

Knowledge from New Study Useful in Enhancing Adaptation Approaches in Madagascar

- A new study conducted by researchers of the University of Michigan and the University of Antananarivo published in *PLOS Climate* on December 7, 2022 analyzed the distribution of adaptation finance at the household level for a project in Madagascar funded by the Adaptation Fund.
- [Press Release](#) and [study](#).
- The Madagascar project was implemented between October 24, 2012 and June 30, 2019. It was funded by the Adaptation Fund and implemented and monitored by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), one of the Fund's accredited multilateral implementing entities.
- The Adaptation Fund has mechanisms in place for addressing complaints and grievances both at the project implementing entity level and at the Fund level. In the case of this project, no complaints or grievances were raised at either level.
- As the Fund has grown over time in the face of high demand it has continually updated, evolved and strengthened its safeguards and project monitoring while aiming for the highest international ethical standards and zero fraud tolerance. For example, the Fund has periodically updated its environmental, social and gender policies -- including last year, which included enhanced reporting avenues.
- Read a recent blog about the Fund's updating and strengthening of safeguards and ethics standards [here](#).
- The Fund is committed to fostering the learning and sharing of experiences based on having one of the earliest, most diverse portfolios of adaptation projects worldwide, including in some of the most challenging local and national contexts.
- Mikko Ollikainen, Head of the Adaptation Fund, commented on the findings of the study in a press release put out by SEI, where the lead author currently works: *"The Adaptation Fund welcomes this important and insightful study. The Fund prides itself on transparency and open, inclusive stakeholder engagement throughout its projects. The Adaptation Fund puts the needs, views, and priorities of vulnerable communities in developing countries at the heart and center of its work. In our country- and locally-led projects, national, multilateral and regional implementing entities are able to directly access financing, implement and manage the projects. We are always striving to further improve our work for the most vulnerable, and studies like this one help us enhance our approaches to ensure that the most vulnerable continue to benefit from the funding, including on the household level,"* he said.
- Find more information about the Madagascar project [here](#). Further background and context about the project can be found below:
 1. The project "Promoting climate resilience in the rice sector through pilot investments in Alaotra-Mangoro region" was approved by the Adaptation Fund Board on the 14th December 2011, through Board Decision B.16/14 and implemented by the UNEP between 2012 and 2019.
 2. The project was designed to address the country vulnerability in the rice sector which is ranked as one of the priorities for adaptation in Madagascar and in particular the project area of Alaotra-Mangoro, as

highlighted in Madagascar National Adaptation Programme of Action (“NAPA”, submitted to the UNFCCC secretariat in 2006). The NAPA acknowledges a worrying vulnerability of rice production nationwide, especially in the Alaotra region, the country’s breadbasket where the average rice production decreased from 1.2 ton/capita in 1975 to 0.6 ton/capita in 1999. The rice sector employs 10 million people (in a population of about 28 million), generating 41% of households’ income in Madagascar and covering 47% of the country’s arable lands. The project was fully aligned with such national priorities.

3. The project’s final Terminal Evaluation (TE) report was completed in September 2020, and outlines that the project responded to the top five priorities identified in the NAPA; that the project is extremely relevant to the national context of Madagascar, regional context of Alaotra-Mangoro and local contexts of the three target communes; and that the project is fully aligned with various policy components under Madagascar’s Agricultural Sector Policy. 61% of the project outputs were fully achieved, 33% partially achieved and 6% not achieved, according to the evaluation, which rates the project as ‘moderately satisfactory’. Finally, the evaluation notes that the project achieved ‘strong results’ in developing an Integrated Rice Resilience Model approach which led to average yields multiplied by 2.5 to 3 times among targeted farmers.
4. The proposal approved in 2011 included the outcomes of a preliminary screening of Environmental and Social impacts undertaken under the guidance of the Ministry of Environment and Forests. Such screening did not identify any major risks of environmental and social impacts. The Fund’s Environmental and Social Policy (ESP) was approved by the AF Board two years later, in November 2013, through Decision B.22/23. Since then, all projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall be designed and implemented to meet environmental and social principles, including in terms of Access and Equity. Indeed, Principle 2 of the ESP states that projects/programmes supported by the Fund shall provide fair and equitable access to benefits in a manner that is inclusive and should not exacerbate existing inequities, particularly with respect to marginalized or vulnerable groups. The ESP policy has also since been updated in 2016, and complemented by a Gender Policy approved in 2016 and updated in 2021.
5. In October 2016, the Adaptation Fund also approved the Fund’s Ad-hoc Complaint Handling Mechanism (ACHM) which promotes accountability of the Fund and helps responding to complaints raised against a project or programme financed by the Fund through a participatory approach. It is complementary to the Fund’s risk management framework, including the grievance mechanism of Implementing Entities. Indeed, complainants and implementing entities are invited to use each implementing entity’s grievance mechanism as a first step. However, the ACHM can also be directly used with the Fund in cases where the Parties have failed to reach a mutually satisfactory solution through the implementing entities’ grievance mechanism within a year. The AF Secretariat independently manages all aspects related to the ACHM, under the oversight of the Ethics and Finance Committee (EFC) of the Fund’s Board.