



ADAPTATION FUND
Readiness Programme
for Climate Finance

Seminar Report: Climate Finance Readiness Seminar for NIEs #3

The third Climate Finance Readiness Seminar for national implementing entities (NIEs) of the Adaptation Fund (AF) was held from 13-15 July in Washington DC. The seminar, which is a global and annual event, is organized under the AF Readiness Programme and hosted specifically for accredited NIEs of the Fund. It presents an opportunity for NIEs to meet and share experiences among themselves and with the Adaptation Fund Board (AFB) secretariat. 19 out of the 23 accredited NIEs attended the seminar, including two regional implementing entities (RIEs) and one multilateral implementing entity (MIE). The implementing entities were joined by several other organizations and adaptation practitioners who included the Heinrich Boell Foundation, the Climate Investment Funds, the World Bank Inspection Panel, the Global Environment Facility, the Climate Technology Centre & Network, and the United States International Broadcasting Bureau.

In addition to providing an exclusive experience sharing platform for NIEs, the third climate finance readiness seminar for NIEs of the AF presented an opportunity to familiarize with the Funds updated operational policies and procedures. Key discussions included the Fund's gender policy, which was approved in March 2016, and how NIEs could align their own policies and procedures with the new policy and with the Fund's environmental and social policy (ESP). Participants also held open discussions on various elements of the AF project full cycle including practical application of grievance handling mechanisms and a comprehensive dialogue on enhancing the NIE community of practice. The AF launched its second round of small grants under its Readiness Programme during the seminar and encouraged NIEs to make use of such resources to build institutional capacity for the design and development of adaptation projects and programmes financed by the Fund.

On the second day of the seminar, participants learnt that the application for accreditation by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM) of Cook Islands had been approved by the AFB, making MFEM the 24th accredited NIE of the Fund.

Welcome and introduction

The seminar started with a welcome message from the Manager of the AFB secretariat, Ms. Marcia Levaggi. She welcomed participants to the third AF readiness seminar for NIEs, and highlighted the following:

- o 19 NIEs participating at the event out of a total of 23 currently accredited implementing entities - most recently accredited include: Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Ethiopia, and Antigua and Barbuda,
- o This is a pivotal moment for the AF in that the decisions adopting the Paris Agreement make reference to the Fund, and that the Conference of the Parties recognizes that the Adaptation Fund may serve the Agreement, subject to a process that is underway.
- o The first stage of the overall evaluation of the Fund that was completed in 2015 outlined the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the Fund and characterizes it as a learning institution.
- o The AFB has recently approved a gender policy and action plan and is receiving an increasing number of project/programme proposals.

- A number of NIEs are in the process of being reaccredited, which demonstrates continuity of the accreditation process.
- The AF is trying to maximize synergies with the GCF. The secretariat is working on a gap analysis between the two accreditation processes with a view to streamlining reaccreditation.
- A record number of project/programme proposals received last year underscore high demand for the AF.
- The agenda of the seminar incorporated needs and suggestions expressed by NIEs through a pre-event survey.

Outcomes of the seminar

Session 1: Status of the Adaptation Fund

- The presentation and ensuing dialogue outlined the following:
 - The Fund has, since its operationalization, mobilized USD 544.6 million in contribution from the Clean Development Mechanism and donor countries.
 - The Fund has three main innovative features: i) it is governed by a majority of developing countries, ii) it is partly financed through a levy on Clean Development Mechanisms and iii) it promotes Direct Access alongside “conventional” access through regional/multilateral organizations.
 - The AFB has approved to date 54 projects/programmes (17 implemented by NIEs, 2 by RIEs, and 35 by MIEs) for a total of USD 354.9 million.
 - Its main revenue source is Certified Emission Reduction (CER) sales but the collapse of carbon market means that new resources are needed, including from donor countries contributions.
 - Funding is currently available for MIEs, RIEs, NIEs, and regional projects.
- The current project/programme proposals under development would, if approved, deplete the amount of funding currently available.
- The characteristics of the pilot programme for regional activities was introduced along with its current pipeline of projects.
- Issues raised by participants and discussed:
 - Current country cap – Currently stands at \$10 million and the possibility of raising the cap is being discussed by the Board.
 - Amount of funding available for different countries and for the regional pilot programme -
 - Clarifications regarding the current stage of collaboration with the GCF, and benefits from being accredited with both institutions, and possibility for the AF to build upon country programmes that are being developed under the GCF – in response, it was explained that upon the request of the GCF, the AFB secretariat had developed a document outlining possible areas for collaboration between AF and GCF. AF was currently waiting for feedback from GCF. Accreditation with both AF and GCF would enable scale up of activities and complementarity of adaptation project financing, among other benefits: GCF could build upon and scale up AF projects, and AF could potentially utilize country programmes developed by GCF.

Session 2: The AF project cycle process: Roles and responsibilities at the country level

- The different functions involved in the project funding processes, and implications for the different stakeholders involved throughout the AF project cycle process.

- Implications and responsibilities of stakeholders in the framework of traditional international access compared to traditional direct access, programmatic enhanced direct access and fully devolved enhanced direct access.
- The different possibilities during which projects can be identified were presented and commonalities between countries when identifying projects were outlined.
- Responsibility that the Adaptation Fund Board has defined for the Designated Authorities (DAs) includes the process to review proposals submitted by countries and associated timeline.
- Extent to which consultations and participatory monitoring comes into play during the project cycle.
- Respective roles of the Implementing Entities and Designated Authorities during the actual implementation of projects/programmes, the potential implications in case of delays in inception or material change and implications for the countries and implementing entities, and reporting implications.
- Issues raised by participants and discussed
 - Participants asked questions with respect to: the possibility of changing the project during implementation, the exact responsibilities of the DA and tools available for him/her to screen proposal before endorsement, the possibility of submitting a full proposal without going through the concept stage, and material changes as currently defined by the Board.
 - One NIE raised the issue of what is next for NIES that have already accessed funds up to the \$10 M cap and the difficulties to stop the process once it is rolling. He suggested focusing on how to mobilize additional resources for the fund to meet its growing demand.

Session 3: Introduction to new policies and update to policies under review

AF Gender Policy

- Although the AF Gender Policy was approved in March 2016, gender is not a new issue to the Fund. The gender policy builds upon existing gender policies of other climate funds and systematically integrates key principles that already exist Fund's ESP. Emphasis was put on the concept of 'gender dynamics,' which means that gender is not an issue only for women, but for both women and men.
- The AF Gender Policy and Action Plan was developed through a multi-stakeholder consultative process including the AFB, AFB secretariat, Accreditation Panel, Designated Authorities, Implementing Entities, Executing Entities, and other stakeholders. consultation with as part of the It was developed with due consideration that gender equality has been recognized as a cross-cutting issue in the 1992 Rio Declaration and several UNFCCC decisions including the Paris Agreement. The AF gender policy:
 - Objectives are mainly to provide equal opportunities for women and men to build resilience, address their differentiated vulnerability, and increase their capability to adapt to climate change impacts, among others: thereby, achieving more effective, sustainable and equitable adaptation outcomes and impacts.
 - Builds upon existing gender-sensitive requirements that exist in the Fund, notably in its ESP, operational policies and guidelines, and results based management processes.
 - Key concepts include:
 - ✓ gender equality and gender mainstreaming,
 - ✓ responsiveness,
 - ✓ women's empowerment, and
 - ✓ gender sensitivity.
 - Principles rely on commitment, comprehensiveness, accountability, competencies, resource allocation, knowledge generation and communication and review and decisions.

- It was noted that some AF-funded projects/programmes e.g. in Rwanda, Senegal, Ecuador, and South Africa had already mainstreamed gender considerations into project implementation.
- Issues raised by participants and discussed
 - Questions were asked by participants on gender issues related to specific projects in the context of India and Indonesia, about the way the Fund monitors the impact of gender policies during the implementation of projects/programmes.

AF Knowledge Management Strategy

- Objectives of the AF Knowledge Management strategy are to:
 - (i) enhance recipient countries' knowledge;
 - (ii) improve the design and effectiveness of adaptation projects and programmes; and to
 - (iii) share the Fund's data, information and knowledge.
- The role of implementing entities in applying the knowledge management strategy were outlined as mainly:
 - to compile data and generating lessons learned from the projects/programmes during the implementation phase to share information with relevant stakeholders,
 - to hand over the knowledge products at project completion,
 - to participate in any Fund driven knowledge capture sessions during workshops and other activities.
- The AF Knowledge Management action plan's objectives and associated roadmap and timeline were presented.

Session 4: Brief overview of the AF Readiness Programme and launch of available grants in 2016/2017

Overview of the AF Readiness Programme

- The AF launched its Readiness Programme for climate finance in May 2014. Following two successful phases of implementation, the AFB decided to institutionalize the programme at its 27th meeting in March 2016.
- The goals of the Readiness Programme are to increase the number of accredited NIEs and to strengthen the overall capacity of NIEs by providing technical assistance and opportunities for peer-to-peer learning.
- Readiness Programme activities are organized under four main components:
 - (i) Support to accredited implementing entities
 - (ii) Cooperation/Partnership with climate finance readiness providers
 - (iii) Support to countries seeking accreditation
 - (iv) Knowledge management
- Activities of the programme have included hosting regional workshops for capacity building, knowledge and lesson sharing, disseminating guideline documents and materials to support climate finance access and project development and implementation, and facilitating forums for further knowledge and experience sharing through platforms such as webinars and maintenance of the climate finance ready micro-site for posting case studies and other adaptation news and information. Activities are mostly implemented in partnership and in cooperation with various climate finance readiness providers. Partnerships include co-hosting of events and participating in events held by other organizations. Partner organizations have also included the Fund's own NIEs, REIs and MIEs.
- Capacity building events also compliment efforts by the Fund to establish a community of practice in which NIEs can network, share knowledge, experiences and interact on a regular and on-going basis.

Launch of Readiness grants for 2016

- Four types of readiness grants were announced:

- Technical Assistance (TA) grants for ESP and Gender – US\$ 25,000 per NIE available to help NIEs strengthen capacity in the areas of environmental, social and gender risk management.
- Technical Assistance (TA) grants for Gender – US\$ 10,000 per NIE available to NIEs that had previously received a TA grant before the gender policy was in place. The grant is to allow them to align their environmental and social policies and procedures with the Fund’s gender policy.
- Project Formulation Assistance (PFA) grant – US\$15,000 per NIE available for NIEs available to build capacity in project preparation and design by undertaking special technical assessments such as environmental impact assessments (EIAs), vulnerability assessments (VAs) and other technical assessments as needed.
- South-South (S-S) cooperation grants – US\$ 50,000 per country available to countries that are not yet accredited with the Fund to access peer support to from already accredited NIEs of the Fund. The accredited NIE provides peer support to the country to go through the Fund’s accreditation process and to submit an application for accreditation. An application for an S-S cooperation grant is submitted to the AFB by an accredited NIE on behalf of the country seeking accreditation with the Fund.

Lessons from previous readiness grant recipients

- The experience of NIEs with readiness grants was generally positive.
- The process to apply for readiness grants is easy and straightforward
- Readiness grants are beneficial for the project designing phase and for evaluating Executing Entities.
- Endorsement from the AF Designated Authority (DA) was required in order to apply for the grants but was easy to get.
- Issues raised by participants and discussed
 - Questions were raised on the funding for Environmental Impact Assessment, the effects of changes in focal points on existing South-South (S-S) cooperation, applying grants for working with local governments, and expanding the Readiness support to include peer-to-peer learning on project implementation – in response, it was highlighted that the implementation of the readiness grants was flexible and the implementation process is led by the NIE grant recipient according to its own procurement and operational policies and procedures. However, use of the grant and resultant outcomes from activities should be within the scope of the AF policies and guidelines.
 - Unofficial, country-specific and/or regional cooperation between implementing entities was welcomed and encouraged.

Session 5: Re-Accreditation process of the Adaptation Fund (This session also combined session 7: “Accreditation Workflow” of the agenda)

- Re-accreditation can be seen as a continuity of the capacity building both on an institutional and project level. The aspects on which the re-accreditation focuses as well as the nature of the required documentation was outlined in depth.
- Documentation for reaccreditation is delivered to the AFB secretariat via a dedicated online platform, the Accreditation Workflow.
- The importance and benefits of getting re-accredited with the Fund were described.
- Issues raised by participants and discussed
 - Comments were made by the participants on clearer communication about the benefits of re-accreditation so that the Fund could differentiate itself on the climate finance field. More than one participant was

concerned about the country cap which may affect the willingness of an NIE to apply for re-accreditation. The AFB secretariat took note of the comments and referred to further discussion and decision at the executive Board level.

- A question was raised on the accreditation application language to avoid excessive translation costs – in response it was explained that the re-accreditation application is in English but the documentation can be uploaded in French and Spanish after which the Accreditation Panel member evaluates if there is a need for translating some of the documents.
- Other issues raised concerning the accreditation linkages between the Green Climate Fund and AF were explained to participants that they would be further reviewed into in the gap analysis mentioned earlier.

Session 6: Establishing a Grievance Handling Mechanism for the ESP and Gender Policies

- The Executive secretary introduced the topic by recalling that redressing grievances of affected people are an integral part of any development project's design, plan and management, and that their aim should be to find an effective solution together and that availability of a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) to address environmental and social harms caused by projects is a requirement of accreditation under the AF. She outlined key aspects of such system, included:
 - The GRM needs to be accessible, transparent, fair, and be an effective process. GRM can be pre-existing, national, local or institutional or project-specific.
 - Characteristics of well-functioning GRM are the following: i) provides an accessible, predictable, transparent and credible process to all parties, resulting in outcomes that are seems as fair, effective and lasting; ii) builds trust as an integral component of broader community relations activities; iii) enables more systematic identification of emerging issues and trends, facilitating corrective action and preemptive engagement.
 - The UN guiding principles on business and human rights (Ruggie principles) that consist in 3 pillars: protect, respect and remedy created the first global standard for presenting and addressing the risk of adverse human rights impacts linked to business activity.
 - The effectiveness criteria for non-judicial grievance mechanisms can be the following: legitimate, accessible, predictable, equitable, transparent, rights-compatible, a source of continuous learning, based on engagement and dialogue.
 - Steps to be followed to design a GRM can be the following: set goals, objective and scope, provide structure, provide resources, establish procedures and time frames, create awareness, implement and take stock.
- The Executive secretary also recalled the origin of the World Bank Inspection Panel that was established in 1993 following issues arising from re-settlements issues in India, and that has a fact finding mission and not a decision-making role. She provided an overview of the procedures, processes, and structure of the inspection panel.
- Finally, a case study is presented from a past experience in India for which complaints were received from communities about delays in receiving the revenues that they were supposed to generate thanks to carbon sequestration. The work of the panel helped the World Bank and the executing agency to come to an agreement to provide the expected funding to the farmers and avoid any deadlocked situations.
- Questions asked by participants related to the accessibility of such GRMs, potential costs for the country associated with such systems, language requirements, potential issues linked to fear of retaliation, collaboration with the Integrity Department of the World Bank, field visits, definition of an "independent" GRM in the case of the Adaptation Fund, cases where complaints cannot be addressed, eligibility reports.

- The representative of the CIF administrative unit provided an introduction of the CIF, outlining the role of MDB policies in the way CIF operates. CIF operates in a different way than the AF, especially because MDB prepare country programmes (country investment plan and projects with specific MDBs).
- The CIF has established a Joint Trust Fund Committee which set policies and provides guidance for CIF as a whole, which is different from the way the AF is operating. CIF provides direct support to national and local climate planning institutions. In addition, the CIF has approved a gender action plan split into two parts (first phase in FY15-16 and second phase (FY17-20). Its goal is to mainstream gender in CIF policy and programming in support of gender equality in climate resilient, low carbon development investments in CIF countries.
- The lessons learned from application of the gender policy so far are: importance of government and notably engage with gender focal points of DAs and IEs and women ministries; consultations: enhancing consultation processes, including with rural and urban women and women’s organizations; civil society outreach M&R and Evaluation and learning.

Session 7: Accreditation Workflow (refer to session 5 notes)

Session 8: Complying with the Fund’s Environmental and Social Policy

- The aim of this session was to provide a brief description of each of the 15 principles of the Fund’s ESP and to describe AF expectations on content at the concept and proposal submission stage and at the project implementation stage.
- A description of the Fund’s Environmental and Social policy, including Gender policy, and its principles as well as guidelines how to incorporate the policies to the project design was given. Second part of the session was an interactive exercise that included participation and discussion by the NIEs.
- During the presentation, overview of the AF ESP and its application, including gender policy was presented. The presenter also explained how to incorporate Gender and ESS in project design in an integrated manner. Also best practices in environmental and social risk management with EEs was discussed.
- An outline of the main characteristics of the ESP and Gender policy was provided, and the presenter highlighted the key role that Implementing Entities and Executing Entities have in executing the policies. Next, the 15 principles of ESP were presented and examples of compliance given. Lastly, the expert described the application of ESP Gender Policy in project / programme proposals.
- During the latter part of the session a case study (in groups) on applying ESP and Gender policies and risk assessment on project design was tackled. In the case study, NIEs were asked to discuss real project examples of challenges faced in projects and how they should be addressed in accordance with the Fund’s ESP. The debriefing of the case study produced a lot of discussion and was considered useful by the participants.

Session 9: Meeting the project review criteria

- The representative of the secretariat provided an overview of the project review criteria used to review proposals submitted to the Adaptation Fund Board. Key aspects of his presentation included:
- The “Instructions to proponents” document that provides guidance to proponents to prepare project/programme proposals has been introduced, as well as the “Guidance for IEs to comply with the ESP” that has been touched upon in the previous session and associated case study. This document provides, among others, guidance on self-screening

or environment and social risks in proposals. A must for proposals is to be supported by the country (designated authority) through the submission of the letter of endorsement.

- Different criteria set by the AFB and used by the secretariat to review proposals include:
 - Concreteness of the proposed activities: proposals should pay specific attention to how the activities help with adaptation and resilience and highlights visible and tangible results
 - Environmental, socio-economic benefits
 - Cost-effectiveness
 - Consistency with national strategies and plans
 - Meeting relevant national technical standards
 - Duplication of project/programme with other funding sources
 - Learning and knowledge management component
 - Consultative process: NIEs can be granted Project Formulation Grants (PFGs) to facilitate consultation.
 - Full cost of adaptation reasoning
 - Sustainability (economic, social, environmental, institutional and financial) of the project/programme
 - Overview of the environmental and social impacts and risks identified.
 - Fully-developed proposals need to comply with other specific criteria such as adequacy of project/programme management arrangements, measures for financial and project/programme risk management and environmental and social risks management, monitoring and evaluation arrangements and budget, results framework (milestones, targets and indicators), alignment with the AF results framework, detailed budget, and disbursement schedule.
- Following up on this presentation, participants asked questions related to duplication, concreteness of activities, and relation with the DAs.

Panel discussion – Getting started on the ground: challenges faced in concept and proposal submission

During this session, three NIEs shared their experiences in completing the AF request for funds project template and an identification of the challenges they face in project and concept submission. The NIEs shared how they have overcome these challenges and engaged in a question and answer dialogue with participants on the floor to enhance understanding of the concept and proposal design phase of projects and factors central to submitting good quality proposals for Board approval.

Ms. Aissata Boubou Sall, M&E Officer, CSE (Senegal)

- The representative of CSE informed the audience that the second proposal took longer to develop than the first one, mainly due to the fact that plenty of field level consultation have been organized. The institution worked closely with NGOs and directly with affected communities. It had issued a call and had received no less than 60 project ideas from which it has selected 3. These projects have been selected through a review committee, using criteria developed by CSE in alignment with the Adaptation Fund review criteria. Baseline and environment and social risk analysis are two points that were found difficult to comply with during the process. For the alignment with national strategies and plans, the DA supported by the Climate Change Committee had been especially consulted to ensure such alignment. One of the most challenging part in the process was to establish a baseline and find skilled technical people. An important advice for countries currently developing proposals would be to focus on a limited set of activities rather than too many activities, and those who have a high impact.

Mr. D.K. Mishra, General Manager, NABARD (India)

- One issue faced by the entity was that they had to learn how to address the different criteria that the AFB had defined for the review, since the proposal design process was usually handled internally. The institution worked with NGOs and local offices to design projects and had successfully got five approved project, and one concept endorsed (but not approved yet). The representative provided examples of these projects and detailed a few activities. The first and second batches of approved projects took around one year from concept submitted to project approval. One of the impacts of the AF on NABARD/India was the creation of a coordination committee at national level to coordinate climate change adaptation proposal submissions (for AF and GCF). A selection has been done by the committee (headed by the DA) once a number a proposals were suggested. One of the most challenging parts of this exercise was to fulfill the AF criteria; and involve communities. The most important advice for countries currently developing proposals would be to mobilize communities.

Ms. Claudia Godfrey, Director of Development and Supervision, PROFONANPE (Peru)

- The project had been initially designed with the support of IDB that had designed the initial concept and handled it to PROFONANPE later on. A couple of consultations were conducted at different stages. The representative of PROFONANPE informed that some adjustments were made as comments from the secretariat were coming from the AFB to the institution, but not major ones - at least they were not seen as a burden. The country DA was involved during the design process, especially at the beginning of the development of the project concept. According to the representative, the most challenging part was to learn how to address the review criteria, to get the technical skills to address them, and to address the AF ESP. The most important advice she would provide for countries currently developing proposals is to have some patience and learn from each other.

Conclusion

- Each presenter provided an overview of their respective project/programme and explained who came up with the initial project concept and who designed it (the implementing entity or with support from another entity), explaining who else was involved in the design of the project and how long it took from project conception to submission.
- Questions from participants included differences between bottom-up and top-down approaches, decision to choose a programmatic approach vs. a project one; processes to select the final proposals.

Session 10: Monitoring project performance – AF results based management tools for Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

- The representative of the CIF administrative unit gave an overview of the monitoring and reporting procedures of the Climate Investment Fund (CIF). Each of the four programme of the CIF has a results frameworks and associated core indicators that are used by countries that benefit from CIF support. Toolkits have been defined and made available to countries. Country workshops have been held to include communities in the monitoring of country programme designed with the help of MDBs. 5 core indicators that applies to the PPCR were presented.
- The representative of the secretariat started its presentation by providing a few insights from the Annual Performance Report of the Fiscal Year 2016 that is currently under preparation. An overview was also provided with respect to the current status of the AF portfolio of projects and programmes, including the geographical and sectoral breakdown, characteristics of projects under implementation, and expected results from the interventions. Following this introduction, the representative provided a brief overview of the results based management strategy that the AFB had approved, and of the different tools that the secretariat has developed to allow the implementation

of this strategy. Based on the requests made during the pre-seminar survey, the officer introduced the Project Performance Reports templates and explained the requirements of IEs in its eight different sections that provides information related to project basic data, financial data, procurement data, project risks, project implementation rating, project indicators, qualitative questions and lessons learned and a results tracker. Finally, the checklist used by the secretariat to screen the PPRs submitted by IEs has been presented and the procedures from the submission of PPRs to the disbursement of the funding tranches have been explained.

- Participants asked some questions related to the level of details needed in each PPR, regarding the timeline and reporting cycle, the information needed for the procurement section, and the responsibilities of the executing entities in the reporting.

Session 11: Panel discussion - Implementation of adaptation projects, challenges faced from Board approval to project inception – Experiences from IEs

Representatives of implementing entities shared experiences and lessons learned in implementation of adaptation projects, focusing on the technical aspects and the approaches. Each panelist introduced the purpose of their responsive projects/programmes, were asked how long it took to start project implementation after project approval, and explained the steps that have been followed to get the project under implementation.

Mr. Ayub Ndaruga, Director for environmental education, information and public participation, NEMA (Kenya)

- In the case of Kenya, a call for proposals was issued and was followed by a screening process of the proposals with criteria established by the institution that had received 106 proposals and ultimately selected 11. The screening of the proposals took around six months to complete. NEMA compiled the selected projects into a single programme that it submitted to the AFB. The main challenge that the institution had faced was the existence of a legal gap in the government not allowing the institution to manage grant funding. Such issue had delayed the programme implementation for about a year. The development of ESP/gender-related measures was done in house, and not with external consultants. An advice that the entity would share with other IEs would be to plan carefully the governance aspect of the project, to ensure transparency all along the process, to remain in close communication with the EEs, and to keep in-house capacity.

Mr. Mpfunzeni Tshindane, SANBI (South Africa)

- In the case of South Africa, the AFB has approved two proposals that SANBI had submitted, including a small grant facility project that was the main focus of the representative's intervention. There are currently nine projects that have been awarded funding, and there are opportunities for 7 additional projects. They are mainly in the field of water management, and urban adaptation. It took the institution 11 months to start implementation, and 12 months for the other water catchment project. Integrating ESP and gender were part of the project design, including involvement of women participation. The institution had suffered from a lack of capacity in addressing ESP, in addition to the use of multiple languages at local level. Among the 12 sub-projects approved (76 were submitted), 10 are headed by women - most of them in small-scale farming. Women beneficiaries represent 60 per cent of the funding channeled toward these projects. A major advice that the representative of SANBI would give to other IEs is to be patient and to break down notions and terms being used to a more ground-level vocabulary. In addition, emphasizing transparency when reviewing sub-projects and encouraging sub-projects not selected to persevere until additional funding is provided were also seen as lessons learned that may be valuable to other IEs.

Ms. Hazar Badran, Head of World Bank Group and UN Agencies Division, MOPIC (Jordan)

- In the case of Jordan, the steps followed after approval from the AFB were the signature of the proposal by different ministries, setting-up the Project Steering Committee, the Project Implementation Unit, recruiting the Project Implementation Unit (M&E officer, project director), drafting the TOR for the inception workshop, and organizing the workshop. A unique challenge that the institution had faced relates to the geopolitical situation of the country and the pressure put by the refugees crisis on the national institutions. The representative announced that the project has just started, one year after its approval. With respect to the gender policy, a significant challenge was to ensure women's participation into the project that the institution addressed by promoting participation of women and increasing their revenues, especially in the most vulnerable regions. An advice that the representative would like to share with other IEs is to draft the action plan before the signature of the agreement in order to speed up implementation.

Session 12: Readiness support and tools from the international community

- In this session, a representative from CTCN presented on the type of readiness support they provide to countries, the tools available to countries through the support they offer and the modalities through which countries can access the readiness support.
- Mr. Spensley covered the technical assistance and readiness support that CTCN provides to countries. Supporting equally mitigation and adaptation, the core services of CTCN include Technical assistance, Capacity building and Knowledge management and networking.
- The CTCN has received 127 requests from 60+ countries of which at the moment 67 are being designed or implemented. The services, which can be seen as complementary to the AF readiness support, especially "Project Formulation Assistance" Grants, include background analysis for the project proposals. For example, in Peru, the CTCN is providing assistance in designing the national fishing strategy, which is related to the Adaptation Fund / PROFONANPE project.
- The readiness support requests are accepted by CTCN at any time during the year. As for developing AF project proposals, early in the stage is recommended, e.g. during design of concept notes of full proposals. Mr. Spensley also provided a list of country NDEs from which an approval is needed for the support requests.
- During the discussion, AF Readiness Officer highlighted that AF is not part of the CTCN decision making process and that CTCN resources are complementary to the AF readiness resources.
- Questions were raised on the procurement standards for selecting the technical assistance provider, the eligibility of the research institutions and private sector and ownership of possible Intellectual Property rights that may be created during the support projects. Also research institutions and private sector parties are eligible as they are institutions.

Session 13: Communication and stakeholder management

This session included two presentations and dialogue with NIEs on how to communicate project results. The discussion focused on identifying different communication formats, communication platforms, and how to identify and work with multiple stakeholders as well as gather useful media throughout the life of the project.

- The specialist gave an overview on how to build a media and communications strategy from the NIE's point of view. She pointed out the connection between the missions of the organizations and the need to communicate the mission and the projects to the general public via media.

- The use of visual aids (videos, photos) in communicating the impact of projects and programmes to the journalists was highlighted in order to get publicity to the project. Discussion evolved on how Implementing Entities use media in disseminating their message, which media is selected on what basis and what means there are to increase the likelihood of their message being published. Also discussion on the ethical journalism and anti-corruption procedures with media was raised.
- A second consultant provided hands-on tips for the NIEs on communications and media. The main points of his presentations included:
 - With the help of new media formats, such as social media, organizations can publish news and content themselves instead of having to go to the traditional media outlets. Despite this, high quality content is still important in gaining a sufficient outreach.
 - Facilitating the dissemination of the content in traditional media and collecting media during the different phases of a project for later distribution was also discussed. Mr. Sugg also explained the importance of managing the materials to facilitate sharing and usage later on. Hands-on tips on photography and videography was given to the entities.

Closing remarks

- The manager of the secretariat thanked all the participants, outlining the inspiring energy emerging from the participants and the discussion held during the seminar. She highlighted the usefulness of such events that allow to receive first-hand feedback from the participants and the NIEs. Adding up to the growing community of practice of NIEs accredited to the Fund, the manager announced officially the accreditation of the Ministry of Finance and Economy Management of Cook Islands as the 24th NIE of the Fund, the 5th entities accredited this year, and 2nd in the Pacific. After congratulating the newly accredited institution, the manager recalled the two major challenges that the Fund is currently facing: i) the sustainability and predictability of its funding sources and ii) its place in the application of the Paris agreement, and for which the support of the NIEs could help.

(Sessions for National and Regional Implementing Entities)

Session 13: NIE Community of practice

- In this session, Implementing Entities and the secretariat discussed the development of a community of practice for continued dialogue and exchange of information, resources and interaction with experts.
- At the previous Readiness seminar for NIEs in 2015, the NIEs requested a community of practice for sharing experiences and lessons learnt. As one of the results, the AF secretariat launched webinars in November 2015. To date, two webinars have been held and the third webinar is to be held in October 2016. During this session, the idea about the Community of Practice (CoP) that would involve peer-to-peer knowledge exchange between the NIEs was taken forward with the help of a brainstorming session and discussion in groups.
 - By definition, a CoP means a group of people with a common interest and a common goal. The objective of the CoP is sharing experiences and thus help capturing tacit knowledge and sharing know-how that is not usually easily articulated.
 - CoP would be managed by the NIEs, not AF secretariat. Secretariat could facilitate the CoP in the beginning, but the management should be with the NIEs in order to maintaining the CoP as a platform for peer support and learning.

- The discussion was initiated in small groups. NIEs did brainstorming on short and long term ideas on the CoP, and specifically discussed on:
 - What the CoP should look like and how it would work. The need for commitment by participants to keep the platform “alive”/active was emphasized.
 - What tools can be used to support knowledge learning and exchange on the platform
 - What are the General Rules/code of conduct for engaging on the platform
 - What are the Immediate actions for operationalizing the community of practice
- Christian Rosado from Kemitraan volunteered to create a draft for the group. The draft would include group norms, privacy considerations. Also short pilot project on WhatsApp or similar app, creating a Facebook group and suggestions on adding a private interface on the AF website were considered to be included in the first phase of building the CoP.

Group discussion notes

- Group 1: Their idea is called a “Support System” where trust among NIEs is the foundation.
 - Short term: Community charter, trust building on knowledge & lessons sharing, group norms, developing a platform (Evernote, Facebook, Webinar, Asana)
 - Long term: project site visits to exchange hands on knowledge, National Adaptation Plan contribution
 - Discussion: some of the information is confidential so trust was considered important
- Group 2: idea based on easy and flexible and sharing, not additional workload for NIEs or secretariat
 - Short term: Easy response tool, social network (sharing); Website discussion group topics suggested
- Group 3:
 - Short term: knowledge management, sharing ideas, challenges -> technologies
 - Long term principles: accessibility, privacy, uniformity, policy of sharing documents
 - G-Drive, YouTube
- Group 4:
 - Blog, smartphones
 - Limitations: language -> network to be used more as a technical network, instead of a social network; confidentiality is important
 - How to maintain the enthusiasm after the workshops?
 - Short-term: uploading information (to be defined: what? where?), WhatsApp group
 - Long term: framework of discussion,

Summary: foundational charter, how, responsibilities, group norms; social media; website platform for uploading documents.

Clinics on the Fund’s project cycle and environmental and social policy /Short video interviews

Representatives of accredited NIEs were invited to attend the clinics. In the clinics, participants had the opportunity to interact one-on-one with secretariat staff and environmental and social safeguards experts to ask questions and gain a

clear understanding on project proposal requirements. In parallel with the clinics, representatives were invited to have short video interviews on their AF project experience/plans. The interview themes covered: a) concrete adaptation benefits the country would get as a result of AF project, b) relevance of the project in the life of ordinary people and vulnerable communities, and c) experience of direct access project implementation compared to the conventional financing model.