, children, and adolescents, and for which the GFF is well-positioned to help catalyze change, in line with its strategy and country engagement model. This objective supports a shift to a responsive, problem-driven approach whereby actionable evidence on key challenges and bottlenecks is generated in a timely manner and fed back into country decision-making processes, ultimately accelerating progress on the critical path to improved health of women, children, and adolescents.

Objective 4 aims to strengthen transparency and mutual accountability within the GFF Partnership, while explicitly examining the GFF Logic Model against country experience to deepen understanding of causal pathways; demonstrate what is working, where, and how; and guide adaptation as needed to improve outcomes.

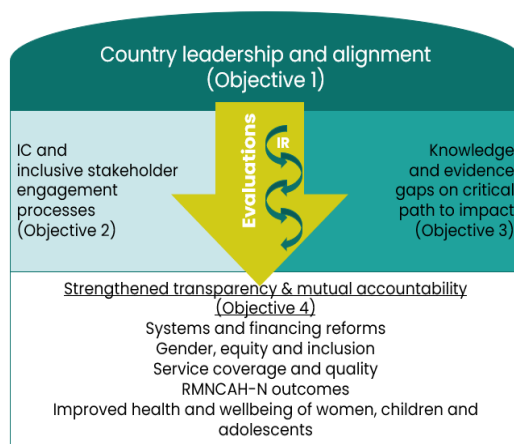


Figure 1: High level representation of GFF IR&E Strategy

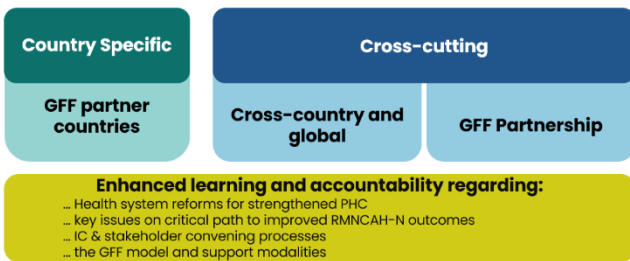


Figure 2: Multiple levels of learning and accountability

Through this strategy, the GFF aims to support a learning and improvement agenda on two levels (Figure 2). In line with objectives 1 and 2, the primary level of interest is at country level, where the GFF aims to support a country-led learning and improvement agenda responsive to context-specific knowledge gaps and learning needs. The second level of interest is comparative learning across settings, thus enabling countries to learn from each other while also enabling the GFF partnership to learn about and improve its engagement model, support modalities, and overall strategy. Activities supported through this IR&E strategy play a key role in strengthening mutual accountability for achievement of measurable improvements in the health and wellbeing of women, children, and adolescents.

IR&E Strategy Action Areas

The actions needed to deliver on the IR&E Strategy fall into the six areas shown in Figure 3. Two action areas are foundational and cut across the broader portfolio of work: (1) supporting country leadership and alignment; and (2) strengthening partnerships. The other four action areas (represented in the darker boxes) are layered on the foundational action areas. The activities across these areas will be interlinked and recursive, rather than linear. The specific activities implemented in each country will be tailored to the local context, stage of implementation, and corresponding needs. Considering the centrality of gender and equity in achieving outcomes in reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent health and nutrition (RMNCAH-N) and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), a significant need exists to generate evidence on effective implementation approaches in this area; it is, therefore, a critical lens that will be applied to the development and implementation of all IR&E strategy action areas.



Figure 3: IR&E Strategy Action Areas

1. Supporting country leadership and alignment

The GFF will work with countries to identify and engage with the appropriate national entity within the Ministry of Health or other relevant public health institution responsible for coordinating IR&E processes within the health sector. The GFF will align its support for IR&E processes with the routine work of the appropriate national entity and seek to contribute to strengthening sustainable IR&E processes, including fostering engagement with other key ministries—such as finance, women and child development, gender, youth, education, and related stakeholders. Country platforms or other coordination mechanisms will serve as key fora to facilitate inclusive dialogue and engagement of in-country stakeholders (for example, implementers, researchers, policymakers, civil society, and others) on IR&E from the beginning of the IC process and throughout implementation, in support of a country-led learning and improvement agenda. Where needed, the GFF will provide technical support to help strengthen governance and coordination.

The GFF will also support governments to budget for and commission IR&E as well as propose the use of GFF/World Bank financing for IR&E (further detailed in action area no. 3, below). Using its country engagement model, the GFF will help facilitate alignment of development partners and other stakeholders with country-led IR&E approaches, including key linkages to broader efforts to advance alignment, where relevant.

2. Strengthening partnerships

Supportive partnerships (Figure 4) that bring together technical expertise, policymakers, links to financing, and coordination efforts serve as critical elements for facilitating uptake and use of findings in a sustainable manner. Rather than operate in parallel, the GFF seeks to contribute to and strengthen the existing country and global ecosystems in which it operates. Internal World Bank partnerships, such as with the Development Economics Research Group, help leverage technical expertise across sectors, disciplines, and methods. Partnerships with World Bank task teams and regions are important for building upon World Bank financing and operations. Strategic partnerships with global agencies enable coordinated and collaborative approaches in support of country leadership and alignment.

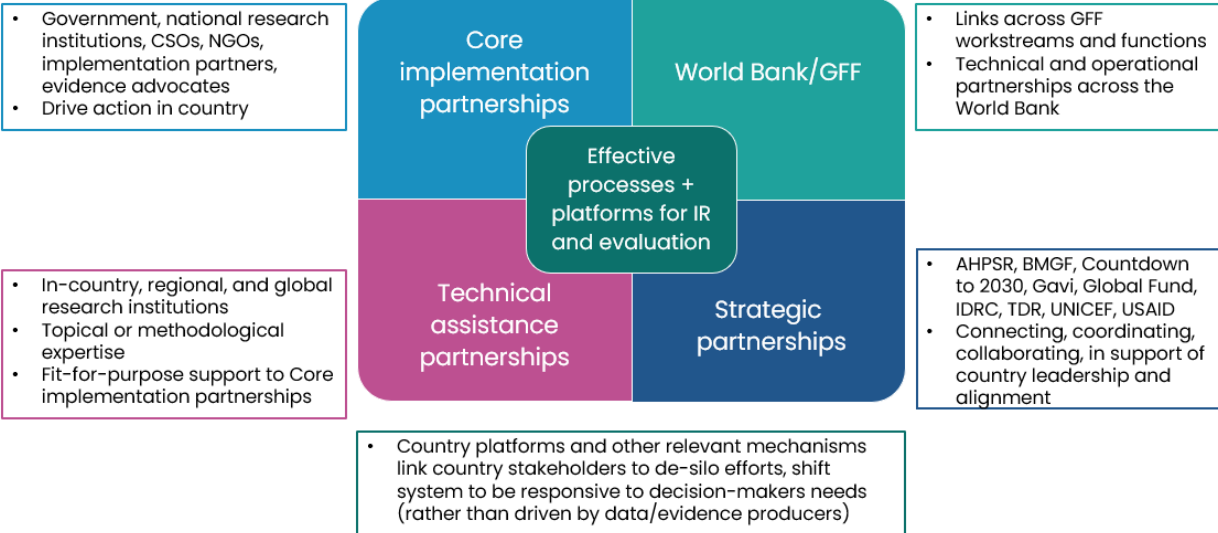


Figure 4: Types of partnerships needed for delivery of IR&E Strategy

Technical assistance partnerships with in-country, regional, and global technical institutions enable the mobilization of topical or methodological expertise as needed for fit-for-purpose support to specific IR&E activities. Thus, strengthening partnerships with in-country research and technical institutions is critical for building upon existing capacities, connecting to national policy processes, and long-term sustainability. Core implementation partnerships with governments, national research institutions, civil society, and implementing partners drive action in countries, for conduct of IR&E and use of findings to influence policy, programs, and resource allocation. Some key partnerships, such as with Countdown to 2030, cut across multiple categories, with strategic elements combined with technical assistance and support for implementation of studies and evaluations.

3. *Facilitating access to financial resources*

The GFF is well positioned to help facilitate access to funding for IR&E, first and foremost by using its regular engagement model to support countries to plan, budget, and manage resources for IR&E activities through their own resources and public financial management systems wherever feasible. The GFF will also help mobilize funding for IR&E activities by facilitating linkages with World Bank and GFF cofinanced projects, providing direct funding where needed, and by seeking cofinancing through strategic partnerships with other international agencies and donors. Cofinancing with other agencies and donors could be in a specific country or in a given thematic area—with particular attention to catalytic and priority themes (see objective 3); relevant and flexible coordination and funding mechanisms will be established and tailored to the specific opportunity. Various World Bank and GFF financing instruments can be deployed to finance the design, implementation, and use of IR&E studies, including International Development Association (IDA), International Board for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), and GFF grant financing. Technical cooperation in support of design and conduct of country-led IR&E activities will be financed through Bank-Executed Trust Fund resources, including programmatic advisory services and analytics instruments, where relevant. For selected topics, the GFF will mobilize resources to provide structured funding opportunities for IR&E, in a manner that links to larger amounts of money from IDA and domestic resources.

4. *Facilitating identification of and response to knowledge gaps and learning needs*

Throughout the IC development and implementation process, multiple relevant entry points exist for identifying knowledge gaps and learning needs as well as for designing and implementing responsive IR&E activities. To facilitate the identification of country-specific implementation knowledge gaps in key thematic areas by stakeholders, the GFF will support and strengthen the role of country platforms and other existing coordination mechanisms in the development of research and learning plans, where and when appropriate. Regular reviews of implementation progress will include assessment of challenges and bottlenecks to identify associated knowledge gaps and learning needs. The GFF anticipates targeted IR studies addressing such gaps will in many cases build upon more comprehensive IC evaluations in a manner that takes advantage of processes, engagement modalities, and technical expertise already in place. This has the potential advantage of being more efficient, synergistic, and coherent, with evidence and learning on specific prioritized topics well contextualized within the broader IC implementation.

5. *Synthesizing and disseminating evidence*

Guided by strategic evidence translation plans at country and global levels, the GFF will leverage its knowledge and learning function to facilitate synthesis and dissemination of evidence generated through IR&E activities, within and across countries. Where relevant, the GFF will support activities across the portfolio of GFF-supported countries to build on country-specific learning and promote global and transferable learning, for example through:

- Comparative studies and evidence syntheses across settings on key thematic areas highlighted in the GFF strategy (such as system reforms, innovations, gender, and equity) or other topics of interest to country stakeholders
- Metareviews of implementation research across contexts to synthesize key themes and inform learning within and across countries
- Synthesis of IC evaluations across multiple countries that document evidence and learning about the GFF model, strategy, and operations; strengthening of mutual accountability; and informing improvements (for example, support for IC development and prioritization processes; donor and

partner alignment; country platform functionality; resource mapping and expenditure tracking (RMET) processes; resource allocation procedures; and technical assistance modalities)

Key knowledge products—such as briefs summarizing existing evidence and knowledge gaps—will be produced and their use supported as part of the regular GFF engagement model.

6. *Facilitating use of evidence and learning for decision-making*

In implementing the strategy, multiple mechanisms to enhance evidence use and enable learning will be used. Supported by the GFF’s knowledge and learning function, specific proactive learning plans will be developed to transform the evidence and knowledge generated through IR&E activities into learning, enhanced competence, and use, both within and across countries. The GFF will support country platforms to incorporate regular review of findings from IR&E studies into routine assessment of IC implementation progress, and to use customized learning mechanisms in a timely manner to help inform improvements. This effort will include a combination of learning support features, ranging from the crafting of actionable knowledge assets (case studies, briefs, or infographics), online interactive resources, learning workshops (virtual or in-person), and communities of practice that create space for reflection and exchange to stimulate sustainable peer-to-peer learning, within and across countries. Learning support activities will be planned and implemented as part of ongoing GFF engagement efforts in countries. Additionally, to inform iterative improvement of implementation of this strategy and the GFF model more broadly, the GFF will develop its own continuous learning plan, supported by systematic process documentation and other activities, to facilitate learning from implementation processes and outcomes at country level, amongst countries, and at the GFF Secretariat level. Reflections and lessons learned will be generated with stakeholders and shared through communities of practice and other modalities where relevant.

Integration with IC Processes

As part of this strategy, the GFF aims to help facilitate systematic integration of IR&E activities into country-led IC development and implementation processes. Depending on the stage of the IC cycle a country has reached, some IR&E activities will be undertaken at the beginning of an IC development process, while others will occur throughout its implementation. In addition to the stage of the IC cycle, the GFF will assess complementary efforts in countries (for example, Country Leadership Program and Alignment Working Group) to identify entry points and ensure IR&E activities are synergistic with other efforts when an added value of doing so is identified. Where feasible and responsive to country demand, the GFF will help facilitate the inclusion of prospective approaches to evaluating IC processes and outcomes, including the role of country platforms, into IC processes from the beginning. For countries that have moved beyond the design stage and are in process of implementing their ICs, the GFF will help facilitate: (1) use of IR&E to improve IC implementation through integration into timely feedback loops focused on using data and evidence routinely to address implementation challenges and bottlenecks; and (2) a shift toward building in IR&E from the beginning as part of the next round of IC development. See Appendix A for a draft concept note for an IC evaluation in countries at different stages of implementation.

Criteria for Prioritization of IR&E Activities

To prioritize which IR&E activities to support, the GFF will consider the following criteria aligned with the principles underpinning this strategy and the central focus on supporting country-led processes:

- Responsiveness to expressed country learning needs that advance priority IC reforms or interventions
- Focus on key thematic areas, as relevant to a particular country

- Feasibility and appropriateness of scope and timeframe
- Focus on generating actionable knowledge to inform course correction or adaptive management
- Opportunities for cross-country learning

Learning Topic Areas

Key areas of investigation and learning could be relevant at either country-specific or cross-country level and address the following types of issues:

- IC design and implementation processes (for example, the role and effectiveness of the country platform as a mechanism supporting stakeholder coordination and engagement; strategic and operational consideration of key principles, such as gender and equity, in the IC prioritization process; the role of IC processes in guiding the health system reform agenda and informing prioritization; the IC as an instrument to facilitate alignment)
- Key results in terms of: aligning country and donor investments around IC priorities; advancing health financing and system reforms; advancing gender-responsiveness and equity; improving RMNCAH-N outcomes
- Lessons learned to inform the next IC, or other suitable follow-on instrument (for example, adaptations to the IC process; strategies to integrate gender and equity considerations in IC processes; factors enabling or hindering IC development and implementation; factors influencing achievement of prioritized objectives)
- Specific knowledge gaps or implementation challenges (for example, identifying and addressing key implementation barriers and system bottlenecks; informing the design of a particular implementation process or strategy; piloting, testing, and comparing the viability and suitability of new implementation strategies and innovations; determining whether and how to expand the reach and impact of effective interventions (scale-up or de-implementation).

Where relevant, IR&E activities will also generate knowledge and enable learning regarding what works in different contexts and how, in relation to the following key thematic areas:

- Country leadership, alignment, and prioritization processes
- Gender and equity
- Adolescent health and wellbeing
- Reimaging service delivery
- Private sector engagement strategies
- Pathways from innovation to scale
- Climate resilience strategies
- Emergent issues prioritized by country stakeholders during IC implementation

Considerations Related to Methods and Data Sources

As part of its IR&E strategy, the GFF will work through a partnership approach to support country-led processes for selecting methods and data sources well suited to addressing the specific learning objectives and prioritized knowledge gaps. While this strategy does not include *a priori* prioritization of specific methods or data sources, it does embrace opportunities to conduct evaluative work in a prospective manner, such that findings can inform course corrections through timely feedback loops. Through this strategy, the GFF encourages use of routine data sources countries generate via their own systems, with assessment of quality and completeness and relevance of data for policy and programmatic action. In particular, the assessment of the evolution of data sources for effectively analyzing critical concerns, such as gender and equity, innovation, and scale, is an integral element. The GFF also provides support for development and testing of methodological innovations (for example, rapid cycle analysis of health

management information system (HMIS) data and rapid phone surveys of households and health facilities), where they are suitable for addressing specific learning objectives and knowledge gaps identified.

Measuring success

The GFF envisions the IR&E strategy will contribute to strengthening accountability for achievement of measurable results. The success of the strategy, therefore, is not simply in generating high quality evidence through IR&E, but additionally in strengthening systems for evidence generation and use for both countries and the GFF partnership. Through this strategy, the GFF commits to engage in countries in a manner that deliberately contributes to building learning health systems, specifically focusing on strengthening systems and country leadership for generating high-quality, timely, relevant, and actionable evidence in a manner that is responsive to health system needs. Success of the strategy also means generating evidence and facilitating learning about the GFF model and its approach to country engagement, such that GFF support remains agile in adapting based on what works in different contexts. The GFF is committed to systematic learning and improvement to contribute to accountability, and ensuring that resources are used effectively and the model is refined and improved, based on evidence and learning.

What does success look like:

- Country leadership of learning and improvement agenda strengthened
- Country processes, structures, and institutional arrangements in place to support the integration of IR&E processes within health or multi-sectoral programming
- Robust findings used in a timely manner to inform and improve country-led IC and stakeholder convening processes
- Evidence on key thematic areas generated and used to help countries accelerate progress toward improved health for women, children, and adolescents
- Evidence used to refine and improve GFF strategy, model, and support modalities, as a mechanism of improvement and accountability

Oversight and Guidance of the GFF IR&E Strategy: Role of the Results Advisory Group

The GFF has convened a Results Advisory Group composed of experts from multiple disciplines to help tackle difficult measurement questions, serve as a sounding board, and provide expert guidance and advice to the GFF Secretariat. This advisory group has played a pivotal role in providing advice and guidance to the development of the IR&E strategy and will continue to advise the GFF in implementation.

Over time, the Results Advisory Group will focus on the following objectives:

- Provide advice and guidance to the GFF to inform adaptations of the strategy based on implementation experience;
- Integrate emerging innovations and best practices;
- Strengthen learning processes and mutual accountability at global and country level;
- Assess the utility and effectiveness of the strategy in contributing to GFF goals.

In addition, the Results Advisory Group will provide oversight and guidance on the integration of key strategic results areas, such as gender and equity, into the IR&E strategy. Through the implementation of this strategy and associated learning plan, the GFF will contribute to learning about building and sustaining a gender-inclusive and supportive system for IR&E. The Results Advisory Group will report periodically to the GFF Investors Group.

Appendix A: Draft Concept Note for Evaluation of Investment Case Processes and Outcomes among Countries at Various Stages of Implementation

Context

Countries supported by the Global Financing Facility for Women, Children and Adolescents (GFF) have utilized the investment case (IC) process in a flexible and adaptive manner to assess needs, engage stakeholders, prioritize interventions, mobilize resources, and align efforts from a range of partners. Similarly, many countries have adopted different approaches to convening stakeholders in an inclusive and coordinated manner through their country platforms and other relevant mechanisms. In light of significant variation in how countries have adapted the IC process and related stakeholder engagement processes based on context, there is need to generate learning and evidence within and across countries regarding the IC development and implementation process, associated results and the role of the country platform and related stakeholder convening mechanisms.

Aim

By providing support to country-led evaluations of IC processes and outcomes, this activity aims to:

- Generate evidence and learning on the design, implementation, and outcomes of IC processes within and across countries, including the role of country platforms and related stakeholder convening mechanisms
- Strengthen transparency and accountability for achievement of measurable results
- Facilitate uptake and use of the findings and evidence to inform decision making and improvement

Audience and Use Cases

The primary audience is country platforms and national decision makers in the specific countries participating in the evaluations. The primary use case enables learning and inform country-level decision making through country platforms and other relevant mechanisms, as follows:

- Identification of the value-add of the IC process and what changed as a result
- Strengthening the role of the country platform and other relevant mechanisms in bringing stakeholders together in an inclusive manner
- Identifying and addressing gaps in alignment of partners with country-led processes
- Strengthening implementation and monitoring arrangements for the current IC
- Identifying areas where innovation and change are needed
- Identifying practices and approaches at subnational or national level that could have relevance and value for transfer and scale
- Strengthening mutual accountability and informing the development of the next IC process (or other suitable follow-on instrument)

The secondary audience and use cases are cross-cutting and global in nature. The GFF Investors Group and the various constituencies they represent, the GFF Secretariat, World Bank, and other partner organizations constitute an important audience for these evaluations. The global use cases will explore the learning across the different country-specific use cases and strengthen accountability for measurable results. Examples of cross-cutting and global use cases include the following:

- Deepening the understanding of different adaptations of the IC process and implementation approach across diverse contexts, and associated results
- Identifying innovations, practices, and adaptations that could have relevance and value for transfer and scale across countries
- Informing efforts to strengthen alignment, country leadership, and the role of country platforms and other relevant mechanisms
- Informing the updating of tools, guidance, and support modalities for future IC development, implementation, and monitoring
- Generating learning regarding the GFF strategy and country engagement model, and informing efforts to strengthen the model, alongside other knowledge and learning activities

High-Level Evaluation Questions

The individual country evaluations will share a common set of high-level evaluation questions, alongside questions tailored to specific country context. The questions will cover IC design and process, results, and lessons learned, as illustrated by the examples below:

Design, process and adaptation: To what extent did the process and approach to developing the IC reflect key principles of country leadership, equity, prioritization, data-drivenness, nonduplication and working with existing structures? To what extent have the IC approach and implementation arrangements helped guide different levels of government and other stakeholders in their health financing and systems reform agenda and influence implementation progress? To what extent and how has the country platform helped facilitate inclusive stakeholder dialogue and contributed to strengthening country leadership and alignment?

Results: To what extent have countries and donors made progress in aligning their investments with prioritized ICs? To what extent have countries made progress in advancing health financing and systems reforms and improving RMNCAH-N outcomes as prioritized through their ICs?

Lessons learned: What adaptations have proven useful (or not) to the local context, and why? What key factors have helped or hindered implementation and the achievement of prioritized goals and objectives? What are the key lessons learned for helping inform the next round of IC development and implementation (or other suitable follow-on instrument), and for strengthening the country platform? What are key recommendations for improving processes and results at country level?

Multi-step process

In order to reinforce country leadership of the process, the GFF will structure this activity as a set of country-specific IC evaluations linked through a peer networking approach.

The GFF will use its knowledge and learning function to facilitate exchange and learning across countries on IC processes and mechanisms for coordination and alignment. The GFF will also help foster connections between the technical institutions leading the work in each country through a community of practice supported through its knowledge and learning function. This will enable technical institutions to exchange with and learn from each other about process, methods, findings (and the use of findings), in a collaborative manner.

The GFF will conduct a metareview of the individual evaluations and synthesize key themes and findings. As much as possible, the GFF will aim to achieve an appropriate degree of comparability across country-specific evaluations, in addition to facilitating exchange and learning across countries and supporting uptake and use through its regular country engagement model, using country platforms and other relevant mechanisms as the key fora for convening stakeholders.

The GFF Results Advisory Group will provide guidance on the process and review the cross-country analysis and synthesis report brought to the Investors Group.

Country Participation

Countries with more mature implementation of their ICs (generally after three or more years) will be given the first opportunity to participate in this activity, if they are interested in doing so. Two countries implementing for more than four years, Kenya and Liberia, have recently initiated IC evaluation processes led by the African Population and Health Research Center and the University of Liberia, and will be included in the community of practice and cross-cutting synthesis, subject to further discussions with stakeholders. The GFF will convene consultations with stakeholders to ascertain demand for participating in this evaluation activity.

Based on learning from this round of country-led IC evaluations, the GFF will assess opportunities for extending the opportunity to additional countries. In line with its strategic approach to IR&E, the GFF is initiating a shift whereby evaluation and learning are defined as core components of the IC and built into the process from the beginning. Learning generated through this activity will help inform efforts to facilitate that shift.

Note

1. Read and/or download the World Bank Group Evaluation Principles (2019) online: <https://ieg.worldbankgroup.org/sites/default/files/Data/reports/WorldBankEvaluationPrinciples.pdf>

References

Peters, David, et al. 2013. "Implementation Research: What It Is and How to Do It. *British Journal of Medicine* 347: :f6753. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.f6753>.

Theobald, Sally, et al. 2018. "Implementation Research: New Imperatives and Opportunities in Global Health." *The Lancet* 392 (10160): 2214–228. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736\(18\)32205-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736(18)32205-0).