



ADAPTATION FUND
Readiness Programme
for Climate Finance

**2025 AF Regional Workshop in Belize: Enhancing Access To Adaptation
Fund Resources in the Caribbean**

Workshop Report

27-30 May 2025

San Pedro, Belize



Acronyms and Abbreviations

AF	Adaptation Fund
AFCIA	Adaptation Fund Climate Innovation Accelerator
CCCCC	Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
DA	Designated Authority
ESP	Environmental and Social Policy
GCF	Green Climate Fund
IE	Implementing Entity
LLA	Locally Led Adaptation
MTS	Medium term Strategy
NIE	National Implementing Entity
PFG	Project Formulation Grant
PPR	Project Performance Report
RIE	Regional Implementing Entity
RBM	Results-Based Management
SRF	Strategic Results Framework
TA	Technical Assistance

DAY 1

Introduction

The Adaptation Fund hosted a regional workshop in San Pedro, Belize from 27-30 May 2025. The workshop aimed to strengthen regional capacity and provide critical insights into accessing AF resources in the Caribbean, strengthen individual capacity by enhancing skills among project participants that are essential for engaging in or supervising the preparation of bankable climate change adaptation projects to be financed by the Adaptation Fund, and to contextualize and discuss project ideas by AF implementing entities in the region.

Welcome Remarks

Mr. Carlos Pol, Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Economic Transformation, inaugurated the write shop by emphasizing the Fund's commitment to fostering collaboration and innovation in climate adaptation. He highlighted that Belize, as a Small Island Developing State (SIDS) and a low-lying coastal nation, remains acutely vulnerable to the accelerating impacts of climate change. The country faces compounding risks from rising sea levels, coastal erosion, saltwater intrusion, and increasingly frequent and intense weather events that threaten livelihoods, critical ecosystems, and infrastructure. The reliance on climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, and tourism underscores the urgent need for robust adaptation strategies that safeguard our people, our economy, and our natural capital. Over 60 percent of the population and critical infrastructure are concentrated along low-lying coasts where sea level is projected to rise by up to 32 cm by 2050, posing profound risks to housing, utilities, transport systems, public safety, and tourism-based economies. Belize's nationally determined contributions and national adaptation planning processes have clearly outlined these vulnerabilities, yet the scale and immediacy of the threats demand enhanced access to predictable and sustainable adaptation finance.

The Belize Barrier Reef sustains more than 190,000 livelihoods through fisheries, tourism, and natural coastal defense. Its progressive decline due to warming seas and acidification undermines both national income and food security. Climate impacts already impose measurable financial losses. Independent economic analyses suggest Belize could face up to 7 percent GDP loss annually by 2030 if climate stressors accelerate without transformative adaptation. Tourism, agriculture, and fisheries, which collectively contribute over 50 percent of national GDP, are particularly exposed. Droughts increasingly threaten water security for rural and urban communities. Inland communities face heightened flood events and erosion. Women, Indigenous Peoples, and smallholder farmers remain disproportionately vulnerable.

He emphasized the commendable progress the country has made in mainstreaming climate resilience into national development frameworks and in strengthening institutional capacity for climate action. Through ongoing initiatives supported by the Adaptation Fund and other partners, Belize has advanced local adaptation planning, ecosystem-based resilience, and community-driven adaptation interventions. However, despite these strides, the country continues to face significant financing gaps that constrain the implementation of large-scale adaptation projects. The demand for climate finance far exceeds current availability, and the administrative complexity of accessing such funds remains a barrier to timely and effective implementation.

He concluded his remarks by stating that Belize underscores the critical importance of scaling up adaptation finance and simplifying access modalities for vulnerable states. He called for continued collaboration with the Adaptation Fund to advance innovative financing mechanisms, enhance direct access modalities, and build local institutional capacity for effective climate investment. Strengthened partnerships and sustained financial support are essential for translating national adaptation priorities into transformative, on-the-ground action. Belize remains committed to working constructively with the Fund and the international community to ensure

that adaptation finance truly meets the scale of the challenge and supports a resilient, sustainable, and climate-secure future for all.

This was followed by remarks from the Protected Areas Conservation Trust (PACT), which is the NIE of Belize to the Fund. Mr. Eli Romero highlighted how the Adaptation Fund plays a pivotal role in supporting Belize's resilience agenda. Its commitment to direct access, innovation, and country ownership aligns closely with Belize's national climate objectives and provides a vital platform for mobilizing targeted adaptation interventions.

Day 1 highlights (Laying the Foundation for Accreditation and Proposal development): The welcome remarks were followed by an overview of the workshop's structure and objectives, delivered by Mr. Farayi Madziwa, Readiness Programme Coordinator. The sessions combined group discussions with presentations. The session focused on the Board decided to revise the system of country focal point to an entity-based system as per the Decision B.43/29 of the 43rd meeting of the Adaptation Fund Board. Ms. Anysa Ahuja, Accreditation programme officer at the Fund highlighted that the new system allows for the Designated Authority (DA) to be an organization, and the DA will be crucial contact and entry point for countries to access resources from the Fund. The change with the DA is aimed at fostering continuity, teamwork and institutional knowledge, that will enhance access to AF resources. She underscored that over the next year, the Fund's aim is to invite developing country government to nominate an entity to be the DA. The key idea is to avoid losing institutional knowledge and the DA of each country is pivotal to Funds country led approach to project and programmes where those projects and programmes need to be aligned to the country's NAPs and target the most vulnerable communities. This was followed by a discussion on the Readiness support available through the Fund as delivered by Mr. Farayi Madziwa. He highlighted the capacity support services available through the Adaptation Fund include accreditation strengthening, technical guidance on compliance policies, and access to peer learning initiatives. These offerings are essential to maintaining effective direct access modalities. He emphasized that Belize's continued participation reinforces the country's readiness to lead in future climate adaptation project development. Final the day concluded with remarks from Ms. Saliha Dobardzic, Project and Programming lead at the Fund who laid the foundation for effective project proposal development. She underscored the essential elements of constructing a robust adaptation rationale, emphasizing alignment with national or sub-national strategies. Technical writing sessions focused on identifying both challenges and opportunities in defining effective rationales, with participants beginning to develop their respective concepts or proposals. Tailored guidance from AF staff facilitated the creation of equitable and contextually grounded adaptation rationales. The day concluded with structured brainstorming and guided writing activities, setting the stage for deeper technical engagement in subsequent sessions.

DAY 2

Day 2 highlights (Integrating Environmental, Social, and Gender Safeguards and compliance with technical standards): Day two commenced with a recap of the previous day by Ms. Ishani Debnath, Climate Change Analyst at the Fund, and an introduction to the day's focus on compliance with the Fund's Environmental and Social Policy (ESP) and Gender Policy (GP) and national technical standards. Led by Ms. Estefania Jimenez, Climate Change Specialists at the secretariat, the sessions addressed the technical challenges of data collection, reporting on triggered ESP principles, and designing effective risk adaptation measures. Participants received detailed guidance on completing the ESP identification table at the concept stage, including project categorization and further assessment at the fully developed proposal stage. This preparatory session emphasized the importance of practical, context-specific learning and the application of technical standards in real-world settings. The day's activities included group discussions, guided writing sessions and feedback on ESP and national standards, such as building codes and environmental impact assessments. Participants learned how to apply gender analysis early in the process to inform actions that ensure equitable participation and

benefit delivery, inclusive of gender-responsive monitoring indicators and safe reporting mechanisms. Mr. Eli Romero showcased how the projects implemented by PACT continued focus on inclusivity in rural communities that aligned directly with the Adaptation Fund’s gender mandate. The day concluded with a session focused on Scalability led by Ms. Ishani Debnath. She highlighted the Scale-Up Grant mechanism, which allowed entities to expand successful projects that have already demonstrated resilience benefits. This was followed by a group discussion where participants focused on the activities supported by scale-up, such as feasibility analysis, partnership development, and co-finance mobilization.

DAY 3

Day 3 highlights (Strengthening Monitoring, Evaluation, and Sustainability):

The third day focused on enhancing the coherence, structure, and technical clarity of project concepts and proposals. Moderated by Mr. Justice Issah Musah, climate change specialist, sessions centered on integrating monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks, budgeting, and indicator selection in alignment with the AF Strategic Results Framework (SRF). Participants worked in groups to discuss budget justifications and adherence to Fund requirements on cost-effectiveness at both the concept and fully developed proposal stages. The session addressed the incorporation of sustainability measures and the avoidance of duplication with existing initiatives. Mr. Musah underscored how projects align with the Strategic Results Framework through clearly defined outcomes supported by robust baselines, measurable indicators, and verifiable targets. This was followed by presentations by two RIEs of the Fund in the LAC region, the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC). The presentations allowed participants to strengthen their understanding of how to attribute resilience improvements directly to project interventions. This session reinforced that sustainability is fundamental to Adaptation Fund project design. Long-term resilience requires clear strategies that ensure benefits extend beyond the project life cycle. This includes demonstrating community ownership, ongoing institutional support, and governance arrangements capable of maintaining interventions.

DAY 4

Day 4 highlights (Conclusion and Forward Planning)

Closing Remarks

The Adaptation Fund Regional Technical Workshop in Belize advanced the collective capacity required for designing sustainable, safeguard-compliant, gender-responsive, and results-focused adaptation projects. Belize continues to elevate its regional leadership by strengthening its institutions and expanding direct access to climate finance. These efforts are critical to supporting vulnerable communities, protecting essential ecosystems, and ensuring a resilient future for Belize and the wider Caribbean. Mr. Farayi Madziwa concluded the workshop by expressing gratitude for the active engagement and collaboration from all participants. He acknowledged the valuable peer learning and support that contributed to a deeper understanding of the AF accreditation and proposal development processes. The formation of new partnerships among IEs and the secretariat was highlighted as a key outcome. Participants were encouraged to continue developing and implementing their ideas, maintaining the momentum generated during the workshop.

Some key highlights from the group discussions and presentations are noted below:

Questions	Responses
Accreditation and Readiness	
What is the role of DA in the implementation of projects? 2- What will be the big difference between the Focal Point and now the DA?	Regarding funding proposal, the DA is endorsing the funding proposal (to be implemented in the country) on behalf of the country

On the note of continuity, can the secondary contact take over the signing of the letter in a case of transition of the primary focal person?	Please note that only the primary contact point having the authority to sign letters related to the Fund on behalf of the DA (entity). the other secondary contact point(s) serving as technical/operational contact points for day-to-day communication and coordination
Who should sign the letter of designation of the entity that will be the designated authority?	There is always a need to have a higher authority who nominates the primary contact. This doesn't change with respect to previous policies and procedures. The AF would like to ensure that the DA process is country coordinated. DA primary focal point may send a letter nominating the same agency as DA of the country but this needs to be in country coordinated process.
Can the DA nominate an NIE from the same agency?	Yes, it's possible for the DA to nominate an NIE from the same agency. Regarding DA nominating the NIE in the same agency, the DA can sign the endorsement letter, while the nomination of the NIE is the country-coordinated process.
Project Proposal Development Process	
For the PFG (Project Formulation Grant), what qualifies an entity to access the 20% at the pre-concept stage, and what are some things entities have used this for?	When you submit your pre-concept proposal, you also submit the PFG template and can request up to 20% of the total PFG amount at this stage. The PFG can finance local consultations, workshops, ESP and gender policy compliance activities including risk analysis, travel costs, policy analysis, translation, and capacity assessments of executing entities.
At which stage can regional implementing entities apply for the PFG, and what is the process?	At the pre-concept and concept note stages. The template must be submitted at every stage of review.
What are best practices or tips to avoid back and forth in the project proposal process, and what is the average timeline for approval?	Ensure you have the required LOE, use project formulation support, conduct thorough consultations, and engage with the Secretariat for guidance. Ensure the LOE with DAs in copy along with PFG application (if at concept or pre-concept stag) are included in every submission and resubmission of the proposal.
What is a pre-concept? What is the advantage of the three-step approval process?	The pre-concept is a short document (about six pages) for regional and LLA projects, which allows early feedback and the opportunity to request PFG support before developing a full concept note.
Is there a limit for any country to submit a project for the small innovation funding window if they already have an approved project?	There is no limit. You can submit as many proposals as you would like. This applies to the LLA window as well.
If a project was submitted before the change in the caps, can the amount be revised?	The amount can be revised if it's well justified. If you increase the amount, there may be additional review rounds, especially if the project is close to technical clearance.
ESP and GP Compliance	
If the mitigation measures required for ESP compliance are not solely under the control of the main IE, how should this be handled? How do you handle mitigation measures for displacement, especially if impacts are not known at proposal stage?	The IE should describe the process and how coordination will occur. If unanticipated impacts arise during implementation, report them and adjust mitigation measures as needed. Budget reallocations up to less than 20% can be made without board approval. For LLA and Innovation projects, if including

	USPs, the USP justification (concept and Full proposal) and plan for USP management (Fully proposal only) are detailed.
Do you align with individual country policies or have your own?	The fund aligns with country definitions for issues like indigenous peoples but requires compliance with its own 15 ESP principles.
For USPs (Unidentified Sub-Projects), what is required in the proposal? If infrastructure needs to be changed due to ESP alignment, can budget be reallocated?	For partial USPs, include a plan for risk screening management, and monitoring as and when sub-projects are identified. Completely unidentified sub-projects are not accepted. Budget reallocations up to less than 20% are allowed without board approval, as per the recently updated policy for project post-approval changes. Similarly, revisions to the project results framework are accepted and can be cleared by the Secretariat (minor) or approved by the Board (major).
Can mitigation measures be included as a specific budget line in the project budget?	Yes, especially for LLA and innovation windows, budget for ESP risk mitigation and capacity building should be included in project components.
How do you report on ESP principles if some are triggered during implementation but not at proposal stage?	Report any unanticipated risks and triggered principles in the project performance reports (PPR), using the dedicated section for unanticipated risks. If these unanticipated risks require an update of the ESMP, kindly share this with the Secretariat as part of the PPR.
Budgetary alignment and M&E	
Considering the challenges the Adaptation Fund has identified in ensuring consistency and comparability of results across diverse contexts, how will the revised guidance balance standardization with flexibility for Implementing Entities to adapt indicators to their local contexts and capacities?	This is the main challenge that we need to address in developing the guidance document. The flexibility comes from the fact that IEs have to report on relevant indicators per their country context. There will also be a helpdesk function set up for a period of 6 months where the secretariat will provide customized support to IEs in implementing the guidance provided.
Which SRF indicators currently create the most ambiguity for implementers, and what clarifications or practical examples should be added to the indicator reference sheets to resolve it?	Historically, the core indicators that created more challenges to report on were those on income and to a certain extent also how to measure indirect beneficiaries. The Secretariat will prepare a specific guidance note with concrete examples, as you suggest, to facilitate reporting.
Could you name three indicators to harmonize first across AF, GCF, and others, and share dates to publish simple common guidance with definitions, formulas, beneficiary rules, and how to avoid double counting?	The Funds are working to seek opportunities for common reporting. For adaptation specifically we will be most probably sharing a common reporting on beneficiaries at COP. Further work will be undertaken to possibly harmonize methodologies on beneficiaries.