CIF CLIMATE INVESTMENT FUNDS

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First Meeting of the Global Climate Action Programs (GCAP) Sub-Committee

Washington D.C. (Virtual)

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Renewable Energy Integration (REI) Program Independent Expert Group Report

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Proposed Decision

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CLIMATE INVESTMENT FUNDS

RENEWABLE ENERGY INTEGRATION PROGRAM

(REIP)

Final Report of the Independent Expert Group (IEG) to the Strategic Climate Fund (SCF) Sub Committee

September 30, 2021

List of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

List of abbreviations

ACT	Accelerating Coal Transition, part of the Climate Investment Funds
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AFDB	African Development Bank
BESS	Battery Electric Storage System
CCGT	Combined Cycle Gas Turbine
CCV	CIF Climate Ventures, part of the Climate Investment Funds
CIF	Climate Investment Funds
CIF AU	Climate Investment Funds Administrative Unit
CT	Combustion Turbine
CTF	Clean Technology Fund, part of the Climate Investment Funds
DPSP	Dedicated Private Sector Program, part of the Climate Investment Funds
EAP	East-Asia Pacific
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ECA	Eastern Europe and Caucasus
EoI	Expression of Interest
FIP	Forest Investment Program, part of the Climate Investment Funds
GCAP	Global Climate Action Programs, part of the Climate Investment Funds
GESP	Global Energy Storage Program, part of the Climate Investment Funds
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
HI	High income (countries)
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IDA	International Development Agency
IEA	International Energy Agency
IEG	Independent Expert Group
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IP	Investment Plan, for the Climate Investment Funds
IPP	Independent Power Producer
IPPG	Investment Plan Preparation Grants
IRENA	International Renewable Energy Agency
LAC	Latin America and Caribbean
LDC	Least Developed Countries
LIC	Low-income countries
MDB	Multilateral Development Bank
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MLIC	Middle low-income countries
MPIS	MDB Project Implementation and Supervision Services under the Climate Investment Funds
NAMA	Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions
NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions
PPCR	Pilot Program for Climate Resilience, part of the Climate Investment Funds
REI	Renewable Energy Integration

REIP	Renewable Energy Integration (Integration of Renewable Energy into Power Systems) Program, part of the Climate Investment Funds
RfP	Request for Proposal
SCF	Strategic Climate Fund, part of the Climate Investment Funds
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SREP	Scaling Up Renewable Energy Program, part of the Climate Investment Funds
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
TCLP	Transformational Change Learning Partnership, part of the Climate Investment Funds
UMIC	Upper middle-income countries
VRE	Variable renewable energies (wind, solar PV)
WB	World Bank

Acknowledgements

The Independent Expert Group (IEG) of the Renewable Energy Integration (REI) Program wishes to acknowledge the support of the Climate Investment Funds (CIF) Administrative Unit (AU) and the technical inputs from the Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs). The background, insights provided by all, enhanced, and contributed much to our discussions as an IEG.

The IEG also wishes to thank the CIF team for their support in assisting in the preparations and workload development involved through the very demanding process of performing the assessments for the large number of Expressions of Interests (EoI) submitted under this first REI Program Call for Expressions of Interest.

1. Introduction

1.1 The CIF Renewable Energy Integration Program (REI Program)

In the current energy sector context and the goals of the Paris Agreement, accelerating the energy transition requires a full package of country-specific measures to enhance flexibility in energy systems and, to this end, concessional capital to push boundaries and increase the penetration of renewable energies (RE) in the energy mix. There is an urgent need to demonstrate, at scale, the integration of high volumes of variable renewable energy (VRE) into power systems in a way that maintains safety, reliability, and security of energy supply while establishing alternative investment pathways that are consistent with a 1.5 °C warming scenario.

Recognizing the need to urgently scale-up climate finance ahead of this year's UNFCCC COP (Conference of the Parties) 26 in Glasgow, UK, G7 nations committed in June 2021 to provide up to USD 2 billion[1] to support the Climate Investment Funds (CIF) in accelerating the transition away from coal and enabling the integration of renewables into energy systems and associated infrastructures [G7, 2021]. CIF is providing funding for five new areas, among them, the Renewable Energy Integration Program (CIF REI Program).

As described in the CIF REI Program Design Document [CIF AU REIP (2021 a)], the Program aims to enhance the flexibility of energy systems for a smooth integration of higher shares of variable renewable energy generation into power grids and increase off-grid access to renewable energy. The program supports the integration of renewable energy into power systems through different flexibility solutions. Specifically, it is designed to help address system-wide barriers to the integration of renewable energy into power systems by targeting the use of concessional finance to accelerate the deployment of an integrated mix of supply-side and demand-side flexibility measures, such as enabling technologies, enabling infrastructure, market design and system operations improvements, and electrification and demand management. Flexibility thereby refers to both technical and operational aspects:

(i) Technical flexibility refers to a set of supply-side, demand-side and grid-related measures, including energy storage, demand-side management programs, and transmission networks-related interventions.
(ii) Operational flexibility refers to how the assets in the power system are operated.

[1] G7 (2021): CARBIS BAY G7 SUMMIT COMMUNIQUÉ "Our Shared Agenda for Global Action to Build Back Better": "…We welcome the work by the Climate Investment Funds (CIFs) and donors plan to commit up to $2 billion in the coming year to its Accelerating the Coal Transition and Integrating Renewable Energy programs. These concessional resources are expected to mobilize up to $10 billion in co-financing, including from the private sector, to support renewable energy deployment in developing and emerging economies…"

The CIF REI Program will provide concessional climate finance through its partner MDBs to support developing and emerging countries in accelerating the deployment of an integrated mix of supply and demand-side flexibility measures according to the best, country-specific combinations of technology pathways that balance the need for different infrastructure requirements.

1.2 The Independent Expert Group (IEG)

An Independent Expert Group (IEG) has been established for the CIF REI Program, with the main task of assessing Expressions of Interest (EoIs) that were submitted.

Following the Operational Modalities approved by the Joint Meeting of the Clean Technology Fund (CTF) and Strategic Climate Fund (SCF) Trust Fund Committees [CIF CTF SCF (2020 a)], the IEG was established, and its members selected, resulting in the following membership:

- Amrit Man Nakarmi, from Nepal
- Christine Woerlen, from Germany
- Engedasew Negash Habtemichael, from Ethiopia
- Oscar Coto, from Costa Rica
- Peggy Mischke, from Germany
- Richard Hosier, from the United States of America

According to the guidance provided, the IEG selected two Co-Chairs, namely Peggy Mischke and Oscar Coto.

1.3 Tasks assigned to the IEG

The IEG conducted its work for the task assigned, in accordance with the timeline agreed with the CIF Administration Unit (CIF AU). All the work of the IEG was conducted virtually through communication platforms and video sharing sessions.

The IEG performed the tasks in accordance with the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the IEG of the CIF REI Program and in consultation with the CIF AU and MDBs.

The tasks assigned to the IEG as stated in their ToR have included:

- Review of the EoI template and selection criteria for the CIF REI Program.
- Evaluation of the submitted EoIs including annexes and to the referenced documents against the Assessment Criteria established in Sections 6 and 7 of the Country Selection Process documents [CIF CTF SCF (2020 a)] and outlined also within the IEG ToR document.
- Presentation to the relevant SCF governing body, of a ranked list of countries, for the CIF REI Program.

The IEG was not able to do additional desk research or country interviews due to the short time available for review. Doing this for some EoIs but not for others would have distorted the assessment in an uncontrollable way.

This final report of the IEG includes the following components as stated in the ToR:

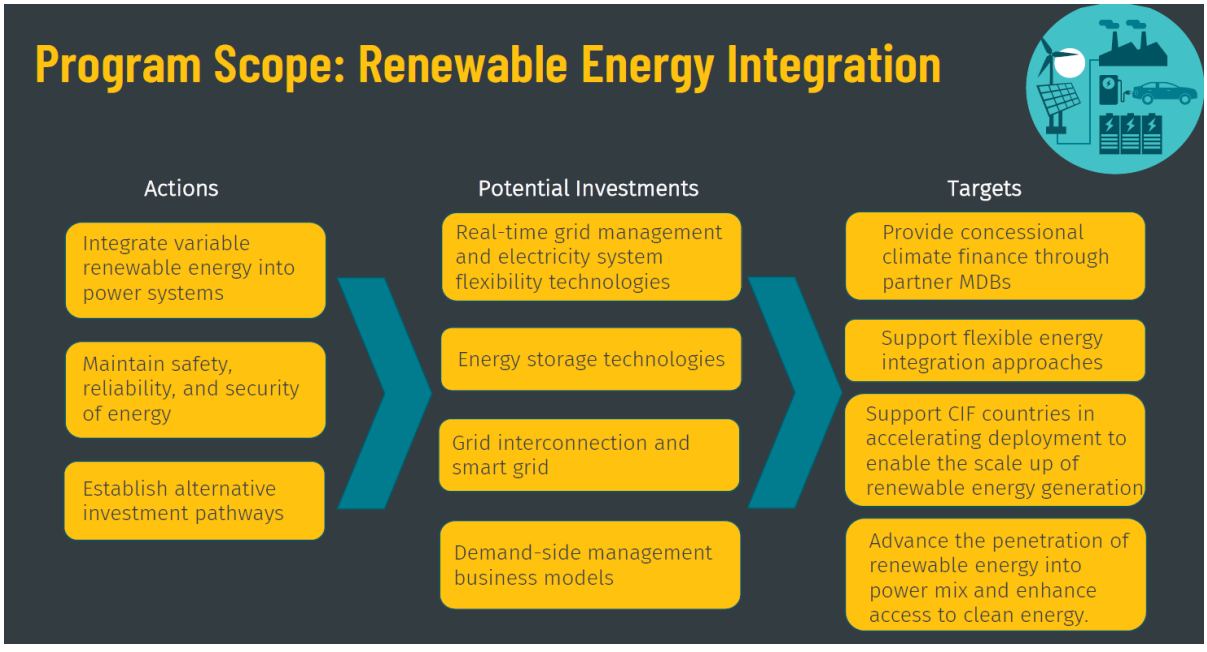
- A ranked list of EoIs from eligible countries for the CIF REI Program.
- Relevant methodological notes and justifications that led to the proposed ranking.
- Assessment of key issues and shortcomings encountered in the assessment process and recommendations for improvements.
- Concluding remarks on the recommended ranked list of EoIs.
- List of stakeholders consulted.

1.4 Role of the REI Program and its technical interventions

Taking into consideration the tasks requested under the ToR, the IEG devoted time early in the implementation of its activities to properly review and discuss technical issues around the integration of renewable energy into power systems, aiming at generating agreements on how the specific evaluations of proposed technical actions proposed by EoIs would be conducted.

Figure 1 presents the programmatic scope of the CIF REI Program, in terms of the general categories of actions, potential investments and targets; all of which respond to the set of identified barriers and the role of the CIF financing.

Figure 1: Programmatic scope of the CIF REI Program



Source : CIF AU REIP IEG (2021)

The CIF REI Program Brief include possible activities to be supported under the program and intended outcomes as reflected in **Error! Reference source not found.**.

Table 1: Possible Activities to be supported under the program and intended outcomes

Scaling up renewable energy enabling technologies: • Energy storage technologies, such as batteries, pumped hydro, and green hydrogen, which can back up the variability of renewables and provide various services. • New technologies for real-time grid management that enhance electricity system flexibility and facilitate distributed generation, such as advanced metering systems, wireless network control, and demand side management, including outreach to women and men users. • Technologies that enable electrification of other sectors, such as electric vehicle charging infrastructure, to open doors to new markets for renewable generation and new ways to store the generation surplus. • Green fuels/e-fuels in sectors like transportation or heating.
Enhancing infrastructure to be renewable energy -ready: • Grid interconnection to integrate regional markets and increase their flexibility. • New and smart grids, both large and small scale, that complement each other and enable new ways to manage variable renewable energy generation. • Changes in the operation of existing hydropower plants to accommodate more penetration of VRE.
Supporting renewable energy innovation: • Business models that empower consumers, turning them into active participants in demand-side management. • Innovative schemes that enable renewable energy supply, in both off-grid and connected areas.
Enhancing system and market design and operation: • New regulations in the wholesale markets that encourage flexibility from market participants, better signal firming power supply's value, and properly remunerate their grid support services. • Design and regulatory change in the retail market that stimulate flexibility on the consumer/prosumer side, including on pricing structures. • New operation procedures that improve predictability of renewable energy such as advanced weather forecast procedures.

The aforementioned Program Brief describes the main expected outcomes of the program to include:

- Improved policies, plans and institutional capabilities of governments to plan, execute and sustainably manage flexible energy systems.
- Mobilized public and private capital into flexibility related investments that will help secure the safety, reliability, and security of clean energy supply.
- Reduced total system cost.
- Fostered innovation.

As clearly indicated, the scope of this program does not include an expansion of Variable Renewable Energy (VRE) assets *per se*. Therefore, the CIF funding should not be planned for VRE asset investments, although it is possible to argue that the program funding might leverage private investments in this area.

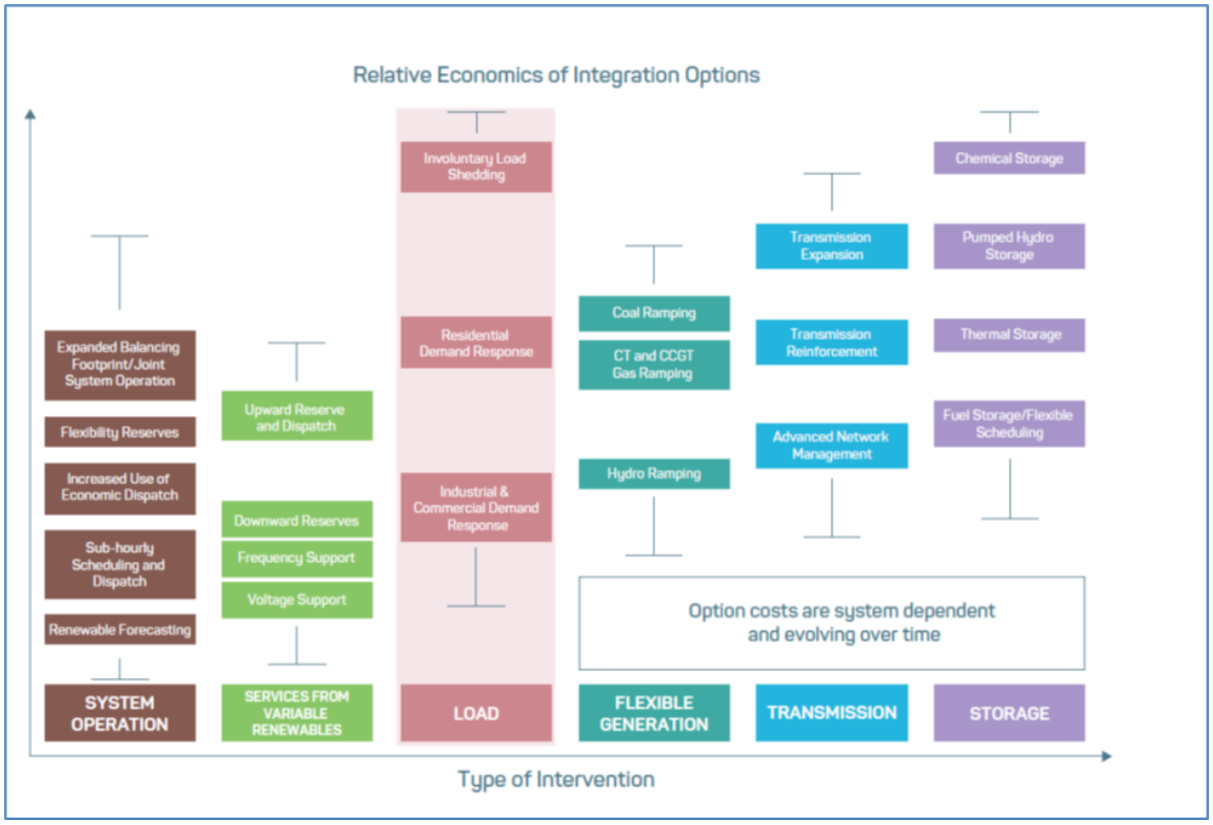
A country's current energy infrastructure assets and corresponding institutional frameworks are key to introducing, prioritizing and phasing the appropriate set of least-cost measures to deploy and increase power system flexibility over time [IEA, 2018].

Figure 2 illustrates a broad spectrum of VRE integration options that can be considered relevant for grid integration of VRE and flexibility enhancement, on a relative technical/economics base. The figure served to guide IEG internal technical discussions on the different options available to increase flexibility in order to develop the common baseline of technologies available. These options include, for example:

- System operation technologies including renewable forecasting, sub-hourly scheduling, increase use of economic dispatch, flexibility reserves and expanded balancing footprint.
- Services from VRE like voltage/frequency support, downward/upward reserve, and dispatch.
- Load management options including industrial/commercial demand response, residential demand response, and industrial/commercial.
- Flexible generation options such as hydro ramping and fossil-fuel sources– while the technical options include in theory fossil-based combustion turbine (CT), combined cycle gas turbine (CCGT)and coal ramping, REI Programme resources cannot be used to support fossil-fuel assets directly or indirectly.
- Transmission options like advanced network management, transmission reinforcement and/or expansion.
- Storage options such as fuel storage/flexible scheduling, thermal storage, pumped hydro storage, chemical storage, etc.

The IEG used the guidance provided by the REI Program to assess the actions proposed by the different EoIs.

Figure 2: Relative Economics of Integration Options



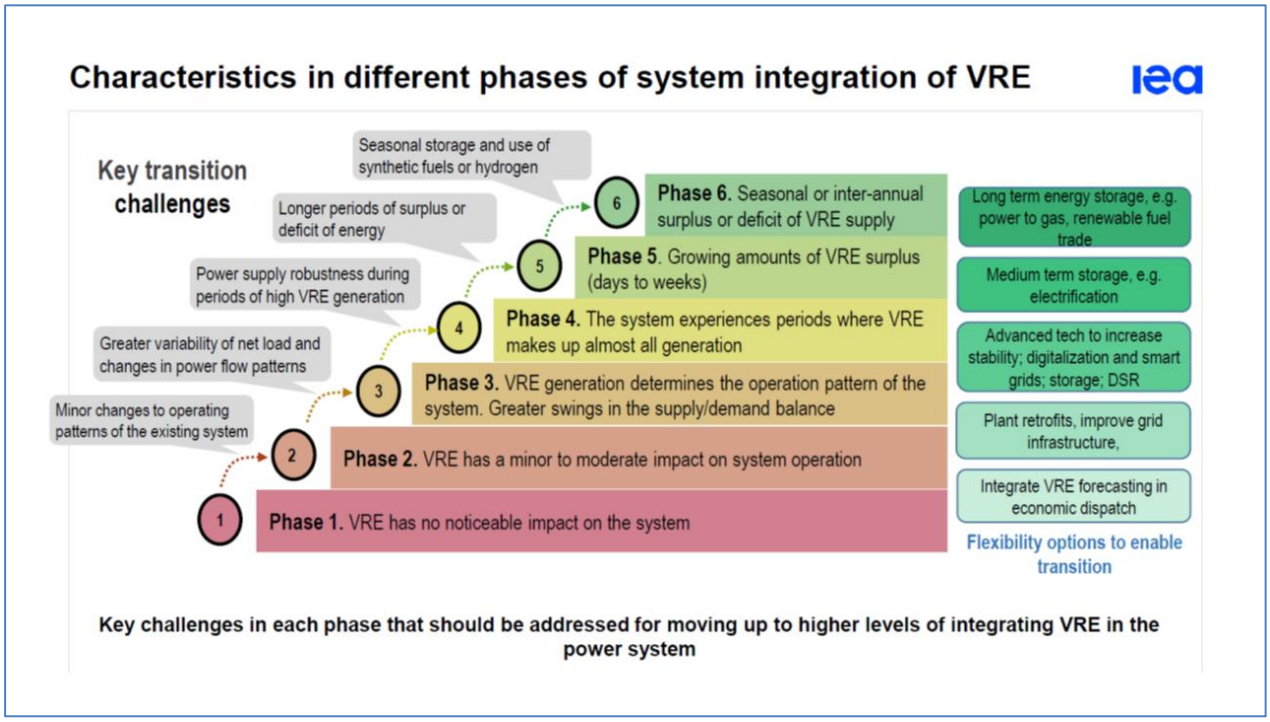
Source: Cochran et al. (2014)

The IEG also discussed the potential role of "green", i.e., renewable electricity based hydrogen as part of the VRE network integration and system flexibility options (IEA, 2018) for the REI Program. Hydrogen is discussed as a future energy source to replace fossil fuels, and if it is produced based on renewable electricity also to decarbonize end-use sectors (heavy transportation, aviation, industry...). Underlying this approach is a large number of processes and technologies which that currently remain costly and technically challenging. Thus, hydrogen-related emerging technology pathways are currently not part of the least-cost and large-scale VRE system integration options across many countries. In Figure 3 below, IEA illustrates the energy systems perspective for the relevant REI technologies in different levels of VRE penetration. The IEG debated and discussed this guidance, with the following result: When VRE penetration provides at times 100% of the electricity consumption (phase 4), the power system enters the stage at which medium term storage can be considered a relevant flexibility option. IEA considers hydrogen only as a viable option for REI if and when there are periods over several months with a VRE (electricity) surplus and all dispatchable power sources are ramped down.

According to IRENA (2018), hydrogen electrolysis is more economically viable when high load factors can be ensured. Indeed, electrolysis (unlike battery storage) can be operated continuously, and is most likely operated as a base load, i.e., rely on base load power plants. In these cases, it would not easily or directly serve grid flexibility or VRE integration - which is fluctuating by definition. Independent of its use (as energy storage,

in transport or industrial applications), base-load reliant hydrogen production will always be as "green" as the current electricity grid emission factors indicate, and as soon as the power grid includes fossil fuels, will not be purely "green" anymore. This highlights some of many interlinked and technically complex aspects that would require further clarification with respect to this program, with respect to if and how "green" any hydrogen produced is to be classified from a "green" infrastructure system planning perspective. Such risks merit further and deeper assessment and analysis, on a case-by-case basis.

Figure 3: Characteristics in different phases of system integration of VRE



Source: IEA (2019)

For the IEG it was also hard to find an instance in the EoIs where "green" hydrogen was proposed for grid flexibility purposes. REI could provide upstream support but the contribution to REI will be noticeable in situations with high VRE penetration only. Yet, this would probably mean that no green hydrogen would be generated with REI Program resources, at least not in the coming 5-8 years. As global markets for green hydrogen production and trade are established, costs for hydrogen and capital investment costs for electrolysis, are expected to decline. CIF resources for such an innovative technology could be more efficiently provided from other resources, for example the currently discussed and proposed Dedicated Private Sector Program (DPSP) and CIF Climate Venture (CCF) window [CIF CCV (2021)]. In the perspective of the IEG, however, there should be additional requirements to analyse the technology readiness level on a country-by-country basis, in synergy with the potential to leverage additional public and private resources.

2. Expressions of Interest

Overall, 54 EoIs were received, comprising 50 country-level requests and four regional submissions, and covering 60 eligible countries[2] in total. Annex 2 includes the list of both country specific and regional program submissions.

The regional distribution of these can be seen in Table 2. The high number of submissions from the Sub-Saharan Africa Region with 22 EoIs is noteworthy. 8 EoI submissions came each from the Europe and Central Asia Region as well as from the Latin America and the Caribbean Region, and the East Asia and Pacific Region. The South Asia Region submissions accounted for 6 EoIs, and there were 3 submissions from the Middle East and North Africa region.

Of the country specific EoIs, 11 came from low-income countries; 23 came from lower-middle income countries and 17 from least-developed countries. There were 8 Small Island Developing States (SIDS) country specific EoIs, as well as 2 SIDS regional programs.

Table 2: Characteristics of the portfolio of submitted EoIs

Europe and Central Asia	**Sub Saharan Africa**	**Latin America and the Caribbean**	**Middle East and North Africa**	**East Asia and Pacific**	**South Asia**
8	21	8	3	8	6
Low Income Countries	**Lower Middle-Income Countries**	**Least Developed Countries**	**Regional EoIs**	**SIDS Country EoIs**	**SIDS regional EoIs**
11	23	17	4	8	2

The EoIs were submitted to the CIF Administrative Unit, encompassing both country-specific submissions as well as regional programs. Although the deadline for EoI submissions was stated as of August 26th, 2021, the IEG notes that EoI submissions were uploaded by the CIF Administrative Unit into the share drives used for information management until August 31st. For one EoI, the full documentation was only uploaded by September 12th.

EoIs submitted in response to the call for EOIs had to include the following:

a. The Expression of Interest Cover Page.
b. The Expression of Interest Template.

[2] The RELAC initiative also comprises Chile and Uruguay, and these two countries were explicitly supportive of the proposal but did not request any resources as they are currently not eligible to submit a CIF proposal.

c. Annexes and supporting documents.

The Call for EOIs provided complete guidance on the criteria to address within the EOI.[3] Such information included, for example, the overarching criteria to be used for assessing EoIs, and program-specific criteria that the REI Program considered important for the EoIs to bear in mind and discuss. Correspondingly, the EoIs often had significant annexes and referenced many documents, so that some packages comprised up to 1000 pages.

[3] CIF (2020).

3. IEG Assessment Methodology

The general approach selected by the IEG to implement the different tasks consisted in open review and discussion of assessment issues, development of a scorecard template, development of two rounds of assessments done firstly on the full collection of EoIs submitted, secondly on a targeted upper tier of EoIs to cross-check and reconcile scores amongst peer reviewers within the IEG, reaching a consensus on the ranked list of EoIs, etc. To accommodate the request to submit a ranked list of prioritized EoIs, the IEG designed a process around quantitative scoring on the criteria supplied in the call for EOIs for the new CIF programs and, specifically, the REI Program. This made other steps necessary, which will be described in the following sections.

3.1 Assessment process

The IEG implemented its work in line with the timetable discussed during the on-boarding session conducted by the CIF Administrative Unit.

The IEG implemented the following process steps to develop the work included in the ToR:

- Participation of the IEG in the on-boarding session organized by the CIF Administrative Unit.
- Comprehensive readings and in-group discussion of the relevant documents provided by the CIF AU, to identify issues and topics that could merit administrative and/or technical follow-up and clarifications at the start of the work.
- Request to CIF AU for the compilation of standardized metrics on the energy sector, GHG emissions, LIC/LDC status, SIDS status etc. of the countries.
- Participation in kick-off meeting with MDB representatives to gain insights on their relevant regional activities.
- Development of a draft scorecard for the assessments to be conducted on the EoIs received; in order to have the means for the careful assessment of the EOI templates (including annexes submitted with the EoIs). The scorecard developed is in alignment with the overarching criteria and their relative weights established by CIF and described in the Call for EoIs. More detail on the creation of the scorecard is provided in the next section.
- Dry testing of the draft scorecard with an initial set of 6 EOIs randomly chosen and assigned to a member of the IEG, respectively, with a view of providing the IEG the opportunity to review and apply to a real case.
- Discussion of the testing and the clarity of the criteria, and fine tuning of the scorecard based on the input received from the IEG members to calibrate interpretation of each criteria by each evaluator and arrive at an aligned and harmonized understanding of the criteria and sub criteria of the scorecard.

- **First-Round Assessments**: each member of the IEG was assigned randomly a set of 9 EoIs, to cover the 54 EoIs received. After the initial allocation of EoIs, IEG members were asked about any potential conflict of interest related to their assigned EoIs. No member was allowed to review EoIs from their own country, no matter whether there was a conflict of interest or not. Through the random allocation and the conflict-of-interest declaration, the independence of the allocation was ascertained.
- After concluding the first round of assessments, the IEG met to discuss the scores through several lenses, including overall scores, spread of the results, average results, results by regions and types of countries, possible inconsistencies in the ratings, etc. The discussion within the IEG identified trends, lessons learned or issues of complexity during the first-round assessment.
- All EoIs with a rating above a certain threshold migrated to a second round of reviews. The threshold was set in line with the time available for second reviews. For some of these EoIs, an adjustment of the score through a second review could not have led to them leaving the range, and these were not submitted to a second review. Outliers to the top were reviewed a second time.
- **Second-Round Assessments**: The second assessments were produced through a second independent review, which developed a second set of scores. Four members of the IEG conducted second reviews. The allocation of EoIs to second reviewers was intended to build on the work experience of IEG members in the respective region/country.
- Reconciliation sessions between IEG members for the first and second reviews of targeted EoIs took place, to reach consensus and submission of a final assessment template with a reconciliated score and rank. The IEG sub-group members agreed on a "deep" micro-level scorecard review, considering jointly all information available in their scorecards, for ensuring a high quality and a strong consensus. Applying a simpler and quicker reconciliation approach through mathematical averaging of total scores was discussed as an alternative methodology but implemented in only one case. The reconciliation was implemented in an open-ended technical reconciliation session with a critical debate of the scorecards for each EoI, looking at all evaluation questions included in the scorecard. In several cases reconciliation led to lower sub-scores, so that the score for the EoI ultimately was lower. Multiple times the reconciliation led to higher sub-scores for an EoI, and higher overall scores.
- An IEG meeting was held for a final review of second round assessments, additional comments, inputs from the members of the IEG, and for reaching consensus on the ranked list to be submitted to the CIF Administrative Unit.

3.2 Derivation of the criteria used in assessments

Table 3 presents the seven overarching criteria and relative weighting factors used in the evaluation of EoIs, in accordance with the approved criteria for the CIF REI Program, as expressed also in the Operational Modalities. The seven overarching criteria included:

1. Vision and Ambition.
2. Alignment and Complementarity.
3. Implementation and Relevance to the CIF REI Program.
4. MDB Partnership.
5. Leadership.
6. Private Sector Engagement and Mobilization; and
7. Social Inclusion, Stakeholder Engagement, and Gender Equality.

The Call for EoIs had provided the submitting countries as well as the IEG with more detail on the content of criteria 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 for all four new programs (cf. Table 3) – which included the weights of all criteria -, and specifically for the REI, for overarching criteria 1 and 3 (cf. Table 3).

There was no difference in the application of the criteria between regional and country specific EoIs.

Table 3: Overarching criteria for assessment of EOIs and weights, from the Call for EoIs

Overarching Criteria	Expression of Interest (EoI)	Criteria Weighting
Vision and Ambition	The EoI indicates the country's level of ambition as it relates to the new CIF strategic program and specifies how the country seeks to use CIF resources to drive transformational change and help achieve its low-carbon and climate-resilient development plan(s) or strategy(ies).	20%
Alignment and Complementarity	The EoI explains how the CIF program aligns with the country's climate strategies and plans (e.g., Nationally Determined Contributions, National Adaptation Plans, SDG-related plans, and/or other relevant low-emission and climate-resilient development plans). Demonstration of the country's commitment to these strategies and plans, as well as progress towards achieving the strategies and plans, will be preferred. The EoI also explains the additional value CIF resources could bring to meeting its goals and demonstrates that CIF fills a funding gap by providing the country with access to concessional resources not otherwise available, or complementary to existing ones.	20%
Implementation and Relevance for CIF Strategic Programs	The EoI identifies potential actions (e.g., policy reforms or investments) or project(s) that are aligned with the strategic objectives of the CIF program and can be implemented through one or more MDBs active in the respective country, as well as financing strategies to leverage MDB and other co-financing to support these projects. Lines of action that cover both mitigation and adaptation are encouraged, where relevant.	15%
MDB Partnership	The EoI provides evidence of a successful past or ongoing lending program with one or more CIF partner MDBs and reflects indicative investment future opportunities.	10%
Leadership	The EoI confirms active involvement of the Ministry of Finance, relevant line ministries and relevant subnational governments in the formulation and implementation of the line(s) of action, including supporting responsible government entities through horizontal and vertical coordination mechanisms.	10%
Private Sector Engagement and Mobilization	The EoI, including annexes, proposes ideas for engaging the private sector in the delivery of the program and mobilization of resources.	10%
Social Inclusion, Stakeholder Engagement, and Gender Equality	The EoI, including annexes, affirms the country's commitment to social inclusion and gender mainstreaming in its development investments, and willingness to work to strengthen climate action and its governance in the country through gender-responsive	15%

Overarching Criteria	Expression of Interest (EoI)	Criteria Weighting
	and socially inclusive investments and planning mechanisms. The EoI, including annexes, includes potential mechanisms for engaging and advancing the voice, skills, and livelihoods of women, indigenous peoples, youth organizations, local communities, environmental and climate NGOs, private sector associations, and the civil society.	

Table 4: Specific guidance for evaluation of overarching criteria 1 and 3 in the context of the REI Program, as provided in the Call for EoIs.

Assessment Criteria	Expression of Interest (EoI)
Vision and Ambition	The EoI demonstrates the country's commitment to the followings: • Reducing or avoiding energy-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions via deployment of Renewable Energy. • Integrating large amounts of variable renewable energy generation into the power system. • Grounding such commitments in official document(s) such as NDC, energy sector strategies, SDG-related plans, or other relevant low-emission and climate-resilient development plan or strategy referenced or annexed in the EoI.
Implementation and Relevance for CIF Strategic Programs	The EoI, including its annexes, identifies actions contributing to one or more of the following goals: • Increasing the flexibility of power grids to enhance the penetration of renewable energies into the energy mix. • Piloting or scaling up innovative renewable energy flexibility solutions. • Harnessing the potential for electrifying end-use sectors, such as building, transport, and industry sectors. • Supporting actions for regional power system integration. • Addressing the climate-related risks to energy systems. The EoI, including its annexes, contains evidence-based analysis performed on the above issues, such as: • Institutional and/or policy frameworks (in place or planned) of relevance for the deployment of power system flexibility solutions. • Evidence-based analysis performed to identify flexibility gaps,18 including case studies. • Evidence-based analysis performed to identify the most cost-effective mix of solutions to fill in flexibility gaps and/or to evaluate the implications of alternative combinations of flexible solutions pathways (e.g., case studies examining specific national and sub-national contexts). • Demonstration of the country's awareness and interest in harnessing the potential of renewable energy generation for electrifying end-uses sector, such as building, transport, and industry sectors. • Demonstration of the potential of regional power sector integration. The EoI must also demonstrate the country's successful track record in: • Deploying MDB funds for low-carbon and/or climate-resilient initiatives The EoI, including its annexes, demonstrates either: • The country has set the legal framework conditions required to achieve the energy-related goals by referencing relevant documentation. *Or* The country has identified the gaps in its legal framework that it needs to address to achieve the energy-related goals.

The overarching criteria as well as the guidance provided in the CfP, included multiple dimensions for assessment. The IEG disaggregated these overarching criteria into specific sub criteria, that could be answered with a score (rather than a lengthy textual assessment), to simulate a tendering process, and have better guidance and due process in the scorecard. This was done along the lines of the bullets in Table 4, or the aspects in the descriptive text in Table 3. Overall, 22 sub criteria were introduced in the scorecard template, and the weights for the overarching criteria defined by the CIF (cf. Table 3) were split into weights for the sub criteria. Specific scoring guidance was prepared and included in the scorecard so that the template could be applied by each reviewer independently in a consistent and transparent way.

3.3 Scorecard used

Table 5 presents the scorecard used on both rounds of assessments conducted on EoIs. An Excel template was developed to automatically track results and scores for the EoIs, through the process of assessments by IEG member.

Table 5: Scorecard template used by the IEG in the assessment of EoIs

Overarching Assessment Criteria and Sub Criteria	Total Weight	High	Medium	Low	no		Choose Scoring rank	Score	
	100							**0**	
AC1. Vision and Ambition	**20**							**0**	
AC1.1. Does the EoI demonstrate the country's commitment to reducing or avoiding energy related GHG emissions via deployment of Renewable Energy?	5	5	3	1	0			0	
AC1.2. Does the EoI demonstrate the country's commitment to integration of large amounts of variable RE generation into power systems?	5	5	3	1	0			0	
AC1.3. Is the country's commitment through such commitments via NDC, energy sector strategies, SDG related plans, and relevant long-term strategy for net zero emissions by 2050 or low carbon economic strategy, and does the EoI specify this? Are the documents recent and can be considered still valid?	5	5	3	1	0			0	
AC1.4. Does the EoI specify how the country intends to use CIF resources to drive transformational change with respect to systemic changes and speed? Benchmark: Paris Agreement; based on the TCLP concept;	5	5	3	1	0			0	
AC2. Alignment and Complementarity	**20**							**0**	
AC2.1. Does the EoI explain the alignment between CIF program and country's existing climate strategies and plans?	5	5	3	1	0			0	
AC2.2. Does the EoI present evidence for a funding gap for reaching the goals expressed in its strategies and plans? //Is there a funding gap according to the EoI? (Making the case that there is a funding gap = low; qualitative evidence for the gap = 3; quantitative evidence for the gap = 5; good and detailed qualitative assessment of the gap = 5)	5	5	3	1	0			0	
AC2.3. Does the EoI explain the additional value addition of CIF resources for achievement of that target? Can this funding gap be plausibly filled with CIF concessional resources?	5	5	3	1	0			0	
AC2.4. Does the EoI explain whether and how CIF resources will help leverage additional funding to bring significant contributions to filling the gap? Will they be significant compared to the gap?	5	5	3	1	0			0	

AC3. Implementation and Relevance for REIP	**15**						**0**	
AC3.1. Is the proposal proposing adequate actions to achieve one or more of the goals of power system flexibility, innovative renewable energy flexibility solutions, regional power system integration or addressing of climate-related risks to the energy systems? 1. establish the baseline of VRE penetration / climate-related risk; 2. determine what would be the transition technology towards the next level; 3. determine whether that is what they are doing.	5	5	3	1	0		0	
AC3.2. Is the EoI based on technically detailed and relevant information and analysis? Regarding institutional frameworks, identification of flexibility gaps, the most cost-effective mix of solutions and or alternative combinations to fill in flexibility gaps, demonstration of the country's awareness and interest in harnessing the potential of renewable energy generation for electrifying end-use sectors, and demonstration of the potential of regional power sector integration?	5	5	3	1	0		0	
AC3.3. Are appropriate financing strategies proposed? Is a track record of MDB funds demonstrated? Does the country have the legal framework conditions to achieve the energy-related goals, or has it identified the gaps in its legal framework and is committed to addressing them?	5	5	3	1	0		0	
AC4. MDB Partnership	**10**						**0**	
AC4.1. Is there evidence provided in the EoI of successful past or ongoing lending programs with the MDBs / Status of ongoing programs	2	2	0	0	0		0	
AC4.2. Does the EoI reflect on indicative investment future opportunities? Is there an indication of the size of the opportunity? (No mentioning =No; Qualitative presentation =low; quantitative from the power sector (GW,trans) =medium; Economic/monetary sizing =high)	8	8	4	2	0		0	
AC5. Leadership	**10**						**0**	
AC5.1. Does the EoI confirm the active involvement of the relevant line ministries and relevant subnational governments in the formulation of the line(s) of action?	2	2	2	1	0		0	
AC5.2. Does the EoI confirm the active involvement of the relevant line ministries and relevant subnational governments in the implementation of the line(s) of action?	2	2	2	1	0		0	
AC5.3. Are there descriptions of the expected horizontal and vertical mechanisms of coordination between responsible government entities?	4	4	2	1	0		0	
AC5.4. Is there involvement of the Ministry of Finance? (Sending the letter of support from the line ministry to the MoF = 2 points; copying the MoF = 1 point)	2	2	1	0	0		0	
AC6. Private Sector Engagement and Mobilization	**10**						**0**	

AC6.1. Yes/No question: is there evidence in the EoI for an engagement plan for the private sector?	1	1	0	0	0			0	
AC6.2. Rating of the quality of the mobilization plan: Does the EoI propose ideas for engaging the private sector? For example: how the project leads to more resource mobilization? (Including e.g., new (RE) business models, more investment into VRE generation, a general idea how the project leads to more investments); higher scores will be justified for example by a higher level of detail, more relationship with renewable energy and grid stability / ESCOs, specific examples from the existing pipeline and recent past and recent private sector funding mobilized, numbers.	9	9	5	1	0			0	
AC7. Social Inclusion, Stakeholders Engagement, and Gender Equality	**15**							**0**	
AC7.1. Does the EoI, including annexes, include potential mechanisms for engaging and advancing the voice, skills and livelihoods of women, indigenous peoples, youth organizations, local communities, environmental and climate NGOs, private sector associations, and the civil society?	5	5	3	1	0			0	
AC7.2. Does the EoI, including annexes, affirm the country's commitment to social inclusion and gender mainstreaming in its development investments?	5	5	3	1	0			0	
AC7.3. Does the EoI, including annexes, affirm the country's willingness to work to strengthen climate action and its governance in the country through gender-responsive and socially inclusive investments and planning mechanisms?	5	5	3	1	0			0	

The process of developing the final scorecard template included intermediate actions and a dry testing of the scorecard in each sample of 6 EoIs. From such actions, several issues emerged to the attention of the IEG on the challenges to be confronted during their assessment and will be discussed in section 6.

4. EoI Scorecard Assessments

The ranking process was conducted in two steps. In the first step, all 54 EoIs were submitted to the ranking via the scorecard through one of the experts. Of these, 22 were promoted to a second round of reviews to validate the score. The IEG recognizes that there will be several considerations influencing the actual funding decision after the technical assessment by the IEG, which makes it necessary for the recommended list to include a multiple of the EoIs that will be selected by the Committee. To allow for a balanced award, e.g., with respect to regions and other contextual factors, this high number seemed appropriate.

4.1 First-round assessments

The application of the score card resulted in the distribution of scores that is illustrated in Figures 4 and 5.

Figure 4: Left (4a): Distribution of scores in first assessment; Right (4b): Scores from the highest to the lowest rating

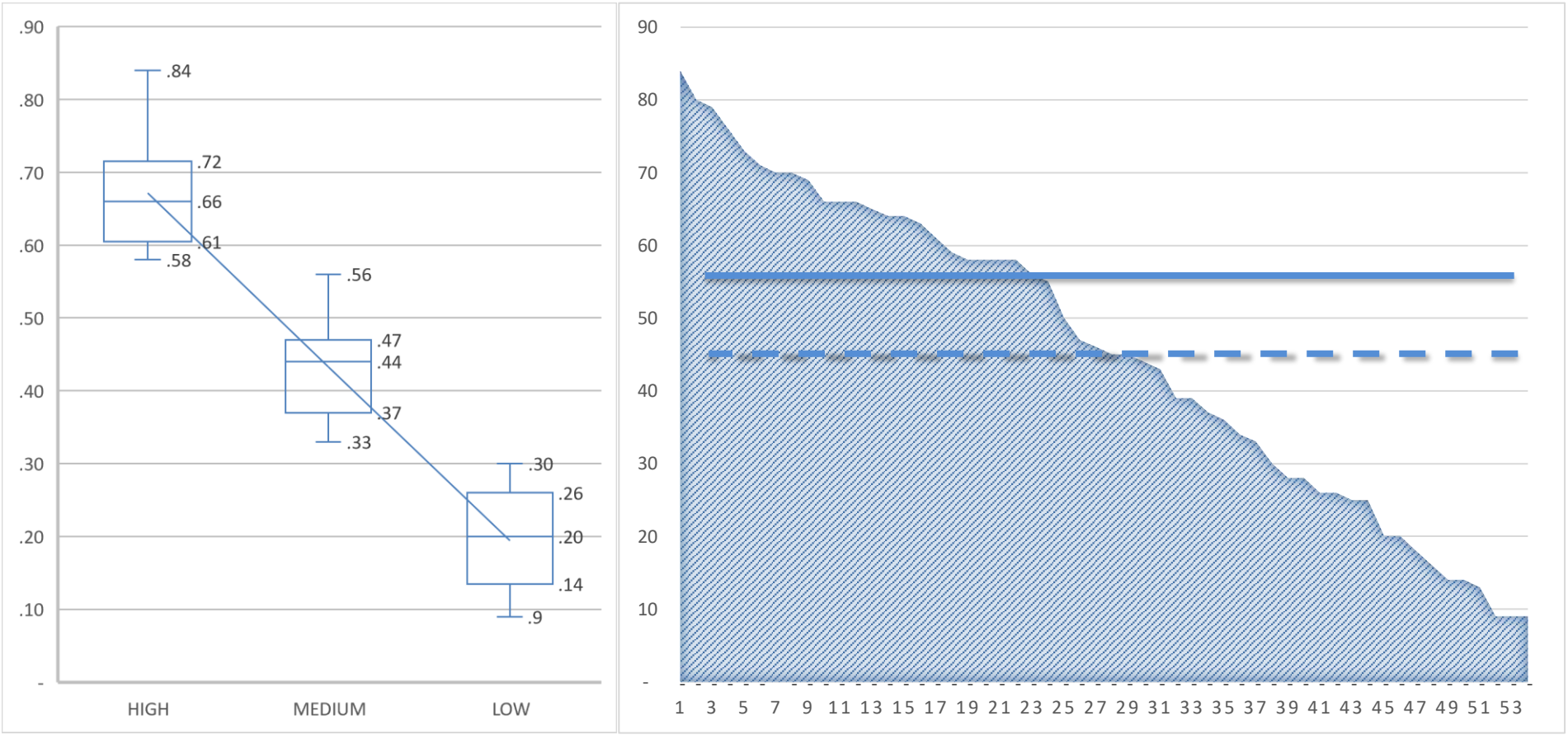
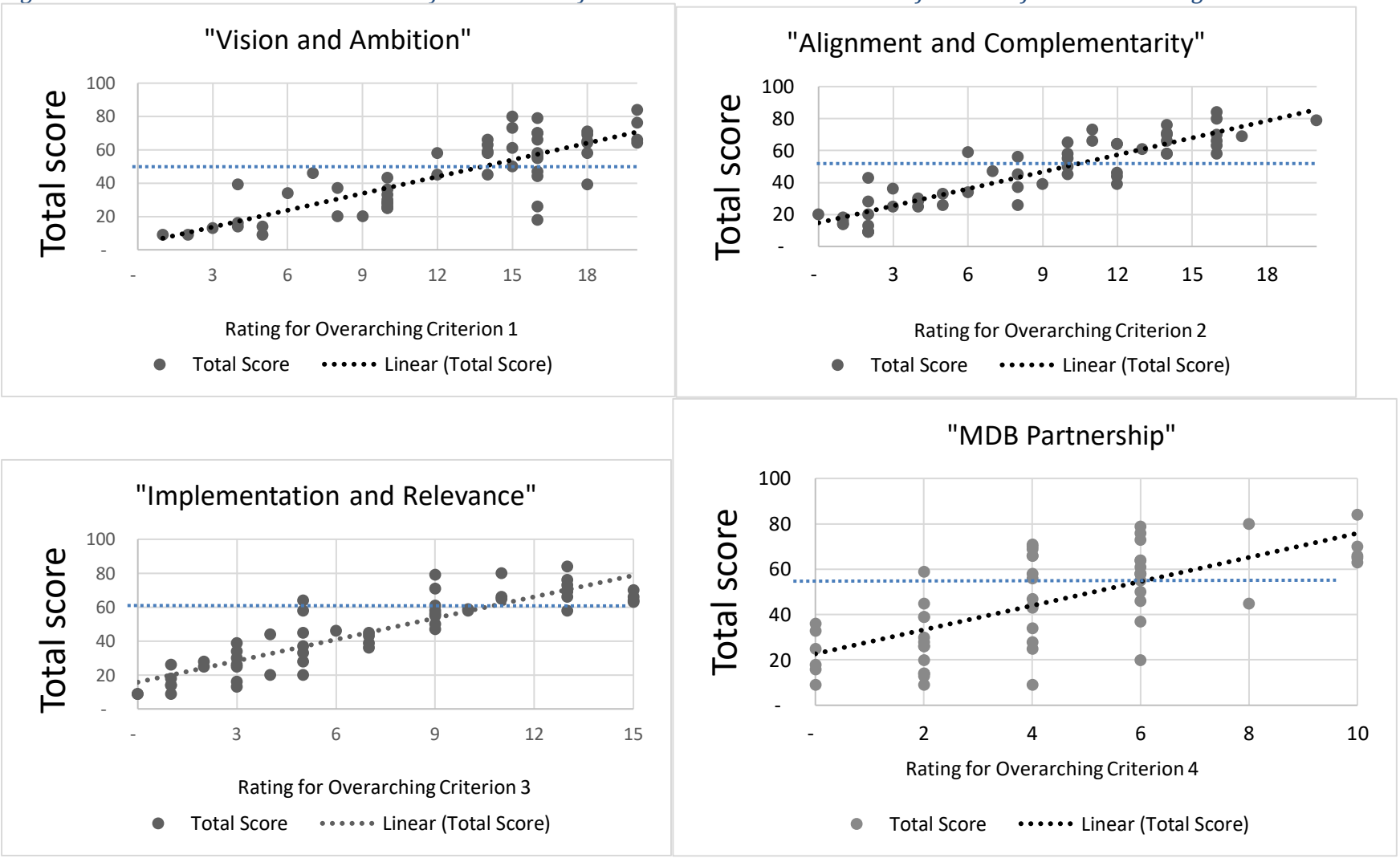


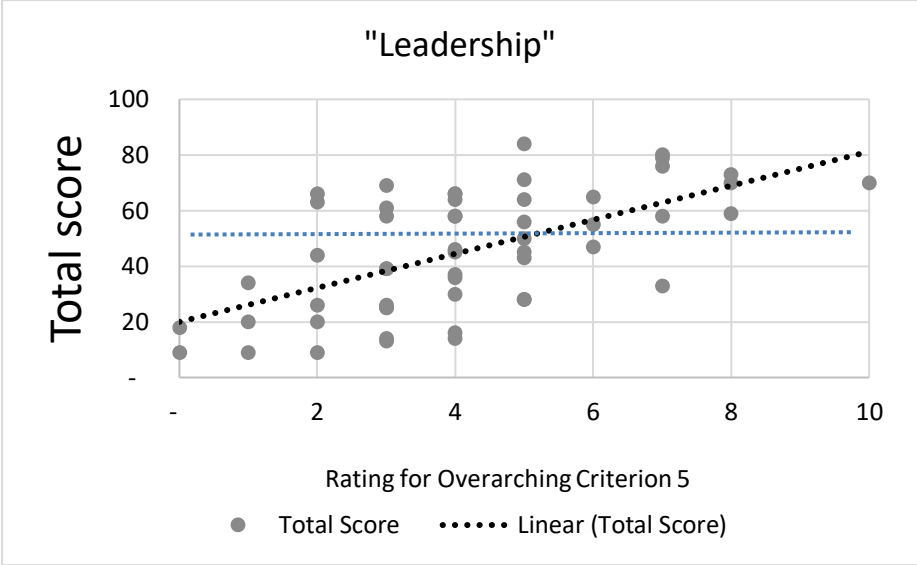
Figure 4a (Left): Box plot of the scores: 50% of the scores are inside the box, middle line is the median value. High: 22 assessments; Medium: 15; Low: 17.
Figure 4b (Right): The horizontal dashed line represents the average; the solid line represents the value of 57 and thus scores classified as high lay above it.

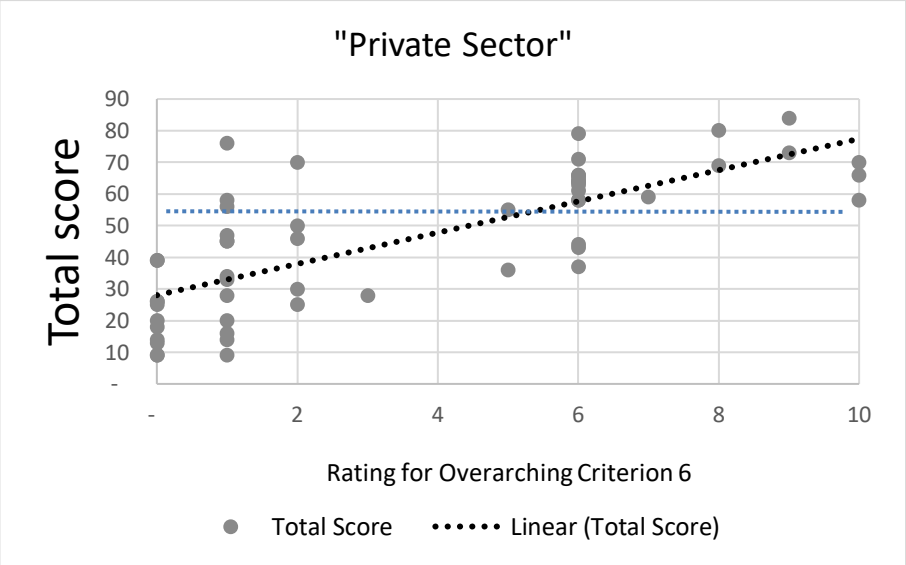
The average of the scores for the portfolio of EoIs in the first-round assessment was 46 points. 50% of the EoIs were rated between 26 and 64, with 25% rated lower and higher, respectively. The lowest score was 9 and the highest in the first round 84.

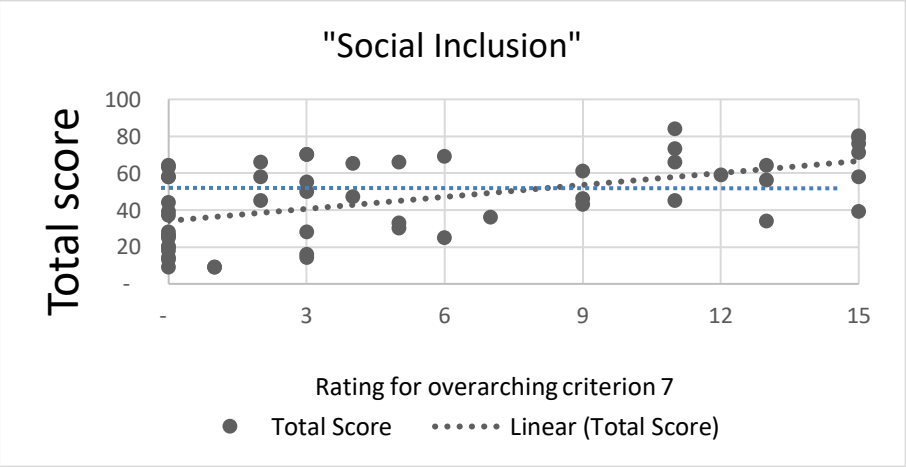
Plotting the overall ratings over the ratings at the overarching criteria (Figure 5) shows how extremes in these ratings can arise, but none of these ratings is really dominating the overall scores. This is a testament to the design of the scoring tool: it was able to provide differentiated scores. In very few cases did multiple EoIs reach the same score.

Figure 5: First-round assessment results for the ratio of EoI total score over the scores for each of the overarching criterion




"Leadership"
Total score
100
80
60
40
20
-
-
2
4
6
8
10
Rating for Overarching Criterion 5
Total Score
Linear (Total Score)


"Private Sector"
Total score
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
-
-
2
4
6
8
10
Rating for Overarching Criterion 6
Total Score
Linear (Total Score)


"Social Inclusion"
Total score
100
80
60
40
20
-
-
3
6
9
12
15
Rating for overarching criterion 7
Total Score
Linear (Total Score)

The diagrams illustrate the relative influence of each overarching criterion. Generally, all individual scores show positive trends, as indicated by the trendlines that go in each diagram from the lower left to the upper right. Generally, the projects that scored very high, i.e., that are above the 57-point cut-off (indicated by the horizontal line) are concentrated in the right side of several graphs. A significant exception to this rule is the criteria 4 – 7.

For the criterion "MDB Partnership" (number 4), almost a third of the EoIs that moved to round 2 scored less than half the available points for this criterion. But all projects that moved to round 2 had at least 2 points. One reason for that is that the EoI template did not specifically ask for investment opportunities for the MDBs beyond the CIF concessional loan even though the assessment criteria explicitly contained that point. A complete response to this would have yielded up to 8 points via the scoring tool.

For the criterion "Leadership", which related to the country-level support and coordination mechanisms, 8 EoIs that scored less than half of the points available here, and another 4 that scored exactly half the points, still moved to round 2. This means that 12 EoIs of the 22 that moved to round 2 were already not performing well on this criterion. The main challenge here was that most EoIs were signed by one governmental body and often the involvement of the Finance Ministry was not documented. Only one EoI sufficiently discussed the vertical and horizontal mechanisms for coordination and was thus able to score full points on this criterion.

For the criterion "Private Sector", the EoIs mostly fell into one of two groups. About half the EoIs had very little consideration of that sector and scored 3 points of less. A significant share of these had no mention of the private sector and therefore scored zero points. None of these moved to the second round which means that they also suffered from other weaknesses. Yet, four EoIs that scored 1 or 2 points managed to be so convincing on other criteria that they were included in round 2. The other group of EoIs scored 5 points or more, with most scoring 6 points. Not all of them managed to graduate to round 2 because of weakness on other criteria.

For the criterion "Social Inclusion" (overarching criterion 7) the diagram shows that a very large group of EoIs did not score any points on this criterion. The reason for this is probably that the EoI template did not provide a natural spot for the assessment of this topic.

Criteria 1–3 show a better correlation between the individual criteria scores and the overall scores. One reason for this better correlation is that these criteria contributed a total of 55% (i.e., 55 points combined) to the overall score. Yet, it is interesting to note that only 2 EoIs scored higher than 16 on the criterion "Alignment and Complementarity" (number 2). The reason for that is that most EoIs did not go into detail about the funding gap, i.e., an explanation of how much their own resources could lead them, and how much of CIF support would be required. This is very unfortunate since it weakens the case for CIF support. In many cases, the closest to a description of the gap was a reference to

conditional vs unconditional targets in the NDCs, which at least explain that the country will not be able to achieve ambitious targets without foreign help. But even with this reference it is hardly discussed how much of that foreign help is already secured (given that few NDCs were updated since 2015, it must be assumed that this is probably the case for most of the submissions) or why it is useful to cover this gap with concessional loans from the CIF rather than, for example, grant resources from another donor.

For the criterion "Vision and Ambition" it is found that all EoIs that moved to the second assessment round scored at least 14 points (with one exception that scored only 12 points). Overall, this was the "easiest" criterion in the sense that the distribution is heavily tilted towards higher scores on this criterion.

This is not so much the case for the criterion "Implementation and Relevance" – indeed the distribution over the range of possible scores is almost even, except for the score of 8 that was not given to any EoI. Here a correlation between high scores (> 9) on the criterion and high total scores, as well as low scores on the criterion (<4) and low overall scores, is demonstrated clearly in the diagram.

4.2 Second-round assessments

All EoIs with a rating of 57 points or higher migrated to the second round of reviews. Of these 22 EoIs, 15 were submitted to a second review. These included those that were extremely high, and those that were close to the lower end of the range. For 7 EoIs, it was clear that a second review would not change the score so much that it would move them out of the range of recommendable EoIs. The lowest score of these was 64. It is possible that the relative ranking within the second-round proposals is affected by this decision. But as the time was extremely short for this assessment, this seemed to be the trade-off with the least disadvantages.

Table 5 provides the characteristics of the portfolio of EoIs that enter the second-round assessments in a similar way as those characteristics were presented in Table 1 for the first-round reviews. It is noteworthy that this selection for the second round did not negatively affect the representativeness of the sample, apart from the fact that only 1 of the 11 Low Income Countries made it to this list.

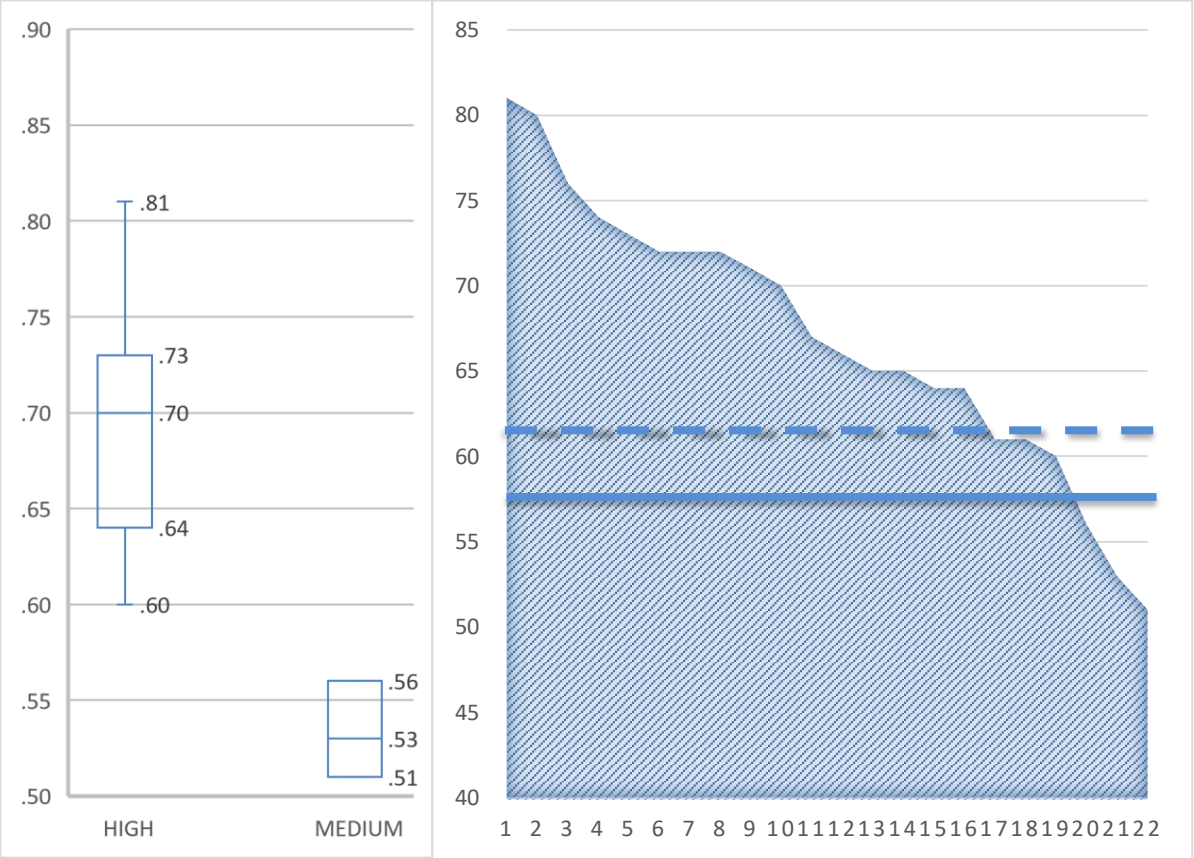
Table 6: Characteristics of the portfolio of EoIs for the second-round assessments (n = 22)

Europe and Central Asia	Sub Saharan Africa	Latin America and the Caribbean	Middle East and North Africa	East Asia and Pacific	South Asia
4	4	5	2	3	4
Low Income Countries	**Lower Middle-Income Countries**	**Least Developed Countries**	**Regional EoIs**	**SIDS Country EoIs**	**SIDS regional EoIs**
1	10	4	2	2	2

The second-round assessments were done on 15 EoIs. Independently of the first review, the second reviewer rated the EoI on each criterion and sub criteria. In some cases, first and second reviews did not differ in the final score, and the sub-scores for the two assessments were averaged where they diverged slightly. In a larger number of cases and in all cases where larger differences appeared, the reviewers discussed the sub-scores in detail, compared if they had considered the same information from the EoIs and used the same comparators and benchmarks. Often this led to minor corrections in both assessments and a reconciled score was achieved. Where this was not the case, averaging was applied.

Figure 6 illustrates that there are still a couple of EoIs that end up with the same score. The average of the resulting second-review scores is around 67. The spread of the scores has become significantly smaller. The highest score was reduced by the second review, as was the lowest score. This led to a situation where three EoIs dropped below the 57-point line.

Figure 6: Distribution of scores after second-round assessments and scorecard reconciliation process



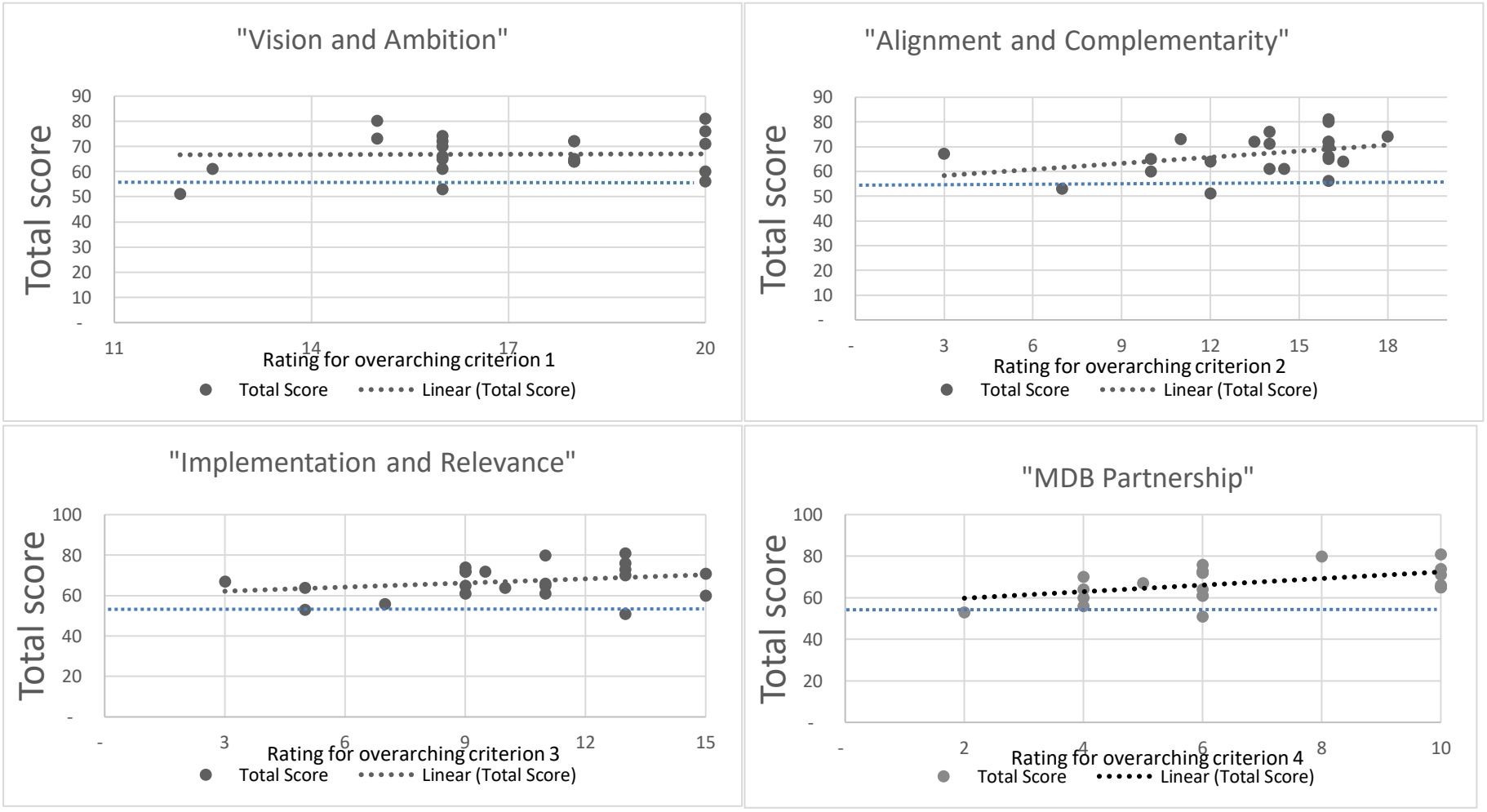
Left: Box plot of the scores: 50% of the scores are inside the box, middle line is the median value. High: 19 assessments; Medium: 3.
Right: The horizontal dashed line represents the average scores of the second-round assessments; the solid line represents the value of 57 and thus scores classified as high lay above it.

The diagrams in Figure7 show that the distribution of scores over the individual criteria looks very different to the first-round. Immediately it can be seen that the trends for some of the criteria, namely "Vision and Ambition" and "Private Sector Participation" is flat. That means that low scores on these are not necessarily correlated with low scores overall but are compensated through other criteria.

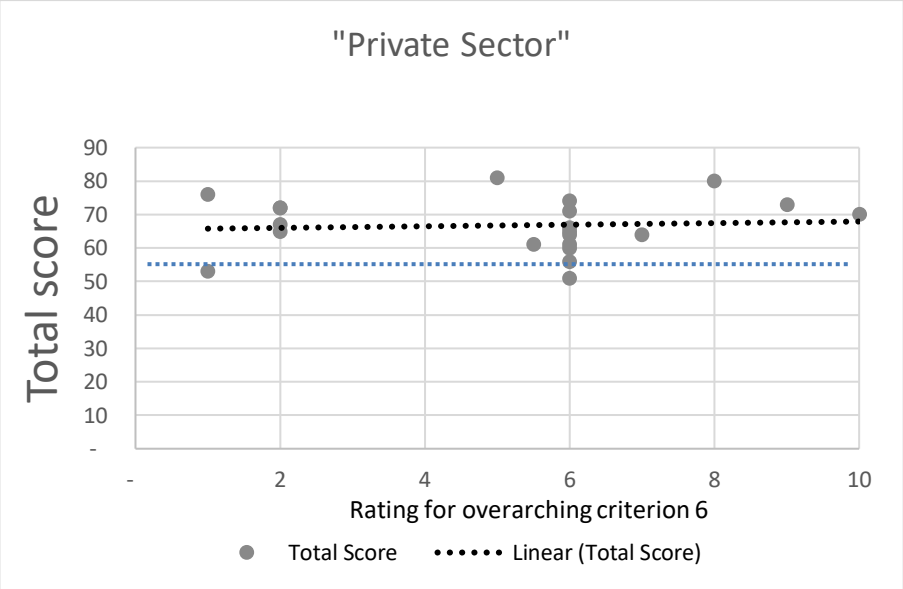
It is noteworthy that almost all criteria assessments are now heavily skewed to the right. This gives some confidence that the selection is appropriate. The criteria for which this is not the case, are – again – Private Sector and Social Inclusion, for the aforementioned reasons. In both areas, EoIs could perform poorly and still stay above the cut-off line of 57 points.

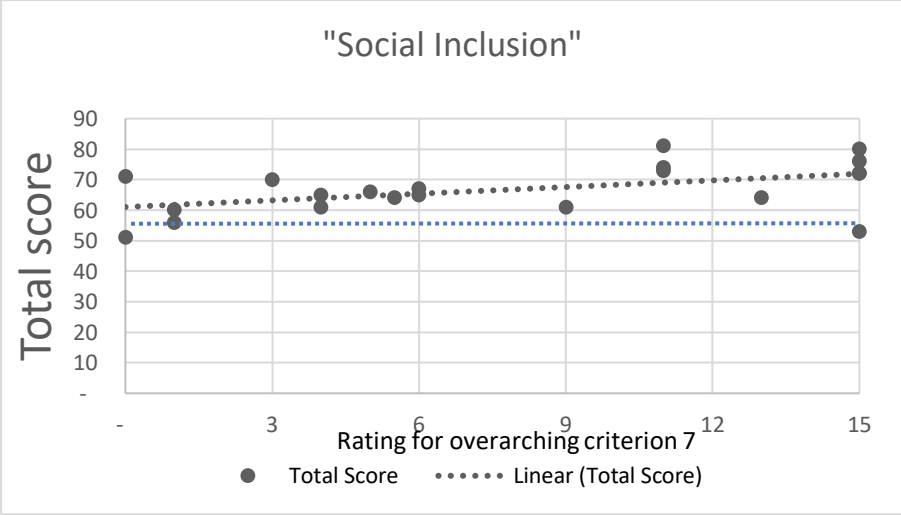
The exceptions were three EoIs that scored below 57. These EoIs were excluded from further consideration. Therefore, out of 22 EoIs, 19 moved into the recommended list.

Figure 7: Second-round assessment results by criteria




"Leadership"
Total score
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
-
-
2
4
6
8
10
Rating for overarching criterion 5
Total Score
Linear (Total Score)


"Private Sector"
Total score
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
-
-
2
4
6
8
10
Rating for overarching criterion 6
Total Score
Linear (Total Score)


"Social Inclusion"
Total score
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
-
-
3
6
9
12
15
Rating for overarching criterion 7
Total Score
Linear (Total Score)

5. Recommended Ranked List of EoIs

Based on the analyses undertaken and summarized in 4.0, the IEG recommends the following ranked list of countries / regional programs for the CIF RE Integration Program, included under Table 6. Annex 5 gives an indication of the scores for each EoI.

Table 7: Recommended ranked list of countries (including regional programs)

	Country / Region	Total Score (max 100)
1	Ukraine	81
2	Fiji	80
3	Colombia	76
4	Kenya	74
5	Mali	73
6	Costa Rica	72
7	Indonesia	72
8	Turkey	72
9	India	71
10	Brazil	70
11	REGIONAL: Eastern Carib	66,5
12	Sri Lanka	66
13	Dominican Republic	65
14	Morocco	65
15	Nepal	64
16	Lesotho	64
17	South Africa	61
18	Tunisia	61
19	Bangladesh	60

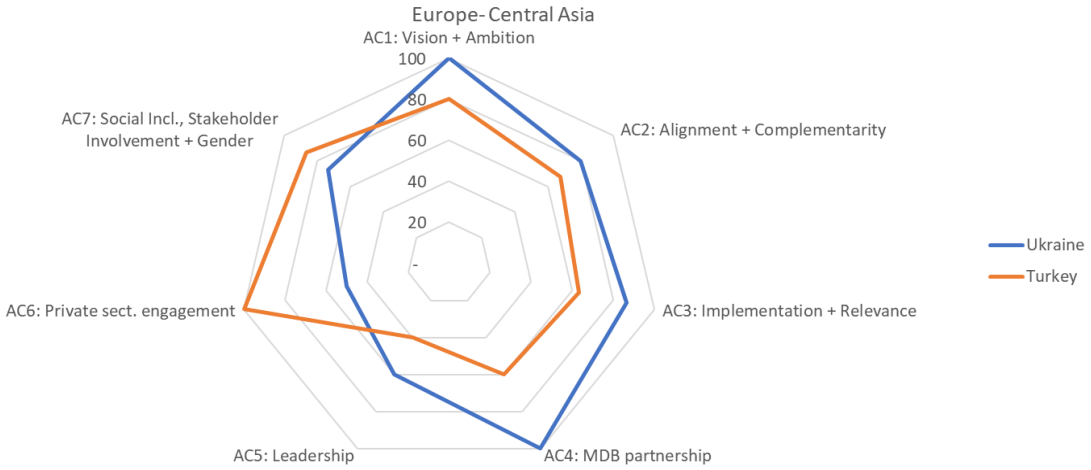
Table 8 presents the characteristics of the portfolio of EoIs included in the recommended ranked lists above.

Table 8: Characteristics of the portfolio of EoIs on the ranked list (n =19)

Europe and Central Asia	**Sub Saharan Africa**	**Latin America and the Caribbean**	**Middle East and North Africa**	**East Asia and Pacific**	**South Asia**
2	4	5	2	2	4
Low Income Countries	**Lower Middle-Income Countries**	**Least Developed Countries**	**Regional EoIs**	**SIDS Country EoIs**	**SIDS regional EoIs**
1	10	4	1	2	1

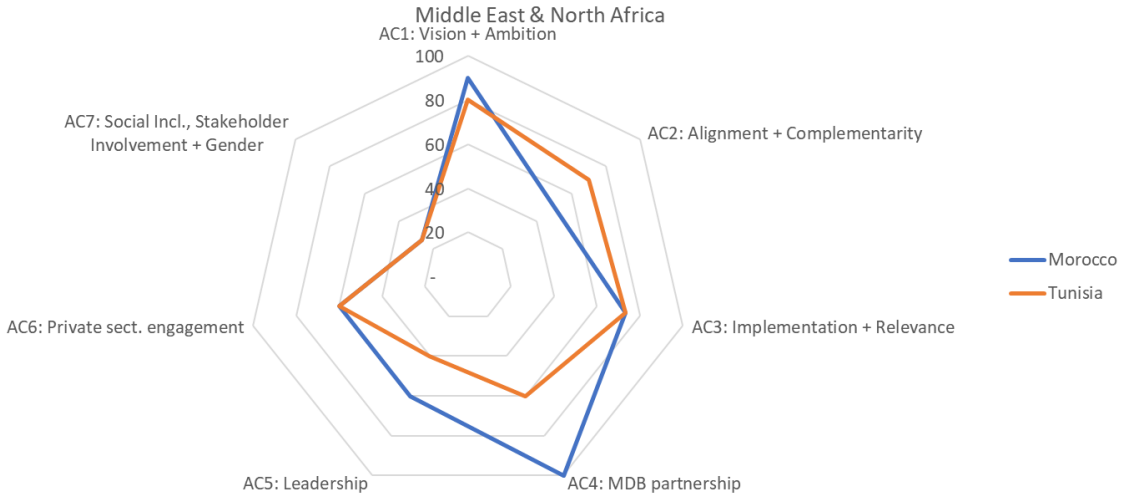
In the following diagrams (Figures 7 to 10), the characteristics of the EoIs from the recommended list is explained in more detail with the help of spider diagrams. In each diagram, information is presented for the countries/regional programs from each geographical region that is included in the recommended ranked list. The diagrams include all the seven overarching criteria used for the corresponding assessments performed on the EoIs submitted.

Figure 8: Spider diagram for the Europe and Central Asia Region



Only two EoIs were included from this region, but these two are number 1 – Ukraine – and number 8 – Turkey – implying that this is on average the highest rated region. As Figure 8 illustrates, Ukraine can build on its successful track record with the MDBs through the CTF. Its good private sector involvement was rated as insufficiently demonstrated through the EoI. Turkey, on the other hand, demonstrated this quite well and described the Stakeholder Inclusion and Gender aspects better than Ukraine.

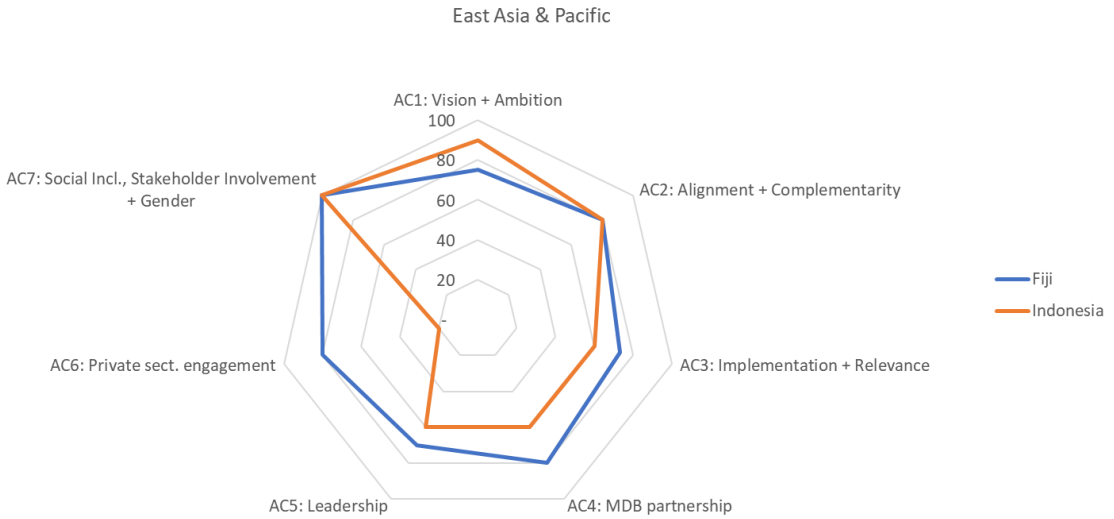
Figure 9: Spider diagram for the Middle East and North Africa Region



In the MENA region (Figure 9), too, two EoIs made it to the list, i.e., Morocco (No. 14) and Tunisia (No. 18). Morocco – like Ukraine - was highlighting its successes with the CTF

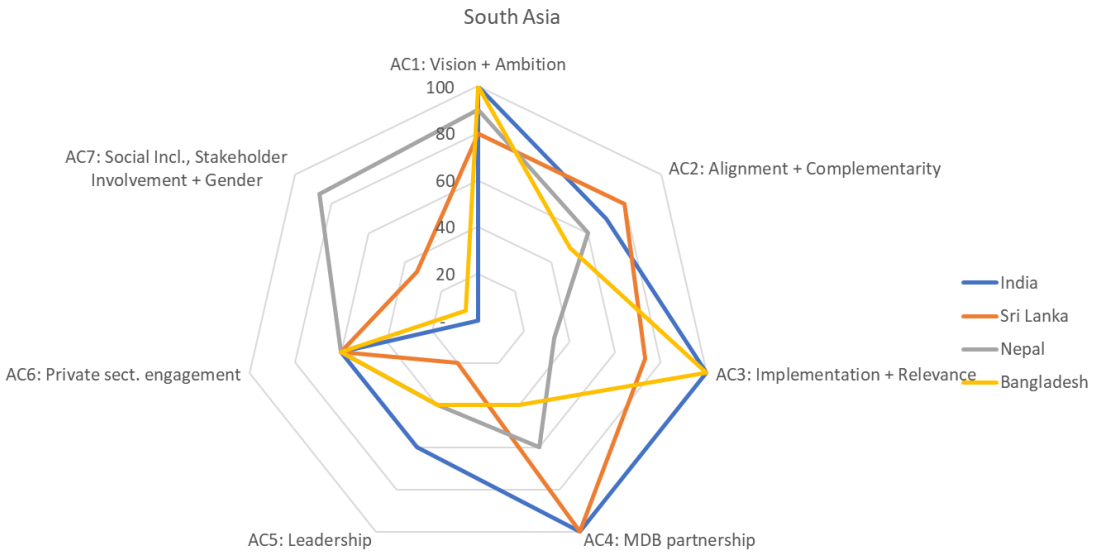
and presented a highly convincing vision. Tunisia's EoI provided a good narrative on Alignment and Complementarity.

Figure 10: Spider diagram for the East Asia and Pacific Region



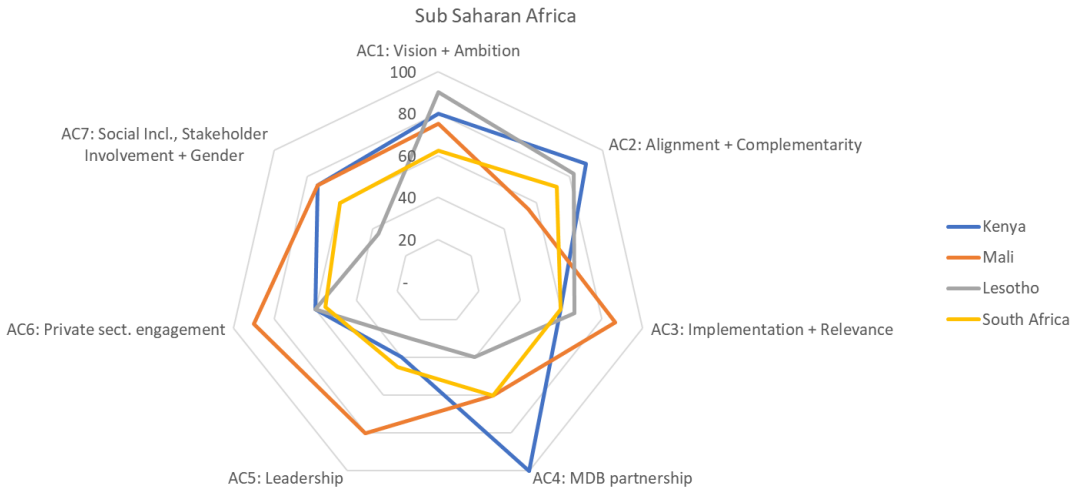
In the East Asia and Pacific region (Figure 10), two very different Island States scored high and ended up in the ranked list: Fiji (No. 2) and Indonesia (No. 7). Fiji could have scored higher if they had a more convincing narrative on the Private Sector Engagement but other than that, it presents a well-balanced EoI with respect to the Assessment Criteria. The proposal is particularly interesting, as it focuses on a technology that could enhance grid flexibility and will need to be introduced in Fiji (i.e., Electric Vehicles). The focus is mostly on cars and vehicles, but also mentions ship and ferries. Obviously, there is interesting and broad scope for innovation.

Figure 11: Spider diagram for the South Asia Region



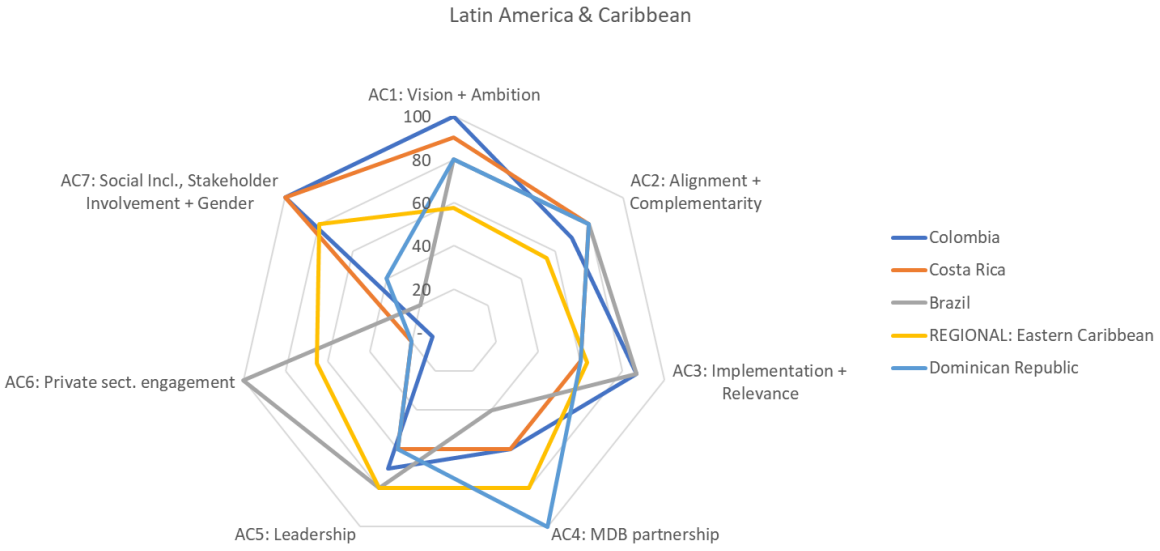
From South Asia (Figure 11), almost all submissions made it to the final list. India (No. 9) has scored full points on Vision and Ambition, Implementation and Relevance, as well as MDB Partnerships. Unfortunately, they did not provide any information on social and gender inclusion. Bangladesh (No. 19) has also earned full score on Vision and Ambition and Implementation and Relevance. Unfortunately, the EoI is almost completely silent on the gender questions. For Sri Lanka (No. 12) the biggest deficit was the representation of internal Leadership and coordination. Nepal (No. 15) was particularly good on Vision and Ambition and Social Integration and Gender, with medium performance on the other criteria.

Figure 12: Spider diagram for the Sub-Saharan Africa



From Sub-Saharan Africa, four EoIs made it to the top list (Figure 12): Kenya (No. 4), Mali (No. 5), Lesotho (No. 16), and South Africa (No. 17). Kenya pointed to its excellent partnership with MDBs, and had a good narrative on Alignment and Complementarity, which related to grid flexibility and fast integration aspects. Mali is the only Low-Income Country that ended up in the top 19. It demonstrated strengths in local coordination and around private sector integration – having a whole prospectus for private sector projects annexed to its EoI. Lesotho's strengths were in the vision and mission – the country wants to decarbonize and at the same time become independent of imports from South Africa. Unfortunately, it did not pay enough attention to the Social Inclusion issues. South Africa presented a well-balanced proposal with respect to all criteria, but none of the criteria are outstanding.

Figure 13: Spider diagram for the Latin America and the Caribbean Region



Latin America and the Caribbean Region is a very successful source of high quality EoIs (Figure 12). Three of the EoIs did not make it to the final list. Five other countries did. Colombia (No. 3) demonstrated a clear vision and high ambition and a highly rated stakeholder inclusion strategy. Costa Rica (No. 6) had similar strengths. Brazil (No. 10) provided a high number of annexes, a total volume of more than 1000 pages. The strength of the EoI lies in the private sector approach. The Eastern Caribbean Regional project proposed by the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (No. 11) focuses on a multi-donor facility that can finance REI measures, but that is just a side note for the main purpose of investing in RE capacity. There is also a slight question of how implementation ready the proposal is, specifically with respect to the REIP's funding causes, given the fact that all countries have a very low RE penetration at this point. But as the power systems of these small islands are very small, this can change with one wind turbine or a larger photovoltaic installation. The Dominican Republic (No. 13) is the third SIDS that made it to the top list.

The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and risks (SWOR) of each EoI in the recommended ranked list are collected in Table 8. The intention of the IEG is to contribute to the decision-making process of the CIF REI Global Climate Action Programs Sub-Committee as it moves forward in the selection of the target investments in this round of financing. The IEG has made its best effort to synthesize information from very well written EoIs as well as bringing its members' contributions from their own understanding of the RE development environment in those countries. The opinions presented in the SWOR table are designed to assist decision making processes and in no way are intended to be taken as a further step beyond the task of the IEG, which has been to assess the EoIs against a given set of guided criteria.

Table 9: SWOR Matrix for EoIs in the recommended rank list

Country	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Risks
Bangladesh	The EoI package builds upon a clear country and energy sector specific policy and legislative background. There is an updated NDC with significant RE targets annexed to the EoI. Renewable energy targets are well aligned across the NDC and key energy and infrastructure sector plans, such as the "Perspective Plan 2021-2041" and the "National Solar Action Plan 2020". The EoI provides emerging evidence that distribution network level battery electricity storage systems (BESS) integration is reducing diesel-fuel consumption for electricity generation and is contributing to network stability, measured in reduced power outages. The IEG finds that the EoI package shows an ongoing track record in attracting MDB funding for the energy sector.	While financing strategies are discussed and the EoI clearly states the vision and ambition to develop replicable implementation and financing models, the EoI package does not yet indicate a potential CIF REI program or pipeline with specific total funding requirements or associated potential financial instruments. Another weakness is the limited discussion of social inclusion and stakeholder participation aspects.	Bangladesh is moving towards integrating its electricity grid with neighbouring countries, providing future opportunities for regionally interconnected, flexible RE markets. A corresponding "Integrated Energy and Power Master Plan" is currently under preparation, which will likely provide future opportunities for CIF REI investment support.	The EoI package transparently includes an initial discussion and overview of technical transmission and distribution network challenges and bottlenecks. Electricity transmission bottlenecks are for example currently present for large-scale high voltage direct current power transmission. Such technical network aspects will likely require a set of technical, regulatory and policy measures for managing electricity network stability and reliability going forward. The IEG finds that such infrastructure risks require further detailed system-level analysis, both at the country-level and the regional-level, in order to enable least-cost VRE integration scale-up in the years ahead.
Brazil	The EOI package is highly focused, building on previous CIF and MDB experiences, and offers multiple concepts to further advance the integration of VRE in various regions of Brazil, thereby balancing energy system, climate action and socio-economic development aspects. The EoI package highlights an ongoing track record in attracting MDB funding for the energy and infrastructure sector.	The presentation of social inclusion, gender mainstreaming, stakeholder participation and environmental protection issues within the extensive, more than 1300 pages long EoI package appears very weak in comparison to technical, financial, and regulatory aspects.	The IEG finds that it is highly likely that a large scale, USD 100+ million CIF REI investment plan can be efficiently prepared, building on strong MDB support and partnerships in the energy and infrastructure sector.	The IEG notes challenges in understanding the clarity, transparency, and consistency of Brazil´s most recent NDC, as presented in the EoI package. These aspects, jointly with the limited social inclusion and stakeholder participation aspects provided in the EoI package, might require further internationally aligned analyses and could thus risk to increase CIF REI investment plan preparation time.
Colombia	The EoI package includes a clear presentation of the vision and ambition for integrating VRE in Colombia, confirmed and aligned within national energy sector strategies and climate commitments. The country´s most recent	The IEG finds that the EoI package does not clearly present how a future CIF REI support for VRE infrastructure development and associated technical assistance would address and moreover strengthen social inclusion,	Increased VRE integration into the country´s networks is expected to play an important role in addressing El Niño and climate-change induced energy infrastructure operation and reliability issues in the medium to long term,	Several regulatory aspects related to development of legal frameworks for increased VRE integration, operation and management still need strengthening in order to implement and optimally operate and maintain the

Country	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Risks
	NDC update from 2020 calls for a mitigation target of maximum 169.44 Mt CO2eq by 2030 (equivalent to a reduction of 51% of emissions with respect to the 2030 reference scenario) and a large-scale, ambitious VRE integration strategy envisaging 5 additional GW of generation capacity for electricity network integration. The country is implementing an agenda for VRE auctions that have shown a lot of promise to streamline private sector mobilization.	stakeholder engagement and gender equality aspects.	likely stabilising or reducing a spectrum of systemic climate vulnerability issues related to hydro variability. Such lessons learned can likely have spill over effects from Colombia into the Latin American region, since other countries with high shares of existing hydropower in the electricity generation mix may encounter similar technical opportunities and challenges for energy system level VRE integration.	large expected VRE capacity additions. The IEG suggests that careful consideration of these issues need to be addressed further in order to avoid delays in implementing the country´s VRE integration plans. Such aspects could for instance be further analysed and discussed with all affected stakeholders during the process of developing a potential CIF REI country investment plan.
Costa Rica	The EoI package clearly showcases Costa Rica´s track record in implementing "green" renewable energy driven infrastructure sector strategies, plans, policies, and lines of actions. The country's current electricity generation mix is 99% based on RE (which includes hydro 70%, geothermal 15% and VRE (solar and wind) 14.8%). Sufficient hydro storage capacity and hydro power baseload generation is currently available to mitigate grid stability challenges from increased levels of intermittency from VRE.	The EOI package does not have detailed plans for the engagement of the private sector for VRE integration.	The EoI package focuses on advancing the country´s decarbonization pathways within transport and industry, including ambitious target of 100% electrification of rail transport and 70% of urban public transport by 2035. The IEG finds that it is highly likely that a large scale, USD 100+ million CIF REI investment plan can support this transition.	The EoI package provides limited economic analysis on how to best approach future electricity tariff changes linked to the ambitious integration of VRE in transport and industry. There is a risk of delays for a CIF REI IP if affordability issues with regards electricity tariffs are not sufficiently analysed, addressed, and communicated with all affected stakeholders.

Country	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Risks
Dominican Republic	The EOI package is succinct, detailed, and consistent in presenting social inclusion, technical, financial, and regulatory aspects of the country´s energy transition, with a focus on short and medium term VRE integration aspects. The country´s long-term climate strategy states carbon neutrality by the year 2050. A track record of recent MDB investment and technical assistance support within the power sector, providing linkages to a potential future CIF REI support, is documented.	The IEG finds that there is not enough technical analysis provided within the EoI package to assess with a high degree of confidence the scale of CIF REI co-funding requirements and the corresponding transformational change ambition in a SIDS context. Further detailed technical studies at the transmission and distribution network level are not yet available to understand least-cost VRE integration planning. Alternatives in optimally siting and costing future transmission, distribution and VRE flexibility assets appear challenging due to the country´s geography, likely challenging transmission and distribution network stability and reliability in the near term.	The EoI package presents various opportunities and avenues for medium-term technological innovation to advance VRE integration in a SIDS context, with high-level and cross-institutional support demonstrated. The EoI package states the country´s willingness for energy transition induced electricity sector reforms to advance VRE integration at scale, including suggestions for private sector participation.	The role of the private sector within the EoI package is not yet fully clear, risking delays and further preparatory studies to explore potential scenarios for public private partnerships for specific VRE infrastructure projects in order to leverage potential CIF REI resources best. The risk is that if VRE cannot be harnessed to meet demand, the fall-back position is to build more fossil-fuel based plants.
India	India's energy strategies and corresponding activities are presented in the EoI package around a five-point strategy: (i) increase renewable energy generation capacity; (ii) minimize intermittency of VRE; (iii) kick-start offshore wind development; (iv) promote modern, alternative fuels; and (v) improve supply-side efficiency. The IEG finds that a key strength of the country´s EoI package is that it documents consistently and in detail a package of large-scale investment opportunities for VRE grid integration. Consistent energy system-level and technically grounded evidence is presented both in the EoI template and its annexes, including a strong MDB and CIF energy portfolio track record.	One weakness of the Indian EoI package is that it argues for wide-reaching CIF REI support for both VRE integration activities (such as improving supply-side efficiency and grid modernization) along with VRE generation activities (i.e., more rooftop PV). This will require some complex judgement and further prioritization regarding CIF REI activity eligibility. The IEG understands from the EoI package that optimal, system-level energy sector regulations for VRE integration might remain a likely focus area for potential CIF REI support, as the EoI package provides examples for highly complex, context-driven, and case-by-case revisions and adoptions of such regulations. Another weakness of the EoI package is its limited focus on responding to CIF REI social inclusion,	The IEG finds that a set of investment opportunities and technical assistance activities, as currently proposed in the EoI package, would likely improve flexibility in network operations, scale-up various technical solutions for VRE integration and advance digitalization of networks. According to a power system-specific case study, published by Indian stakeholders and the IEA and provided as part of the EoI package, four Indian states are already at the stage where VRE penetration is high enough (beyond 15%) to start shaping wide-scale grid operations. This provides opportunities for a potential large scale and transformational CIF REI program support, even beyond India´s borders, if the currently significant share of fossil powered generation in the energy-mix will decrease in the near to medium term	Despite an excellent track record of past interventions, the IEG finds that there might be a risk in optimally and rapidly managing a variety of complex technical, regulatory, and financial planning and decision-making processes. The needs of short-to-medium term support for VRE integration may overload the decision-making ability of various decision-makers to strategically select the most valuable interventions in a medium to long term infrastructure system planning perspective. Thus, there might be a risk of delays in moving forward timely with a potential future CIF REI investment plan.

Country	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Risks
		gender equality and stakeholder participation aspects.	due to continuously enhanced VRE integration.	
Indonesia	Indonesia´s EoI package includes a wide range of large-scale energy sector programs with ample opportunities for potential CIF REI support, such as: (i) energy efficiency support measures in all economic sub-sectors; (ii) substitution of fossil fuels by renewable energy in power systems and in transport; (iii) advancing economy-wide electrification pathways for end use sectors, such as residential / commercial buildings and in transportation; and (iv) low-emission coal based power generation with carbon capture and storage (CCS). Such programs and measures are routed in the country´s national plan to reduce projected energy sector emissions by 73% by 2050 as compared to its business as usual (BAU) GHG emission scenario, aiming to achieve GHG emission levels with reference to 2018.	Indonesia is an archipelago where the power system has been developed in the form of distributed power networks, instead of a large, centralized transmission network. The IEG understand from the IEA package that the country-specific technical power network specifications will likely increase the challenge of continuously managing power network stability and reliability at a national level, while integrating more VRE.	The EoI package proposes the use of CIF REI concessional funding to facilitate private sector investments for five geothermal projects by removing exploration and drilling risks. The IEG understands from the EoI package that this would likely be a country-specific opportunity for potential CIF REI support, if combining innovative RE generation technology investments proceeds in parallel with investments and assistance to reduce high cost of VRE integration at a system level. The IEG recommends to further analyse and clarify system planning aspects, together with CIF REI technology eligibility criteria.	Without climate financing and grant technical assistance to support Indonesia in its energy transition pathway, the IEG finds that it will likely remain challenging for the country to support the deployment and integration of RE at scale. Without climate finance, the financial risks of having large coal and gas stranded power generation assets are likely high for years ahead.
Kenya	The EoI package includes a balanced and detailed documentation of consistent technical, regulatory, financial and policy aspects, building on a track record of CIF and MDB support in the energy sector. The current Least Cost Power Development Plan included in and discussed in depth in the EoI package allows to already identify VRE integration needs, such as battery energy storage systems (BESS) as a key technological component for integrating increasing VRE shares into the country´s power system.	The EoI package appears to lack a clear description of VRE integration specific institutional and regulatory mechanisms for energy system analysis and related least-cost power grid investment planning, operation, and maintenance.	The IEG finds that the EoI package presents sufficient CIF REI specific support opportunities in the medium to long term to both increase national energy security while decarbonising energy and power systems, building on the current Least Cost Power Development Plan.	While the IEG finds that there are opportunities for VRE network integration, there are risks for delays to rapidly advance Kenya´s energy and power system planning. For example, the EoI package discusses the high costs of power generation from geothermal plants and the risks of negative public perception for land requirements for such infrastructure developments. Such complex risks would need careful mitigation, likely involving the management of multi-stakeholder processes for enabling a continuous VRE integration pathway.

Country	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Risks
Lesotho	Lesotho´s EOI package includes ambitious and consistent VRE grid integration planning, aiming amongst others for 40 MW utility-scale solar and 35 MW wind capacity additions by 2030. The IEG assumes opportunities for systemic and timely technical assistance and investment needs for VRE integration, as Lesotho's ambition is to replace high shares of imported fossil fuels in electricity generation.	The EoI package at this point remains weak on technical details for the proposed infrastructure investments, as technical studies are ongoing.	Building on an ongoing study to specify future VRE integration and grid infrastructure investment needs, several concrete opportunities for CIF REI support will likely soon emerge. This includes further details on institutional and regulatory framework adjustments to address system-level flexibility gaps.	As 55% of the population do not have access to electricity, the IEG finds that there remain risks for trade-offs among stakeholders when prioritizing different types of future energy infrastructure investments (e.g., energy access versus VRE grid integration). The IEG understands from the EoI package that managing and mitigating such risks will likely require strong, continuous, and sufficiently resourced stakeholder participation mechanisms.
Morocco	The strength of Morocco´s EoI package is that it builds upon the foundation of the CIF CTF-supported Ourzazate Noor concentrated solar power complex and will seek to strengthen the national transmission grid as well as regional power system interconnections to Europe. Furthermore, the EoI package proposes to develop battery energy systems and improve hydropower storage facilities for balancing an increased large-scale VRE penetration at country level and beyond. The country´s goal statements include an ambitious installed renewable energy capacity in total generation capacity by 2030 (52% as opposed to 37% currently).	A weakness of the Moroccan EoI package is according to the IEG that the envisaged scope is highly complex, requiring multiple parallel work streams on system level issues to progress in a timely fashion.	An opportunity for Morocco is that the programme of VRE integration related investments presented in the EoI package will require large-scale financial resources beyond those available from CIF. More than 50 RE projects valued at US$6 billion are under various stages of development. The IEG thus finds a high likelihood for near term transformational VRE system integration needs.	A risk is that some Moroccan initiatives (such as regional power system interconnections to Europe) may be more complex and take longer than others (grid strengthening or battery storage) leading to uneven program implementation and challenging interface issues to manage.
Nepal	The strength of Nepal´s EoI package is that it consistently and clearly presents ongoing and future energy programs, including VRE scale-up measures of important size, and REI technology including battery energy storage and reinforcement of transmission and distribution infrastructures, linking to multiple CIF REI support options with leverage potentials for CIF partner MDBs and bilateral financiers.	The IEG finds that the EOI package does not provide a detailed and systemic analysis, which leads to weaknesses in understanding flexibility gaps and in prioritizing technically sound and economical optimal least-cost solutions for the country´s energy system.	Developing and integrating grid-connected solar power plants and waste to power plants while advancing energy access via a programme of mini-grids, in close collaboration with private sector partners and supported by local and provincial governments present a range of CIF REI opportunities (building on lessons learned from CIF SREP). In addition, a planned tenfold increase of generation capacity (from 1500 MW to 15000	The IEG finds that a lack of a clear and aligned climate finance and resource mobilisation strategy for the country´s ambitious VRE integration plans, at both transmission and distribution grid level, might likely risk delays in fully preparing and implementation the suggested large-scale, transformational CIF REI activities.

Country	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Risks
			MW), if implemented rapidly, will quickly result in intermittency challenges and opportunities for the large-scale deployment of various CIF REI technologies.	
South Africa	The EoI package proposes a very ambitious, country-specific, and highly strategic CIF REI aligned program, including the installation of 2000 MW of battery storage, smart grid development and scale-up of distributed generation. The IEG finds that this program appears highly ambitious vis-à-vis the current early stage of VRE capacity installed and operational (The country´s electricity generation mix currently comprises 10% VRE in terms of installed capacity and 5% VRE in terms of power production.)	The IEG finds weakness in the EoI package with regards the depth and consistency of analysis and evidence provided in the EoI package to support the argumentation for a highly ambitious and complex VRE integration program in the short term. A funding gap analysis to further clarify how CIF resources will help leverage additional funding specifically for VRE integration appears not available. Suggested approaches for engaging the private sector at scale would as well require more detail, clarity, and consistency, building for example on the lessons learned from CIF CTF support. For example, the technical and operational transmission system requirements for VRE integration at scale could be reviewed further, taking a closer look at the 10-year transmission line refurbishment plan provided as part of the EoI package,	The IEG finds that the EoI package proposes a clear opportunity for using climate finance for leveraging private capital (estimated at US$ 10-12 billion by 2030) for the country´s energy transition, which is centred around the decommissioning of old and inefficient coal power plants and their replacement with cleaner energy generation sources. The IEG restates that the suggested approaches for engaging the private sector for large scale VRE integration (under the terms and modalities of CIF REI) would require more detail, clarity and consistency going forward, building for example on the lessons learned from CIF CTF support	The IEG finds that the country´s ambitious energy transition pathway, arguing for a decommissioning of coal power plants of an immense magnitude and affecting a large share of the workforce - with the support of international climate finance - would require further analysis and a strong focus on stakeholder participation and inclusion. A just transition, as presented in the EoI package, is expected to put in place and support a national programme of social protection measure (amongst others for workforce reskilling, job creation, social protection). Such complexity risks delay per se for a potential future CIF REI support and would require even more careful planning for risk mitigation going forward.
Sri Lanka	The country's commitment to carbon neutrality in the energy sector by 2050, combined with a medium-term target of 70% RE in the power generation mix by 2030, makes a strong case for large-scale and near term VRE capacity additions and subsequent energy system integration including battery storage along with power system management and control system. The EoI package presents a consistent and plausible mix of appropriate CIF REI technologies and support measures.	The IEG finds a limited level of detail to sufficiently assess the consistency between the country´s multiple energy and climate targets. Further details on the underlying modelling and planning tools and processes are needed to better understand the interlinkages between various GHG emission reduction targets and related actions, specifically for the energy sector.	The EoI package details large-scale CIF REI related investment opportunities, among them VRE integration programs for450 MW of wind and 250 MW of solar, 2000 MW of battery storage, transmission line upgrades and smart grids.	The IEG finds that required funding is ambitious and likely too high to be absorbed in the short term. Resource mobilisation strategies would need to be advanced in parallel with systemic planning to leverage CIF resources best and attract commercial investments at scale.

Country	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Risks
Tunisia	To-the-point EOI package with well-defined CIF REI challenges and opportunities presented at energy system level. An ambitious short-term target for RE (4GW) scale-up by 2030 is underpinned by active MDB lending programs, supporting the country´s energy transition agenda with a focusing on developing grid infrastructure for VRE integration at scale. A Tunisia-Italy grid interconnection is planned besides national energy infrastructure programs.	While Indicative RE projects have been mentioned, specific project lists, capital expenditure (CAPEX) requirement and a funding gap have not been specified. Furthermore, the IEG finds limited consistency among finance, energy, environment, and climate aspects due to ongoing studies. An important technical study to estimate the size of the proposed VRE investment programme is ongoing. The NDC is in the process of being updated, with the most recent 2015 NDC provided and discussed.	The IEG finds that CIF REI funding is likely needed to quickly unlock a sustainable and bankable pipeline of VRE projects (Wind 1755 MW, PV 1510 MW, CSP 450 MW and biomass 100 MW), including opportunities for the private sector, while improving grid integration. A lot of capacity building projects for VRE integration have already been carried out, providing opportunities to further specify the optimal type, scale, and timing of CIF REI support options.	In 2019, 97% of electricity (total 19302 GWh) was generated from non-renewable sources. The IEG finds the implementation of such massive VRE investments combined with innovative system level storage and flexibility technologies risks being highly complex with many interface issues emerging. If such investments cannot be designed, planned, funded, and implemented timely, the energy mix will likely continue to have a significant number of non-renewable resources and the ambitious targets presented risk being delayed. Tunisia seeks concessional funding to unlock private sector investment. With respect to financing sources, there is not much detail on how additional public sector funding will be mobilized to achieve such an ambitious VRE target and integration technology in the coming years.
Ukraine	The EOI package is well prepared, data-rich, and highly consistent from an energy system perspective, with a focus on VRE integration into power and heat networks for contributing to the country´s GHG emission reduction pathway and net zero emission targets. By 2030, there is a plan to completely abandon coal which will be replaced by renewables and nuclear energy. The updated NDC sets a goal of reaching carbon neutrality by 2060. The EoI package includes a wide range of current statistics and future targets for gender and social inclusion, as part of an ambitious country-level Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) statistics and reporting effort.	Despite the currently low share of VRE in electricity generation (7% in 2020) and the limited engineering-routed (pre-)-feasibility study details included in the EoI package, the IEG finds that there is a high likelihood for transformational change under the condition that VRE integration concepts presented, including sector coupling, are further advanced and scaled-up in the near future. Hydropower (installed capacity 4.8 GW) and pumped storage hydropower (1.5 GW) are still insufficient for the supporting energy system level VRE integration needs.	The EoI package presents in its annexe's energy transition related baseline data and actual statistics for a wide range of socio-economic development, technical VRE grid integration and stakeholder inclusion aspects, which will likely allow for a rapid preparation of a CIF REI investment plan and subsequent MDB projects.	During a potential large scale, USD 100+ million CIF REI investment plan preparation phase, the IEG suggests reviewing the risks of the ongoing political conflict in parts of the country with regards to large-scale, energy system wide VRE integration plans.

Country	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Risks
Mali	The EoI package is including a full country-level investment prospectus with many investable VRE projects, specifically highlighting options for the private sector. The IEG finds that this investment prospectus is grounded in and derived from consistent and plausible national energy sector visions, plans, strategies, and consultation processes.	The EoI package could have gone into more detail with regards to the country´s vision and its alignment with national (climate and energy) policies, thus giving an even more promising perspective on energy transition related social inclusion and stakeholder participation aspects.	Significant solar capacity is under development, so that the need for technical integration of VRE will become more acute quickly. Building on CIF SREP support, the EoI package presents a broad scope of future CIF REI opportunities, reaching from international interconnectivity to domestic grid stability to off-grid. The IEG assumes thus a large range of options to further specific a potential CIF REI investment plan and associated MDB-supported projects.	The IEG finds that there is a high risk that the challenging security situation in Mali might severely delay or even disrupt future CIF REI engagements.
Fiji	The EoI package is innovative and well targeted to the specific opportunity of using electric vehicle charging for renewable energy integration via a transport sector electrification pathway. This appears unique among the EoIs.	The main weakness of the EoI package is that there appears no track record in recent, sector specific MDB support and collaborations. Also, the potential for transformation of the transport sector should be more strategically thought through and analysed, for example drawing on best practices and case studies for similar type of interventions.	The IEG finds that there are opportunities for supporting a couple of technology specific innovations in a SIDS context, including implementing electric powered shipping (ferries) and smart EV charging infrastructures while ensuring grid reliability and stability.	A 100 million USD concessional loan would constitute more than 20% of the country´s current indebtedness with the World Bank, thus risking limiting the type of CIF REI financial support instruments and CIF REI leverage in the near term.
Turkey	The IEG finds that the EoI package clearly presents the high penetration of VRE in Turkey (53%), and the need for a set of REI technical and non-technical measures at this stage. The social inclusion aspects are fully and consistently discussed across the EoI package. The corresponding national development plan is provided as an annex.	The weakest aspect in the EoI package is the lack of indication of any internal coordination mechanism or inclusion of relevant line ministries. The IEG also notes that several of the proposed measures and actions, as described in the EoI package, might not qualify for CIF REI funding. This would need to be further clarified from an energy system planning and VRE integration perspective going forward.	Turkey could undertake a broad range of VRE integration investments and associated assistance measures, with a high likelihood for significant financial leverage. The IEG finds that there is an opportunity for a potentially large scale and transformative CIF REI investment plan.	To avoid a risk of CIF REI funding supporting more coal powered electricity generation, the IEG suggests discussing and reviewing in much more depth, energy system planning (generation, transmission, distribution, and end-uses) approaches during a potential CIF REI investment plan preparation phase.

Country	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Risks
Regional Eastern Caribbean	The IEG finds that the regional EoI package presents a unique multi-donor, multi-country investment fund to move forward with VRE integration at a regional level, which is well aligned with a potential CIF REI support	The IEG finds that the regional approach is consistently and clearly presented, offers opportunities for economies of scale and scope as well as mutual learning among all involved countries. As the island countries involved are grant-only countries, CIF resources would need to leverage additional resources in partnerships with MDBs and others, likely requiring to include sufficient technical assistance for project preparation as well as co-financing options for infrastructure developments.	The IEG finds that the regional approach is consistently and clearly presented, offers opportunities for economies of scale and scope as well as mutual learning among all involved countries.	As all participating countries in the regional EoI packages have comparatively low VRE penetration rates at the moment, the IEG finds that the need for the suggested fund to be established appears a rather medium term than a short-term transformational opportunity.

6. Summary of key issues, challenges and recommendations

The Call for Expressions of Interest to the current round of financing of the Renewable Energy Integration Program has been met with a large interest and participation from countries around the world. Overall, 54 EoIs were submitted to the CIF Administrative Unit, for due consideration of the program. Of these, 50 EoIs were country-specific and 4 were Regional Programs (including at least three countries each). Overall, 60 REI Program-eligible countries participated.

Although the published deadline coincided with the kick-off call for this assessment, EoIs were still systematically uploaded until 6 days later. This timing allowed many countries to complete their own processes towards their applications. Certainly, this allowed for more engagement from countries around the world, but from the point of view of the IEG, it increased the expected workload due to the sheer size of the participation from countries and shortened the time available for their review. The IEG worked through a virtual meeting set-up for all its work and deliberations when reaching consensus on decisions for recommendations.

6.1 Challenges with matching the EoI Template and the Assessment Criteria

The IEG implemented a robust process in conducting the EoI assessments, under the guidance and criteria established within the procedures of the CIF. The use of a scorecard, guidance for the implementation of the assessments and the two tiers of evaluation conducted, ensured that the process was consistent, transparent, and made use of the skills and experiences of the members of the IEG through individual as well as peer reviews. The scorecard was guided by the evaluation criteria provided in the RfP.

One of the foremost challenges encountered in implementing the assessments centers on how the template for the EoI did or did not include specific sections on the different overarching criteria. Depending on the structure of the EoI Form, therefore, some criteria were addressed more clearly while others were addressed less clearly or not at all in the submissions.

The EoI template included several questions that directed the attention of the countries to issues of relevance to the programmatic developments of the CIF and in this case, of the RE Integration Program. Matching the EoI template and the overarching criteria to be used in the assessments, the IEG notices that there is no clear space in the template to direct the countries in addressing the important criteria related to social inclusion/ stakeholder engagement/gender equality.

There has been a very wide range of treatments given to these issues in the portfolio of EoIs. Still, the IEG believes there is room to include better guidance and directives for explicit inclusion under the template. Specifically, the IEG has found that the use of the scorecard for the Overarching Criteria 1 to 4, meaning: Vision and Ambition, Alignment and Complementarity, Impact and Relevance, and MDB Partnerships, was directly

supported by the EoI template. Other Criteria, like Overarching Criteria 7 Social Inclusion/Stakeholder Engagement/Gender Equality were addressed in the submission mostly through reference to additional information in the form of annexes submitted with the EoI if at all. There is no explicit request or space for a summary of these issues in the EoI template (cf. Annex 3). This issue may in part explain why there was an asymmetrical treatment of Overarching Criteria 7 in many EoIs submitted.

Although there were several questions in the EoI template that could be used to provide input on Overarching Criteria 6 related to Private Sector Engagement, the scorecard, following the guidance from the Operational Modalities, does not put them all together in one spot. In addition, many EoIs either presume that through the concessional funds of the CIF REI Program, private sector capital mobilization is going to happen quasi automatically. In most cases, it is unclear and not discussed in the EoIs whether such mobilization will result in implementation of the sought-after system flexibility – many EoIs (plausibly) expect that the private sector will mainly engage with IPP investments in VRE.

The process of EoI submissions could be improved in general. Guidance given to the countries was minimal. The submissions would have benefitted, for example, had CIF provided best practices, lessons learned or case studies on both how to streamline information within EoIs to make them more effective, and what vision this programme wants to support.

Most EoIs did not address the role/goal or viability that planned activities could have in enhancing flexibility and uptake of VRE into the grid. For example, some EoIs made the case for incorporating actions related to "green hydrogen" but did not link it to the "flexibilization" of the grid. Instead, the cases looked more at the introduction of hydrogen as a new vector in the energy system, without considerations for "greenness". Here, the boundaries and rationales should have been made clearer, both from the side of the CIF guidance, as well as in the EoIs. Generally, the EoIs were extremely vague and mentioned numerous technologies and approaches from the Program Brief in a manner that seemed not very well considered, in some cases approximating a random listing. It is highly recommended that before selecting EoIs for development into an IP, the technical options for enhancing flexibility in grid systems will be discussed and monitored by the CIF to make a decision of the technical fit with the objective of creating grid flexibility of the REI Program.

6.2 Technical challenges in the review process

The work of the IEG was complicated at the onset, because as the group started to implement the workplan, there was a period when new EoIs were introduced to the shared directories, increasing the number of EoIs from 12 received by the official deadline to the overall 54 about 5 days later. Information access issues kept coming until September 10th, the IEG had a consistent shared drive with all information including full annexes for some EoIs. In light of the fact that this left about 2 weeks for the actual assessments, it must be highlighted that this was simply not enough time.

This was partially related to the fact that the EoI submission system was not linked to the access to information by the panel. Efficiently structured, sufficiently resourced, and modern digital processes and IT tools could further reduce the asymmetry of information between EoI submitters, proposal evaluators and funders. A single common digital platform to share and access information was not available. Portfolio statistics, for example, needed to be compiled manually. Manual follow up was required between the CIF AU and the IEG to bridge a variety of IT tools including Survey Monkey, Emails, MS Teams, Office 365 SharePoint Online, and WhatsApp.

Enabling IEG members to perform all evaluation tasks in a consistent, easily and 24/7 accessible, collaborative IT environment, with a single digital platform at its core, including dashboard overviews for individual and group-level evaluation task management as well as key portfolio level statistics from many EoIs, would likely increase overall efficiency and scope of future independent CIF REI assessments.

Potentially other organisations can serve as role models. For example, the EUR 10 billion European Innovation Council (EIC), part of Horizon Europe for the period 2021-2027, provides thousands of independent evaluators across Europe with an advanced digital evaluation platform, including Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning functions for efficient evaluation processes under tight deadlines.

6.3 Evaluation challenges

The time spent by the IEG in producing both first and second round assessments was greatly impacted by the way countries undertook their own filling of templates. There was a large range of, for example, the number of pages included in the EoI template (less than 6 in some to upwards from 25 in others). At the same time, some countries took opportunity of annexing many documents (sometimes not explicitly mentioned in the EoI template). All the above resulted in large time allocated by the reviewers to many countries. The IEG believes that there is space for improvement both within the EoI template and on guidance that could be provided to countries with respect to the size range for EoIs that is considered reasonable when submitting proposals.

For example, the presentation of proposed actions within the EoIs varied widely, and in many cases lacked a more solid technical foundation, both in the EoI template itself and through adequate annexes. Most of the technical annexes in many EoIs related mainly to expansion plans treating capacity additions to power grids and not addressing transmission and distribution bottlenecks for VRE integration or the need for flexibility solutions.

Highly relevant challenges were encountered in assessing the technical merits of proposed VRE integration actions proposed within the EoIs. The impression arose that many countries do not have yet a clear picture of the flexibility options that they will be needing in the future. In fact, many countries are not yet at a point with their renewables share, where this integration would provide a challenge. A large number of countries applied not really for REI but more for SREP-like programs for expanding their VRE

generation capacity. Other countries were by far not at the point where their grids would require flexibility options to accommodate larger shares of VRE. Due to the very different situations between countries and with respect to the baseline status of VRE integration into power systems, there was a varied depth of presentation and treatment of technical issues underlining the actions proposed by countries. This fact also created asymmetries for the different assessment rounds.

Many countries used "buzz words" of technical options, with little to no support or appropriate documentation. Some countries appeared to opt for high-level, strategic, CIF-specific line of arguments in the EoI template, while supporting documentation annexed provided a more detailed, technical perspective, in turn risking limited consistency in scope, depth and technical clarity of prioritizing an initial pipeline of VRE measures for CIF funding. As the RE Integration program moves ahead, important lessons learned need to be shared amongst the community of countries to enhance the knowledge base of actions supportive of integration and flexibility towards VREs.

With respect to assessing the technical merits of actions proposed to enhance grid flexibility or other actions to improve integration of VRE into the power systems, the IEG finds that, in general, the treatment of such options in the EoIs was extremely superficial and unspecific. Most EoIs resorted to the inclusion of annexes related to such technical and power systems issues which were very extensive but did also not always get to a deeper discussion of VRE integration and flexibility solutions. But it had the negative effect that IEG members had to review very extensive and often irrelevant annexes and referenced documents in very short time. It must be said that EoI annexes were often mainly power sector expansion plans, in many cases referring mainly to the capacity additions (including VRE), and without any technical information regarding to the issues faced by power systems with respect to VRE integration.

6.4 Thematic recommendations

Many EoIs did not cover aspects relevant to grid flexibility or the integration of variable renewable energy into its power system. Evidence-based analysis to identify upfront grid flexibility gaps and on this basis identify the most cost-effective mix among alternative technical solutions to address complex technical system and network stability and reliability issues, as suggested in the CIF REI country selection process document [CIF CTF SCF (2020 a)] were hardly discussed or included in annexes. Using the open-source methodologies and tools, such as the IRENA Flextool methodology [IRENA, 2018], for an initial energy system modelling exercise at a country-level, could further improve and clarify techno-economic aspects for CIF REI EoI assessments. But this is not only related to the studies conducted before writing an EoI or for the time available for authoring an EoI. In fact, the programme is suited mainly for a specific cross-section of countries. Many countries are not yet at a point with their share of VRE where their integration would constitute a challenge in the near future. In well-built-out and maintained grids, this challenge would start with a VRE share of total electricity generation of around 15% (IEA, 2019]. It is possible that in weaker grids, this challenge begins earlier. However, in these, the attribution of grid instability to VRE is often not possible as the grid in such situations

typically has several more severe weaknesses, for example a poor maintenance state of the grids or power plants or technical and non-technical losses.

LDCs and LICs did not really do well in the assessment. Originally eleven LICs had submitted proposals, but only one made it to round two. The major challenge was that very few of them had the focus on actual power grid instability aspects caused by VRE. Their penetration of VREs is often still too low or their grids too weak to generate a "renewables-integration" challenge. For these countries, more support for building up renewables would be very important but was not considered eligible under this program.

Each investment plan, program or project proposed for CIF financing shall demonstrate how it will seek to deliver contextually large-scale impacts including, for instance, explicit strategies for enabling subsequent scale-up or replication of the CIF-funded intervention and wider market impacts. This includes the potential in generating a demonstration effect that would lead to a sizable reduction in GHG emissions growth. [CIF CTF SCF (2020 b)]. However, this is also difficult, as in REI, the technologies are often changing when the integration challenge grows – therefore rather than replicate a solution, often a new and different solution will be needed a later stage. This limits the replicability to other countries.

Thus, many EoIs would have been more relevant for SREP and PPCR. There were also cases where grid infrastructure improvements are neither environmentally motivated nor leading to higher climate risk resilience, and in such cases, other funding opportunities are better suited, such as mainstream MDB lending. It should be noted that in situations where poor performance of the power grid reduces the operating hours of fossil fuel power plants, an improvement of the grid can lead to higher GHG emissions. Based on the information provided, such a situation could not be excluded. More and better information on the overall state of the power grid and more time on the side of the IEG would have been required to do a thorough and technologically well-funded assessment.

How to define, measure and monitor electricity transmission and distribution infrastructure assets that would be CIF-eligible because they are "green" and "climate friendly", - for example to distinguish "Green" renewable energy based hydrogen from fossil-fuel based hydrogen is not fully clear at this point. Most countries do not have a system of Guarantees-of-Origin that would at least certify green electricity and could be extended to assess how "green" the hydrogen produced from a complex hydrogen value chain would be. In CIF countries that are on the trajectory from fossil-fuel driven infrastructure systems to full decarbonization, the EoIs submitted provided hardly any results from detailed energy system modeling, GHG emission and climate pathway scenario analysis.

In the context of the CIF REIP, this could likely challenge MDBs and their partner countries to include further energy system-level analysis and modelling going forward and align MDB appraisal procedures for CIF REI Program projects with the new CIF REI investment criteria suggested in the operational modalities [CIF CTF SCF (2020 b)]. As an

example, for such complex assessments, the evolving EU taxonomy and EU green bond standard defines energy networks on a trajectory to decarbonization either through the use of a threshold for emissions from newly connected electricity generation or a threshold of the average grid emissions factor. For example, the interconnected European electricity system is eligible for "green" EU financial instruments, as a network that is currently on a trajectory to full decarbonization, qualifying all transmission and distribution infrastructure and equipment as EU taxonomy-aligned (European Commission n.d.). It is necessary to implement systematic modelling before the EoI or at least during the development of the IP; to undertake systematic and real-time tracking during the implementation; and to not move forward with the investments if it is not ensured that the investments improve the integration of VREs, and not of fossil-fuel power generation.

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Annex I List of resource persons and stakeholders consulted

Name	Title	Institution
Daniel Morris	Program Coordinator	Climate Investment Funds (CIF)
Jimmy Pannett	Program Coordinator	Climate Investment Funds (CIF)
Lesley Wilson	Senior Operations Officer, Governance Lead	Climate Investment Funds (CIF)
Christopher Head	Private Sector Specialist	Climate Investment Funds (CIF)
Amel El Abed	Program Assistant	Climate Investment Funds (CIF)
Davinia Levy Molner	Operations Analyst	Climate Investment Funds (CIF)
Chibulu Luo	Consultant	Climate Investment Funds (CIF)
Hema Badrinarayanan	Database Assistant	Climate Investment Funds (CIF)
Shane Suksangium	M&R Operations Analyst	Climate Investment Funds (CIF)
Nadia Taobane	Senior Energy Specialist	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)
Christian Ellermann	Senior Climate Finance Specialist	Asian Development Bank (ADB)
Karan Chouksey	Climate Finance (Energy) Specialist / Consultant	Asian Development Bank (ADB)
Andrey Shlyakhtenko	Senior Climate Finance Specialist	International Finance Corporation (IFC)
Tendai Madenyika	Climate Finance Specialist	International Finance Corporation (IFC)
Gloria Visconti	Lead Climate Change Specialist	Inter-American Development Bank (IADB)
Jordi Abadal Colomina	Energy Specialist	Inter-American Development Bank (IADB)
Mariel Juárez Olvera	Climate Finance Consultant	Inter-American Development Bank (IADB)
Jan-Willem van de Wen	Head of Climate Finance and Carbon Markets	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
Alexis Franke	Associate Director, Climate Change & Sustainability	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
Andrea Iro	tbc	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
Oleh Sybira	tbc	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)

Vincent Dujnhower	tbc	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
Gerrit Held	tbc	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
Gareth Phillips	Manager, Climate and Environmental Finance	African Development Bank (AFDB)
Regina Nesiama	tbc	African Development Bank (AFDB)
Leandro Azevedo	Principal Climate Finance Officer	African Development Bank (AFDB)
Kidanua Gizaw	Senior Climate Finance Officer- AFDB CIF Team Coordinator	African Development Bank (AFDB)

Annex II EoI Submissions

The list provided here includes all EoIs or as part of a regional program. Regional programs may include countries that also submitted country specific EoIs.

Number	Country / Region
1	Armenia
2	Azerbaijan
3	Bangladesh
4	Bosnia and Herzegovina
5	Botswana
6	Brazil
7	Burkina Faso
8	Chad
9	Colombia
10	Costa Rica
11	Democratic Republic of the Congo
12	Dominican Republic
13	Ecuador
14	Fiji
15	Ghana
16	India
17	Indonesia
18	Jordan
19	Kazakhstan
20	Kenya
21	Lesotho
22	Liberia
23	Malawi
24	Maldives
25	Mali
26	Mauritania
27	Morocco
28	Namibia
29	Nepal
30	Niger
31	Nigeria
32	North Macedonia
33	Pakistan
34	Papua New Guinea
35	Paraguay
36	Philippines
37	Sao Tome and Principe
38	Sierra Leone
39	Solomon Islands
40	South Africa
41	Sri Lanka
42	Sudan
43	Tonga
44	Tunisia
45	Turkey
46	Tuvalu

47	Uganda
48	Ukraine
49	Uzbekistan
50	Zambia
51	Regional Program: Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
52	Regional Program Pacific Islands: Kiribati, Tonga, Tuvalu
53	Regional Program: RELAC (Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Paraguay)
54	Regional Program: WAPP (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mauritania, Mali, Niger)

Annex III Expression of Interest (EoI) template for CIF's New Strategic Programs

1. Country name:
2. Contact Information
Official submitting EOI: Ministry: Government focal point name: Job title: E-mail: Alternate e-mail: Contact details:
3. Please indicate if your country meets the following criteria
1. Is your country eligible for Official Development Assistance (ODA) at the time of the call(s) for EoI? Yes/No
2. Does your country have an active lending program with at least one of CIF's partner MDBs*? Yes/No
4. With which MDB does your country have an active lending program?
African Development Bank (AfDB): Yes/No Asian Development Bank (ADB): Yes/No European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD): Yes/No Inter-American Development Bank (IDB): Yes/No International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD): Yes/No International Finance Corporation (IFC): Yes/No

5. Does the country have an active lending program with at least one of CIF's partner MDBs? Yes/No.

If so, please provide a brief overview of these engagements, and explain if and how the work envisioned under the new CIF Programs will build upon existing CIF-supported work. If possible, please reflect indicative investment opportunities with partner MDBs in the context of the new CIF Programs.

6. For what type of CIF's funding would you like to be considered?			
	Investment Plan	DPSP/CIF Climate Venture	Regional
Integration of Renewable Energy into Power Systems Program	☐	☐	☐
Climate-Smart Urbanization Program	☐	☐	☐
Accelerating Low-Carbon, Climate-Resilient Transition in Industry Program	☐	☐	☐
Nature, People and Climate Investments Program	☐	☐	☐

7. Country's vision and ambition for using CIF resources

What is the country's level of ambition as it relates to the new CIF strategic program? How does the country seek to use CIF resources to drive transformational change and help achieve its low-carbon and climate-resilient development plan(s) or strategy(ies)?

8. Alignment and complementarity

How does the CIF program align with the country's climate strategies and plans (e.g., Nationally Determined Contributions, National Adaptation Plans, SDG-related plans, and/or other relevant low-emission and climate-resilient development plans)? Demonstration of the country's commitment to these strategies and plans, as well as progress towards achieving the strategies and plans, will be preferred. What are the additional value CIF resources could bring to meeting its goals? And how does CIF fill a funding gap by providing the country with access to concessional resources not otherwise available, or complementary to existing ones?

9. Implementation and relevance for CIF strategic programs

What are potential actions (e.g., policy reforms or investments) or project(s) that are aligned with the strategic objectives of the CIF program and can be implemented through one or more MDBs active in the respective country, as well as financing strategies to leverage MDB and other co-financing to support these projects? Lines of action that cover both mitigation and adaptation are encouraged, where relevant.

10. **Has the country been selected to implement a CIF program in the past? Yes/No.**

If so, please provide a brief overview of implementation experience, benefits, and lessons learned.

11. **Please attach the cover letter signed by the relevant Minister****
12. **Please attach relevant document to support your EOI**
13. **Attach additional document (if needed)**
14. **Attach additional document (if needed)**
15. **Attach additional document (if needed**

Annex IV: Climate Investment Funds - Call for Expression of Interest for the Renewable Energy Integration (REI) Program (via Survey Monkey)

Climate Investment Funds - Call for Expression of Interest for the Renewable Energy Integration (REI) Program - Deadline: August 26, 2021

Dear CIF Stakeholders,

We hope this message finds you well.

This is a kind reminder that the Climate Investment Funds (CIF) have launched the selection process for identifying countries that will receive funding from the Renewable Energy Integration (REI) program. With this announcement, we are writing to invite eligible recipient countries to express their interest in this Program, by completing an Expression of Interest (EOI) form which can be found at the bottom of this message.

Since it was established in 2008, the Climate Investment Funds (CIF) has succeeded in accelerating progress towards a climate-smart future that leaves no one behind, promoting climate resilience, seeding investments in clean technology, and supporting sustainable forest management. Now, after widespread consultation, CIF has mapped the next frontier of climate challenges – among them, the coal transition, and the transformation of power systems. A bold new commitment in June 2021 of up to $2 billion this year by four G7 nations to support CIF in accelerating the transition away from coal and enabling the integration of renewables into existing energy infrastructure, has the potential to jumpstart the transformation of the energy grids, and to unlock a greener, more sustainable global economy.

Accelerating energy transition calls for enhancing flexibility in energy systems and pushing boundaries to increase the penetration of renewables. Under the Renewable Energy Integration Program, CIF will support this process in developing and emerging countries. Flexible solutions help accelerate uptake of the best combinations of technologies to help manage grids, balance different infrastructure requirements, and improve overall market design systems operation.

Further details on the Program, eligibility criteria, country selection process and next steps, can be found by clicking on the orange box provided below. Should your country be interested in accessing funding for the REI Program, kindly submit an EoI by the closing date of August 26, 2021.

We look forward to hearing from you in due course.

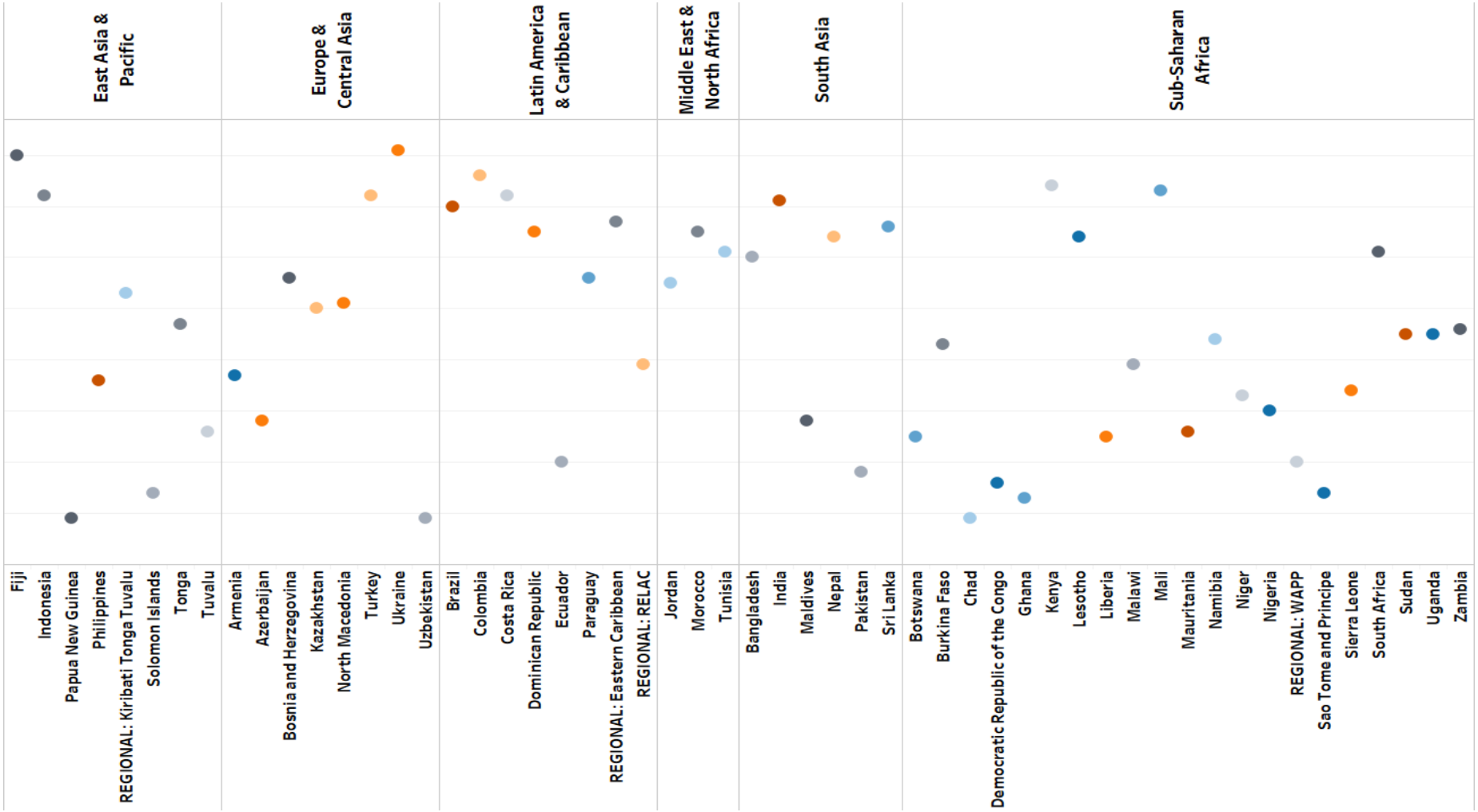
Sincerely,

Mafalda Duarte

Manager

Climate Investment Funds

Annex V Overview of ranking of all 54 EoIs by region



The Climate Investment Funds

The Climate Investment Funds (CIF) were established in 2008 to mobilize resources and trigger investments for low carbon, climate resilient development in select middle and low income countries. To date, 14 contributor countries have pledged funds to CIF that have been channeled for mitigation and adaptation interventions at an unprecedented scale in 72 recipient countries. The CIF is the largest active climate finance mechanism in the world.

THE CLIMATE INVESTMENT FUNDS

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