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**ASSESSMENT REPORT ON PROGRESS IN THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ADAPTATION FUND'S GENDER
POLICY AND GENDER ACTION PLAN**

**From Policy Mandate to Implementation: Assessment Report on
Progress in Realizing the Mandate of the Adaptation Fund's
Gender Policy and Gender Action Plan**

October 2019

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I. Introduction

A. Background

The Adaptation Fund's Gender Policy (GP) and Gender Action Plan (GAP) (2017-2019; document AFB/EFC.18/5/Rev.1) were approved by the Adaptation Fund Board (the Board) in March 2016 (decision B.27/28). The Gender Policy (GP) was designed and approved in following established international good practice in climate finance mechanisms. It was articulated against the backdrop of the growing recognition of the importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women as a crosscutting issue in multilateral environmental agreements more generally and specifically in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which in a series of decisions has highlighted the relevance of advances in gender equality for the fulfillment of its mission to combat climate change. Likewise, in the 2015 Paris Agreement (PA) gender equality is enshrined as an overarching principle guiding its implementation. For adaptation, Article 7, paragraph 5 of the PA specifically highlights that *"Parties acknowledge that adaptation action should follow a country-driven, **gender-responsive**, participatory and fully transparent approach, taking into consideration vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems, and should be based on and guided by the best available science and, as appropriate, traditional knowledge, knowledge of indigenous peoples and local knowledge systems, with a view to integrating adaptation into relevant socioeconomic and environmental policies and actions, where appropriate."* [emphasis added]¹

The GP systematically integrates and further defines key principles elaborated in the Fund's own environmental and social policy, especially the principles of access and equity, on consideration of marginalized and vulnerable groups and of human rights. While it is thus interwoven and interconnected with an environmental and social safeguards (ESS) approach, it does not stop there. Instead, it goes beyond the traditional approach of environmental and social safeguards (ESS) centered around the core mandate to "do no harm". The GP operates from a mandate to not only avoid and mitigate potential gender discrimination in its operations but to "do good", i.e. to pro-actively address gender equality and women's empowerment through purposeful planning and targeted interventions in adaptation actions funded.

The GP and GAP were built drawing on and applying lessons learnt from the existing gender policies and gender action plans, including those of other climate funds, such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF), as operating entities for the financial mechanism of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement. The gender mainstreaming approach of the Climate Investment Funds (CIFs) of the World Bank, although outside of the UNFCCC framework, was also analyzed to determine good practice components and building blocks applicable to the AF's work. Since 2016, in the multilateral climate funds (GCF, GEF, CIFs) used as reference framework, further efforts to improve the integration of gender in their respective fund operations have been made, including through the update of existing policies and gender action plans (see chapter IV of this assessment document for further elaboration). This acknowledges a core understanding of the efforts to mainstream gender consideration in a climate fund's

¹ https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf.

operationalization, namely that this is a long-term iterative collaborative process, rather than a just a series of goals or indicators achieved, although accountability through tracking of progress is vital. The GP indicates this explicitly by stating as a principle (under ‘Review and Revisions’) that ***“the gender mainstreaming approach of the Fund’s gender policy is a long-term undertaking demanding a sustained commitment and a regular tracking of its progress. As experience is gained and lessons learned in the implementation of the gender policy throughout the Fund’s operations, the Fund as a learning institution might adjust its approach. In light of this, the Fund will review its gender policy three years after it becomes operational.”***

B. Methodology

In line with the mandate of the GP, starting in May 2019 and expected to be finalized by early 2020, an overall review of the implementation of the GP and GAP is to be conducted to assess how well the Fund has so far implemented the GP and GAP compared to international best practices and the experience in other multilateral climate funds, especially under the UNFCCC and serving the PA. With a focus on successes and good practices, as well as ongoing challenges or gap areas, the goal of the review is to draw concrete recommendations on how the AF and its partners can collaboratively improve in their efforts to comprehensively consider and support ‘gender equality and women’s empowerment’ in all of the AF’s operations. The outcome of the review will form the basis for the update of the GP and GAP through a consultative and participatory process which aims to comprehensively include the Adaptation Fund Board members and alternates, AF implementing entities (IEs), Designated Authorities (DAs), the Adaptation Fund NGO Network and broader civil society, as well as other partner organizations and stakeholders.

Methodologically, the review has been independently conducted by an external gender expert contracted by the Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat (the secretariat). It is based primarily on a desk review and analysis of relevant Adaptation Fund operational policies, strategies and other Board and secretariat documents and procedural guidelines, the Fund’s web presence and other communication tools. The desk review uses the six priority areas for actions and the respective activities mandated under the three-year GAP (FY 2017-2019) as the framework for the analysis of implementation achievements for the AF’s GP. The desk review is complemented by the analysis of responses received from a set of four tailored surveys targeted at Adaptation Fund Board members and alternates, Designated Authorities (DAs), Implementing Entities (IEs), and the AF NGO Network and civil society respectively. The surveys were designed to solicit responses pertaining to the understanding and appreciation of the GP and GAP, as well as observations on their implementation, as well as the respondents’ own role in ensuring the success of contributing to realizing gender equality and women’s empowerment in their respective role as partners in the AF’s operation. In addition, a number of targeted interviews were held with selected staff of the Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat, as well as with the Fund’s Accreditation Panel (see Annex I for a list of those interviewed). The analysis of other climate fund’s practices in their implementation of gender policy in their operations was undertaken mainly through a desk review of other climate funds’ gender mainstreaming mandates and implementation efforts as elaborated in codified policies, action plans, gender-specific evaluations or guidance documents and publications.

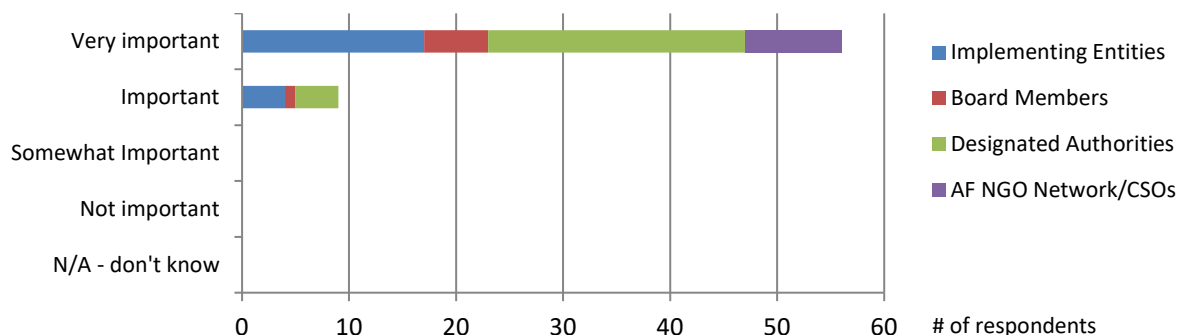
II. Review of the Implementation of the Gender Policy and Gender Action Plan

A. Views toward and knowledge of the GP and GAP among AF Partners – Survey Results

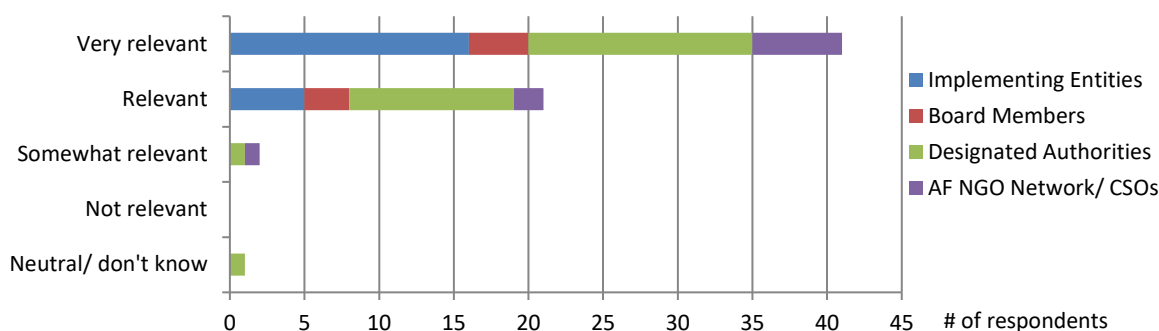
As part of the review, a survey was conducted targeting four groups among the Fund partners and stakeholders which consist of Implementing Entities, Members of the Board, Designated Authorities, and the AF NGO Network and civil society organizations more broadly, each with their respective functions and contributions to the fulfillment of the Fund’s mandate. The overall objective of the survey was to examine their understanding of the role and purpose, relevancy and adequacy of the Fund’s Gender Policy and Gender Action Plan, as well as stakeholders’ familiarity with both. A total of 65 responses were received, including 21 from implementing entities (14 NIEs, 1 RIE, 6 MIEs), 7 from Board members and alternate Board members, 28 from Designated Authorities and 9 from civil society and particularly the AF NGO Network.

All respondents to the surveys agreed that attention to gender equality, women’s rights as universal human rights and women’s empowerment is “very important” or “important” for successful urgent action on adaptation (Question 1). The overwhelming majority (62 of 65 total respondents) ranked the Adaptation Fund’s gender mainstreaming efforts and related policies and procedures as “very relevant” or “relevant” to fulfill its mandate (Question 2).

Question 1: In your view, how important is attention to gender equality, women's rights as universal human rights and women's empowerment for successful urgent action on adaptation?

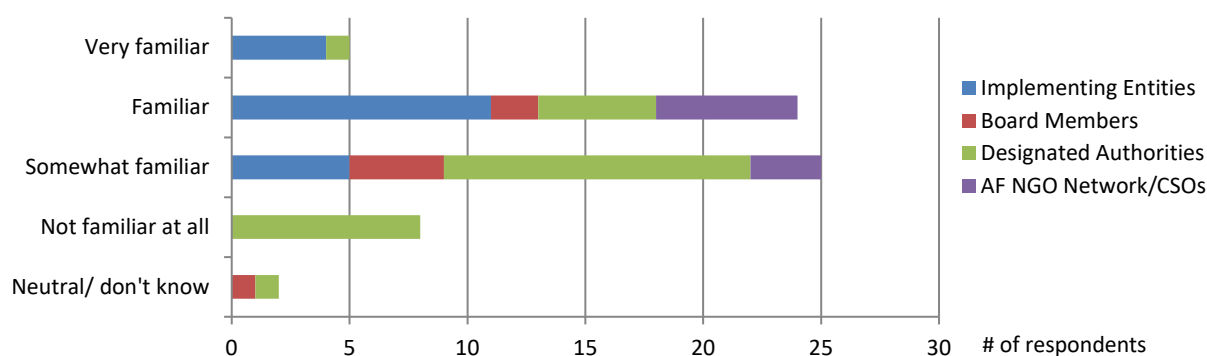


Question 2: In your view, how relevant are the Adaptation Fund's gender mainstreaming efforts and related policies and procedures to fulfill its mandate?



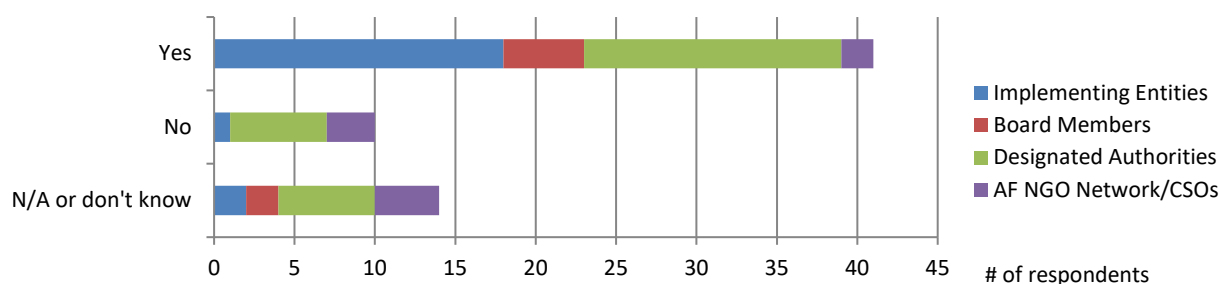
Most of those responding to the surveys claimed to be familiar with the Adaptation Fund’s Gender Policy and Gender Action Plan (54 of 64 total respondents), although only 5 respondents said they were “very familiar” with the policy. Respondents saying that they were “familiar” and “somewhat familiar” with the GP and GAP were pretty much even numbered, although some differences within the stakeholder groups started to appear. While the majority of IEs and CSO respondents indicated that they were “familiar” with the GP and GAP, almost half of the DA respondents more cautiously admitted to only some familiarity with both. Equally telling, all of those 8 respondents answering that they were “not familiar at all” with the GP and GAP were DAs. This points to the need to much more targeted outreach information and engagement needs on the AF’s gender mainstreaming mandate and actions for DAs (Question 3).

Question 3: How familiar are you with the Adaptation Fund's Gender Policy and Gender Action Plan?



Lastly, on the adequacy of the current AF gender mainstreaming efforts, almost two thirds of respondents (41 of 65 total provided answers and the majority of responding IEs, Board members and DAs) indicated that in their view gender considerations are sufficiently taken into account in Fund projects, procedures and policies at all levels, while 10 respondents disagreed and 14 professed either “not to know” or to have no opinion on the question. This indicates that the GP and GAP are considered by those questioned largely “fit-for-purpose”, with room for improvement both more generally in gender mainstreaming efforts and specifically in terms of outreach, awareness raising and building, understanding and support among all core AF partner and stakeholder groups for implementing its gender equality and women’s empowerment mandate. (Question 4).

Question 4: in your view, are gender considerations sufficiently taken into account in Adaptation Fund projects, procedures and policies at all levels (Secretariat, Board, IEs, DAs, In-country stakeholders)?



B. Suitability of the Gender Policy – Is it Fit-for-Purpose?

The Fund's GP starts out with its key objective to uphold women's rights as universal human rights and to attain the goal of gender equality by applying a gender mainstreaming approach with a focus on the equal treatment of women and men and providing them with equal opportunities for access to Fund's resources and services. As articulated, consciously taking a binary approach, the GP acknowledges and identifies that due to the historical and legal discriminations of women in hierarchical patriarchal social systems gender mainstreaming often requires targeted support or prioritization for women and girls to address those disadvantages or oppressions. This does not take into account the concept of the intersectionality of gender, which in the past years has become increasingly recognized as an important analytical tool for understanding and responding to the ways gender overlaps with other sociocultural factors such as race, ethnicity, religion or belief, health, status, age, class, caste, sexual orientation, inclusion and exclusion and gender identity, and how those interlinkages evolve over time. This is not reflected in the current GP. As understanding of gender in all its complexity is evolving over time, in updating its GP, the Fund might consider to make policy's 'objectives' section be more in line with an evolving broader gender understanding beyond a binary approach.

The GP takes a principles-based approach with a strong human-rights framing, rather than elaborating all mandates in explicit detail. In this approach, it mirrors the principles-based approach of the Fund's environmental and social policy (ESP). Both policies are judged to be exemplary and in line with international best practices by the AF NGO Network and CSO observers as knowledgeable stakeholders of Fund operations.² This approach has served the Fund well over the past three years; in line with the AF's modus operandi of being nimble, innovative and responsive to the needs of the developing countries and vulnerable people it serves, the GP allows some flexibility in the Fund's implementation as well as for continuous learning and improvement. It seems 'fit-for-purpose' for the Fund's operational scope, its funding volume and the size and focus of individual projects and programmes, considering that the AF supports concrete, relatively small size grant-financed adaptation interventions with tangible benefits for people and communities on the ground, but without high financial or high environmental and social management risks. The policy elaborates a set of key principles, namely "*Commitment, Comprehensiveness in scope and coverage, Accountability, Competencies, Resource Allocation, Knowledge Generation and communication, Reviews and Revisions.*" These are considered to be relevant and sufficient (not needing inclusion of additional or different principles) for the next operationalization period of the GP over the next few years (although they might need to be slightly adjusted, for instance in the 'commitment' section, if a broader, non-binary implementation practice of gender were to be applied).

² See a recent analysis by Germanwatch, acting as the Secretariat for the AF NGO Network. Grimm, Julia; Weischer, Lutz; Eckstein, David (2018), The future role of the Adaptation Fund in the international climate finance architecture. Germanwatch, Bonn/Germany; <https://newclimate.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/The-future-role-of-the-Adaptation-fund-in-the-international-climate-finance-architecture.pdf>.

C. Implementation of the Gender Action Plan FY 2017-2019

The Fund's GAP as approved in March 2016 (decision B.27/28) is a time-bound framework and accountability tool for the full operationalization of the GP (covering the years 2017-2019). The GAP translated the key principles of the GP into a set of six priority action areas. It sets clear goals and priorities by listing a number of mandated actions under each priority area and by assigning the responsibility for their implementation to one or more identified lead actors. In the following, the progress in implementing the GAP over the past three years will be assessed for each priority area.

1. Governance and institutional structure

This priority area of the GAP speaks to governance and institutional steps necessary for the joint implementation of the Fund's GP as a joint responsibility of the Adaptation Fund Board (the Board), assisted by the AFB Secretariat, and of the IEs by creating the necessary accountability and oversight procedures as well as the necessary gender expertise and capacity for the fulfillment of these functions.

With the **approval of the GP and GAP** in March 2016, the starting point for the fulfillment of mandated action under the '*Governance and Institutional Structure*' priority area of the GAP was set. Several other mandates under this priority area have seen significant progress toward compliance or have been fully complied with. Others speak to ongoing functions of Fund-related actors, thus ensure procedural compliance rather than a benchmark to be reached. For the latter, the end of FY 2019 provides an important check-in point.

Regular Implementation Progress Reports. As required, the Board has received regular progress reports on the implementation of the GP and the GAP. This has happened annually through the Annual Performance Reports (APR) submitted by Secretariat providing a portfolio-wide overview of status and issues in the implementation of their approved projects and programmes. In the APR 2017³, the first one applicable after the approval of the GP and GAP, the report detailed that 40 percent of all people trained on in climate-resilient measures under AF projects and programmes then under implementation were women, which amounted to more than 41,000; that the number of women beneficiaries accounted for close to 1.2 million, with economic empowerment through livelihood diversification; and that bringing women into decision-making in natural resource management were considered as the most prominent areas of gender integration efforts in 2017. In the APR 2018⁴, gender equality and the empowerment of women were reported on as a cross-cutting issue in a dedicated sub-chapter, which noted that of the 73 projects and programmes under implementation at year-end 2018, some 50 activities, or more than two thirds, focused on creating equal access and equal opportunities for men and women to increase their resilience, for example in livelihood diversification, natural resource management and through a targeted focus on increasing women's participation in decision-making. However, almost a third of all projects only focused on listing women as beneficiaries, without specifying gender-responsive interventions as part of the implementation approach. APR 2019 will be submitted to the Board in October 2019. It is notable

³ https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/AFB.EFC_.21.3.Rev_.1-Annual-Performance-Report-2017.pdf

⁴ https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/AF-APR-2018-final_graphic-version.pdf.

that reports on gender and empowerment of women in APR 2017 and APR 2019 are in stark contrast to the APR 2016 (concluded shortly after the GP and GAP was approved), which does not even mention the term ‘gender’ or ‘women’s empowerment’ in its reporting on the Fund’s portfolio.⁵ This highlights the importance of regular reporting, which enhances accountability, and helps raise awareness of and expectations for the necessity of integrating gender considerations comprehensively into the Fund’s projects and programmes.

The AFB Secretariat has also reported on gender biannually to the Board through the reports on activities of the secretariat, starting with the report for the 28th Board meeting in October 2016, i.e. the first such activities report after the approval of the GP and GAP, and reporting on gender-related activities and ongoing efforts to varying degrees in each Secretariat activities report since then.

Enhance staff capacity and expertise. The AFB Secretariat had designated a gender focal point already in October 2015. With the approval of the GP and GAP, the work mandate of the gender focal point was strengthened and expanded in line with efforts to increase the gender awareness and support the gender learning also within the Secretariat. Reportedly, the gender focal point has become over the past three years the go-to person for many gender-related implementation efforts, thus leading to the increased demand on her time. While the overall staff time devoted to gender issues has been increased further in 2019, considering the Fund’s operational modality and objectives, the Fund may want to consider whether there is a need to increase in its gender work personnel, for instance, through hiring a dedicated gender staff person to ensure that the Fund is able to generate the sustained gender-learning results, including lessons learned about and tracking gender equality outcomes for project implementation. A first Secretariat gender training was held in February 2018. The training was received well, with 11 of 12 participants indicating in a feedback survey that they found the workshop on gender and adaptation either very useful or useful for their work as it increased their ability to identify ways and entry points for strengthened integration of gender equality considerations in the Fund. A number of respondents indicated that the workshop could have been longer as they felt it covered too much in a short time. They welcomed the opportunity for further workshops of this kind, in which they suggested to focus more on concrete examples from project practice and on gender integration experiences and challenges throughout the Fund’s project life-cycle. Many respondents urged that it was important not to lose the momentum.⁶

Board accountability for including gender considerations in approved projects/programmes. The GP under para. 22 articulates clearly that *“Fund projects and programmes without articulated gender considerations shall not receive Fund resources”*. The Board in approving Fund projects and programmes assumes final accountability for the compliance with this mandate. In a survey of Board members during the GP and GAP review, all Board members and Alternate Board members respondents (7 of 7 overall respondents) said it was ‘very important’ or ‘important’ for the Board to actively monitor the Fund’s portfolio of projects and programmes for progress in gender integration efforts. Almost all (6 out of 7)

⁵ https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/AFB.EFC_19.3-Annual-Performance-Report-for-FY16_final.pdf.

⁶ Documentation of responses given by AF Secretariat Staff in an evaluation questionnaire after the first gender training within the Secretariat.

agreed that it was important for the Board, and especially the Project and Programme Review Committee (PPRC) to enforce para.22 of the GP mandating that *'Fund projects and programmes without articulated gender considerations shall not receive Fund resources.'* The majority of Board members responding (5 out of 7) felt that the current level of accountability by the Fund for its gender mainstreaming efforts and gender-responsive adaptation results and outcomes was largely sufficient. Asked about whether the level of financial resources made available through project preparation and readiness support for IEs to fulfill the GP mandate was either working or sufficient, the majority of responding (5 out of 7) admitted that they didn't know. Half of Board respondents acknowledged that relevant gender expertise or gender balance was not considered in the composition of the Fund's Board or its Board committees as in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Board, in principle, each member and alternate are nominated by the constituencies and either elected at a session of the CMP, or nominated intersessionally and appointed by the Board; the committees also follow the distribution of seats according to constituencies on the Board. However, all of the respondents indicated their interest (5 out of 7 saying that they are 'very interested') in gender training for Board members, as well as more sharing of information on gender and resources by the Secretariat.⁷

Safeguarding and strengthening the gender capacity of IEs. During the accreditation process, IEs are required to demonstrate the institutional capacity and commitment through policies, procedures and competences to implement the Fund's GP and ESP (including its gender-related principles and objectives) in designing and implementing the Fund's projects and programmes and providing the necessary oversight, as well as providing technical assistance as needed to executing entities, local communities and stakeholders.

Accreditation. Since the adoption of the GP and GAP, the Fund's accreditation procedure and related documentation requirements have been upgraded to include proof of gender-related institutional capacity and related procedures by the applicant entity. The Fund's Accreditation Application Form (OPG Annex 6) was amended in October 2016⁸ and applied immediately to all applicant entities (including those then under review by the Accreditation Panel). OPG Annex 6 explicitly requests applicant entities to demonstrate their capacity to do gender impact assessments, providing evidence of such project documents for two projects, during project preparation and appraisal, and for project closure and final evaluation through samples reporting on gender-related impacts of successfully completed projects, including on whether gender aspects have been included in independent evaluations of previously completed projects. The form also requests evidence of the commitment of the applicant entity, for example a statement by the top management, to comply with the Fund's GP and ESP. In addition, applicant entities need to show that they can provide project beneficiaries with access to transparent, fair and effective complaints or grievance mechanism (either within the entity itself, local, national or project-specific) with the ability to address gender harms caused by the project or programmes. This is for example spelled out in a separate *'Guidance on Accreditation Standards'*, which devotes one section (Schedule 9) to explain in detail the required supporting documents per respective criteria to show

⁷ Analysis and compilation of responses received from a targeted questionnaire sent to AF Board members in June/July 2019, with 5 Board members and 2 Alternate Board members participating.

⁸https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/OPG-Annex-6_Accreditation-Application-Form_amended-in-Oct-2016.pdf.

compliance with the GP, with another section (Schedule 8) devoted to the like-wise gender-relevant compliance with the Fund's ESP.⁹ The requirements provide a good amount of flexibility in providing the requested documentary proof. This is in line with the GP's approach to accreditation requirements, which also includes a tiered approach. The Accreditation Panel's practice in reviewing applications for accreditation and re-accreditation for their compliance with the GP confirms the suitability of this approach, according to a member of the Accreditation Panel interviewed for this review.¹⁰ The AP member noted however that a reference to gender capacity could be more explicitly referenced in checking compliance with applicants' competency on project implementation planning and quality at entry (competency 7) and for project monitoring and evaluation (competency 8). The AP member also noted that while many of the entities have aspirational goals on gender equality in their organization's constituent documents and long-term strategic plans, broader gender equality mandates are not necessarily enshrined yet in the organizations themselves beyond efforts to integrate gender in the implementation of concrete Fund projects and programmes.

According to an overview table on the accreditation status of the AF's 47 accredited implementing entities from March 2019, 36 entities were accredited to the AF before the GP took effect; of these 30 have been re-accredited or are in the process of re-accreditation since March 2016 with the requirement to show their capacity and related procedures to comply with the AF's GP. Some 15 IEs have been accredited since the GP was adopted in March 2016.¹¹ When asked in a survey whether IEs accredited or re-accredited after the GP became effective in March 2016 considered the gender compliance criteria challenging to fulfill, half of all respondents (10 out of 20) answered no, while a quarter of all respondents (5 IEs) answered with yes. Among those answering with yes, one respondent indicated that it was the first time that they had to show documented gender competence, with another one pointing to the entity's need to request technical assistance by the Secretariat. A third indicated that the desire to become accredited with the Fund motivated the entity to develop an internal staff training plan on gender, as well as articulate a public commitment to gender equality on their website and develop an institutional gender policy modeled after the Fund GP objectives and principles. For those IEs accredited before the GP became effective, only few respondents (2 out of 15 responses of IEs in total) have some concerns about their ability to show compliance with the GP, with an equal number of respondents either having no concerns or indicating that they do not know.

Readiness Support. As highlighted in the GP and GAP, IEs may request and can receive technical assistance (TA) grants under the AF's readiness programme to build their institutional capacity on gender. Currently, this support is only available to NIEs in the form of two options, either grants of USD 25,000 for new NIEs for integrated capacity strengthening on both ESP and GP (TA-ESGP); or stand-alone TA grants of USD 10,000 just on the AF's GP for those entities that have already received a TA grant on ESP or want

⁹https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/English_Guidance-on-Accreditation-Standards.pdf.

¹⁰ Written responses received by a Member of the Adaptation Fund Accreditation Panel, on a set of questions regarding the suitability of the criteria for evaluating the ability of Fund applicant entities for accreditation and re-accreditation to comply with the mandates of the Fund's GP.

¹¹https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Accreditation-status-of-the-Implementing-Entities_March-2019.pdf

to focus just on the GP (TA-GP).¹² As of June 2019, the AF has approved seven TA-ESGPs and three TA-GPs.¹³ For the new fiscal year 2020, as of July 1, 2019 another two-months call for submission of interest opened. At the moment, those grants are only available once. However, in line with the understanding of gender mainstreaming as a continuous process requiring institutional learning and upgrading, the AF might consider a more iterative readiness support for NIE institutional strengthening on gender, for example at least once for every accreditation period. That would mean that entities seeking re-accreditation could also update or upgrade their gender competencies through another AF readiness TA grant (TA-ESGP or TA-GP). The Secretariat might also consider making those grants available to RIEs, specifically those RIEs serving countries or regions where there are few or no accredited NIEs (for example those serving SIDS, or where countries lack the institutional set-up to designate an NIE, to ensure that gender-capacity is build for institutions within those regions). Asked whether they had made use of or planned to use TA grants to help build their institutional capacity on gender through external technical support, 11 of 14 NIEs responding to a questionnaire targeting IEs as part of the GP and GAP update responded in the affirmative and indicated that they felt having these resources available made it easier for them to fulfill the GP mandate. However, only 7 out of 14, declared that those financial resources were accessible and sufficient enough, which 2 declaring that they were not and 5 respondents saying that they didn't know.

IEs can also request support for project preparation under the Fund's readiness activities if they follow a two-stage project development approach to help them develop their concept note into a fully developed proposal. Two different grants are available for that purpose, the Project Formulation Grant (PFG) of up to USD 30,000 for NIEs and up to USD 80,000 for regional projects submitted by RIEs or MIEs, and the Project Formulation Assistance Grant (PFAG) for up to USD 20,000 per proposal, which is only available for NIEs. Both have no cap on the number of proposals for which those grants can be applied for by an individual IE. While the PFG can be used for a variety of project preparatory activities internally, the PFAG is supposed to be targeted more narrowly for specialized project preparation technical assessment or studies from outside experts. This funding could be used for a gender assessment or for the elaboration of a gender equality project baseline; however, according to the secretariat no NIE has ever accessed PFAG for this purpose. This might be a matter of NIEs, for instance, simply not being sufficiently aware that this possibility exists to strengthen the integration of gender considerations in project development with the help of external experts. In their responses in the targeted survey, only a third (5 out of 14 responding NIEs) said they were planning on using PFAGs for specialized technical assistance on gender integration in project preparation and design, with the remaining 9 indicating that they were not. In contrast the number of all IEs that responded by indicating that they either used or were planning to use the PFGs to help with strengthening the gender integration in project formulation was significantly higher with 60% (12 out of 20 responding IEs).

¹² <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/readiness/readiness-grants/technical-assistance-grants/>.

¹³ As reported on the AF website at: <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/projects-programmes/project-information/projects-table-view/> (accessed on June 24, 2019). The seven IEs having received TA-ESGPs as of June 2019 are from Morocco, Antigua and Barbuda, India, Kenya, Peru, and Rwanda; three IEs have received TA-GP grants, namely those from Costa Rica, Micronesia and Senegal.

Under the Fund's Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) (2018-2022) NIEs that have projects under implementation have now also the option to request a Project Scale Up grant of up to USD 100,000 per project/programme. A first call for applications opened in the summer of 2019, with applications to be considered twice per year.¹⁴ The grant can be used for example for planning, assessment, capacity enhancement (individual, organization and institutional) for designing and developing scaling up pathways for project scale up; and public and private partnerships and collaborations to support project development for scale up. Conceivably, this could also include activities related to the enhancement of gender capacity within the NIE or its partners to ensure a more gender-responsive implementation of a proven adaptation approach in a scaled up manner, or expanding the set of implementation partners by bringing additional public and private partners with a gender focus into an upscaled project (such as women's collaboratives, women entrepreneurs, public commissions or government entities focusing on gender equality or social inclusion). As with the PFAG, while of course the use of such readiness grants cannot be prescribed to be used for gender-related activities, it is recommended that the Fund actively communicates in its engagement with NIEs that efforts to deepen or scale up gender-integration in project proposal development are sanctioned expenses for support by the Fund's readiness program under the PFAG as well as the Project Scale Up grants.

DAs role in ensuring alignment. DAs through their function are supposed to guarantee with their no-objection to AF project/programme proposal that those proposals to be implemented in their countries are aligned with national gender and climate change policies and international women's rights obligations. In their responses to a targeted questionnaire for DAs, in which 28 DAs participated¹⁵, an overwhelming majority (22 out of 28 respondents) answered that they were familiar or somewhat familiar with their country's national gender policies and international women's rights obligations, with an additional 4 indicating that they were 'very familiar' and only 2 admitting that they were 'not familiar at all'. Of those 26, all but one said that they considered those policies and obligations in addition to national climate change policies and plans when endorsing concept notes and project proposals to be submitted to the Fund. Those DAs also indicated that they either 'always' (10 respondents) or 'sometimes' (10 respondents) reached out for guidance, consultation or advice to gender experts within their government before making the decision to endorse a Fund concept note or project proposal; 5 respondents admitted that they had so far not considered it.

DAs are also supposed to select for nomination suitable NIE candidates with the capacity and commitment to implement the Fund's GP, as expressly articulated in the Fund's information note for DAs, which was updated to comply with the GP in March 2018.¹⁶ Almost half of DAs responding to the targeted survey (13 out of 28) said that they were at least somewhat familiar, with another 5 saying that they were familiar and only one responding that they were very familiar with the Fund's GP and GAP. However, 8 respondents admitted that they were 'not familiar at all' with the GP and GAP, the only stakeholder group among Fund partners questioned to respond in that way. This points to the fact that DAs have so far not

¹⁴ <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/project-scale-up-grants/>.

¹⁵ Analysis and compilation of responses received in a targeted online survey to which all of the Fund's DAs were invited to contribute in June 2019, with 28 DAs participating.

¹⁶ https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Information-Note-for-DA-to-select-an-NIE-candidate_updated-23-March-2018.pdf.

been sufficiently effectively engaged in strengthening gender mainstreaming in Fund procedures and partnerships, to be familiar with the GP and GAP. Existence of interest among DAs is not only evidenced by the fact that a significant number of DAs responded to Fund targeted surveys on the GP and GAP review process (indeed, DAs were with 28 out of 65 overall respondents the largest stakeholder group participating), but also by their articulated interest to the survey to receive more relevant gender and adaptation information by the AFB Secretariat. All 28 DAs responding asked to receive more such information and indicated that they would use such information, with the overwhelming majority (21 out of 28) saying having such additional information would help them to fulfill their function as DA better. Even more DA respondents (25 out of 28) said they were 'very interested' in participating in gender trainings (such as webinars or readiness activities) offered by the Fund, with the remaining 3 saying they were 'somewhat interested'. While the AFB Secretariat during the duration of the GAP has not focused on providing targeted support related to gender to DAs, it is in the process of developing an e-learning course on ESP and gender requirements in the AF, whose audience also includes DAs. Going forward, it is recommended for the Fund to consider more targeted action to comply with the GP mandate in para. 6 and under the GAP to specifically support DAs' understanding and capacity for their contribution to the implementation of the AF GP.

IEs role in ensuring design and implementation of gender-responsive AF projects and programmes.

While the AF's accreditation procedure and the expert review by the Fund's Accreditation Panel assesses the requisite institutional capacity of the IEs to comply with the GP based on documentation provided for institutional procedures and prior implementation practice, the real proof of the IEs' capacity lies in the practice of designing, implementing, monitoring, reporting and evaluating Fund projects and programmes for gender-responsive outcomes and impacts. This is of course an ongoing mandate of the IEs, in which they are supported by the AFB Secretariat, including through the provision of guidance documents and templates (to be further explored in Section C.2.) as well as readiness support and support for project preparation (explored in more detail above).

The responses of IEs surveyed as part of this GP and GAP review are instructive. They indicate that while over the course of the GP's and the GAP's initial implementation period there has been growing gender awareness and related commitments by the Fund's IEs (with all 20 IE respondents indicating that they are at least somewhat familiar with the GP and GAP, and 11 saying that they were 'familiar' or in the cases of 5 IEs 'very familiar' with both), they are mindful of challenges related to their internal and institutional capacity and thus the gender guidance that they can give to executing entities, local communities and stakeholders during Fund project implementation. Only 3 IEs responding to the survey felt that they were sufficiently capacitated, with 4 acknowledging that they have only rudimentary gender capacity and expertise to share with implementation partners, while the large majority (13 out of 19 respondents to this question) said their level of expertise and capacity was 'somewhat' sufficient. Several respondents indicated that they had to rely mostly on external consultants for providing gender expertise and capacity to implementation partners. However, the appetite for more information to be provided by the AFB Secretariat on relevant gender and adaptation resources or trainings is great, with 16 of 19 respondents saying they would like to receive more such information and all respondents saying they would be 'very

likely' (16 responses) or 'somewhat likely' (3 responses) to use such additional gender resources offered by the AFB Secretariat in fulfilling their functions as IEs.¹⁷

While this review focuses mainly on AF operational policies, guidelines and procedures in support of the implementation of the Fund's GP, a separate analysis commissioned by the AFB Secretariat in summer 2019 as part of its knowledge management products on gender learning looked at five case studies to determine the extent to which gender has been integrated in these specific Fund projects/programmes. The *case study on gender in selected Fund projects and programmes* highlighted some good practice experiences and outcomes, for example related to improved project design thanks to gender-responsive comprehensive stakeholder engagement and the power of gender-disaggregated indicators and gender-responsive monitoring. It also articulated some challenges and opportunities relevant for improving the gender mainstreaming efforts within the broader portfolio of Fund projects and programmes, such as tackling the varied capacity on gender of IEs and executing entities and a stronger focus beyond small-scale on-the-ground interventions on efforts to also target systemic gender inequality drivers.¹⁸

2. Operational guidelines and project/programme cycle support

The Fund's GP is implemented throughout the Fund's operational processes. Thus, over the course of the GAP the updating of existing operational policies, templates and guidelines was required. In addition, paralleling the compliance process for the Fund's ESP, the development of a separate guidance document on gender that would help implementing entities understand and apply the requirements for complying with the GP throughout the project/programme cycle was recommended. The targets under the GAP for this priority area have been fulfilled, and the resulting updated and new documents are posted on the Fund's website.

New GP guidance document for IEs. In March 2017, the AF Board in its 29th meeting took note of the '*Guidance Document for Implementing Entities on Compliance with the Adaptation Fund Gender Policy*'¹⁹ (document AFB/B.29/Inf.6). The document clarifies the relationship of the GP with the ESP; elaborates the determinants for gender-responsive stakeholder consultation; describes the approach to and requirements for an initial gender assessment as required under the GP; details ways to ensure gender-responsive project and programme planning and design, implementation and performance monitoring and evaluation; and underlines the importance of knowledge management, information sharing and reporting. Asked whether the GP guidance document provided adequate guidance to Fund IEs on how to implement the mandates of the Fund's GP in project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, two thirds of IE respondents in a targeted survey (13 out of 20) responded that it did with 6 respondents saying that it did not. When asking those respondents who felt the guidance note was not sufficient how guidance could be improved, one IE responded that it would like to see a template for a project gender

¹⁷ Analysis and compilation of responses received in a targeted survey shared with all of the Fund's IEs in June 2019, with 20 IEs responding (14 NIEs, 1 RIE, 5 MIEs).

¹⁸ The title of the case study is "*Assessing Progress: Integrating Gender in Adaptation Fund Project and Programmes*" and as of this report, the secretariat is reviewing the study to finalize it.

¹⁹ <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/GenderGuidance-Document.pdf>.

assessment further elaborated, while another mentioned needing to complement guidance notes and documents with iterative training efforts by the Secretariat on how to do gender mainstreaming in the Fund's project cycle. Further improvements to the guidance could be also made by better showcasing (in documented form) the components and determinants for AF projects that have successfully integrated gender throughout the project cycle. In this respect, as more evidence is garnered about the gender-responsiveness of Fund project implementation, such as in the *Gender case studies report*, guidance documents and templates could be enriched by detailing what made concrete Fund implementation efforts successful.

Update of existing operational policies, templates and guidance documents. As mandated by the GAP in the course of FY 2017 and 2018 several core operational policies, guidance documents and templates have been updated to be brought in compliance with the AF GP through the inclusion of explicit references to gender equality or gender-specific descriptions and sections; however, some of the recommended updates are missing or incomplete. Overall, in responses to a targeted survey, the Fund's IEs in the majority (13 out of 20 respondents) feel that those operational policies, templates and guidance documents that were updated provide an adequate level of guidance to IEs to allow them to work toward gender-responsiveness throughout the Fund's project cycle, with only 3 respondents saying that it did not, and 4 indicating that they did not know.

The '*Operational Policies and Guidelines for Parties to Access Resources from the Adaptation Fund (OPG)*'²⁰ were amended in October 2017 to insert relevant references to the GP, including by adding a specific subsection on the GP to the document (para. 35). In line with the mandate from the GAP, the GP was added as Annex 4 to the OPG²¹. The '*Accreditation Application Form*' (OPG Annex 6)²² was also updated in October 2016.

The '*Request for Project/Programme Funding from the Adaptation Fund*' (OPG Annex 5) was amended in October 2017, although, the references to the GP were not consistently integrated and are still missing in relevant text sections. A further, more thorough revision is advisable to ensure that IEs have to systematically report on gender from the onset. For example, under part I which requests a brief description on the project/programme background and context, a reference to include applicable gender context is missing. Section III.D which describes monitoring and evaluation arrangements does not list the mandate to include gender outcomes in the mid-term and final evaluations, and Section III.E where IEs have to submit a results framework examples of how a project's objectives and outcomes align with the Fund's outcome and output indicators does not showcase gender-disaggregation for beneficiaries. As of the report of this assessment, Section III.E does not have a specific segment prompting IEs to report on core indicators. Instead, IEs are supposed to also include with the submitted results framework separate core indicator tables, which – if they are filled out and submitted -- should help with the more systematic tracking of the number of men and women benefitting. To ensure this important information is recorded

²⁰ <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/OPG-amended-in-October-2017-1.pdf>.

²¹ <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/document/opg-annex4-gender-policy/>.

²² https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/OPG-Annex-6_Accreditation-Application-Form_amended-in-Oct-2016.pdf.

in the funding application directly it is recommended to integrate this reporting requirement on gender-disaggregated core indicators into the funding request template directly.

The accompanying *'Instructions for Preparing a Request for Project and Programme Funding from the Adaptation Fund'*²³ are from November 2013 and have yet to be updated to comply with the GP or even reference its existence. Unfortunately, the Fund's website in its section on 'Project Proposal Materials' still lists only the old November 2013 version of both the *'Request for Project/Programme Funding from the Adaptation Fund'* and the related *'Instructions for Preparing a Rest for Project/Programme Financing'*.²⁴ Those should be replaced urgently with the new and updated versions of both documents. Similarly, the document listing the *'Adaptation Fund Project Review Criteria'*²⁵ is outdated and misses explicit references to compliance with both the Fund's ESP and GP as part of the review in place of a very generic reference to gender considerations.²⁶

Lastly, the *'Guidance Document for Implementing Entities on Compliance with the Adaptation Fund Environmental and Social Policy'*²⁷ was revised in June 2016 to comply with the GP and to replace the principle of gender equity with a commitment to the principle of achieving gender equality. While this specific section of the document has been enhanced, the upgrade missed an opportunity to include cross-references within the document on how the commitment to gender equality and women's empowerments intersects with other ESP principles.

3. Capacity development

Gender capacity development for all Fund partners is an important priority under the GP and GAP. The GAP highlighted as deliverables specifically the **organization of gender trainings and provision of gender resources** for the AFB Secretariat as well as the Board and also targeting Designated Authorities and Implementing Entities. While some efforts were made, during the GAP's duration only a first gender training for Secretariat staff was conducted in February 2018. It was well received, although Secretariat staff responding to an internal evaluation indicated that they felt more time was needed and that future workshop should specifically target gender integration throughout the Fund's project cycle more. While valuable in anchoring the importance of addressing the gender dimension of urgent adaptation actions within Secretariat staff as a task concerning all staff members, such a onetime event would not be sufficient to ensure an improved understanding of GP policy mandates across various Secretariat functions and given staff fluctuations. Instead regular (for example yearly) trainings are recommended to

²³ <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/OPG-ANNEX-4-2-Instructions-Nov2013.pdf>

²⁴ <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/apply-funding/project-funding/project-proposal-materials/>, last accessed on September 2, 2019.

²⁵ <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Review-Criteria-5.12.pdf>

²⁶ Currently the only reference to gender and ESP is the following: "Does the project / programme provide economic, social and environmental benefits, with particular reference to the most vulnerable communities, including gender considerations?"

²⁷ https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/ESP-Guidance_Revised-in-June-2016_Guidance-document-for-Implementing-Entities-on-compliance-with-the-Adaptation-Fund-Environmental-and-Social-Policy.pdf.

be conducted, including with dedicated segments focused on improving the integration of gender throughout the Fund's project cycle. It would be useful to assess if the general onboarding procedures of Fund staff through the World Bank's staff procedures, which include various e-learning courses on 'gender' more generally, 'prevention of sexual harassment', and 'diversity and inclusion', are providing a sufficient core gender module specifically focused on gender and adaptation, or whether this should be developed as a complementary and mandatory part of the Fund's onboarding procedures for new staff.

During the FY 2017-2019 GAP, no gender training for the AF Board was conducted; the very first training of this kind for the Board is only planned to be held in March 2020. It is apparent that this delay was simply a matter of lack of time and heavy agenda of each Board meeting, given that the Board only meets two times per year and already has to conduct some of its operations intersessionally.

So far, the AFB Secretariat has not considered DAs as a target for a possible gender training or engagement on the GP. It would be useful to improve targeting in this respect, given the DAs' role in endorsing project proposals and certifying their compliance with national policies (including gender policies) and international commitments. Enhancing the understanding of DAs of the goals and the mandate of the AF's GP could translate into better integration of gender considerations into project design and early project development stages in exchange with IEs, and in particular national implementing entities (NIEs). A better understanding by DAs of what the Fund's GP and GAP entail – with responses from 28 DAs from a targeted online survey showing that a significant sub-segment of DAs is not familiar at all with both (as elaborated under Section 1) – could also have a strong impact for the role of DAs of endorsing or even selecting prospective NIE candidates to the Fund that express strong gender commitment or even have a track record of having successfully implemented adaptation measures in a gender-responsive way. With all 28 DAs responding to the targeted survey expressing interest in participating in gender trainings organized by the Fund, the 'e-learning' course on gender and the ESP that the Secretariat is finalizing in late 2019 could be a first such concrete training opportunity for DAs. It is therefore recommended that the Secretariat directs some specific outreach focus on this 'e-learning' course to DAs, and uses the opportunity to provide further background information and guidance to DAs.

In its capacity development engagement efforts with IEs, the Secretariat's efforts have focused on familiarizing IEs with the mandates of the GP and GAP in their engagement with the Fund and its project/program cycle specifically and on contributing to building their gender capacity and expertise more broadly. Most of the Secretariat's activities have focused on a series of readiness activities, including regional workshops, web-based seminars (webinars) and an annual multi-day seminar. However, those readiness activities are targeted exclusively at the Fund's NIEs. While this speaks to the special capacity building needs of many NIEs, it may (wrongly) assume that some of the Fund's RIEs and MIEs do not have any gender capacity challenges or needs. This is not borne out by the results of a targeted survey all of the Fund's IEs received, and the (albeit limited in their number) responses provided by 1 RIE and 5 MIEs (of 20 IEs overall responding), with several of them admitting for example some difficulties in undertaking an initial gender assessment, selecting gender-responsive indicators, or designing gender-responsive implementation and monitoring arrangements as required for Fund project/programme implementation. It is therefore recommended that the Secretariat consider opening up a number of these activities for the participation by all interested Fund's IEs. In the same vein, seeing that implementation on the ground is

actually conducted by executing entities (EEs) supervised by the IEs, for specific sessions or activities it might be useful to also include them more regularly in such climate finance readiness efforts. This has previously happened in some select instances, such as public events showcasing some of the Fund's gender integration efforts.

In its readiness engagement with NIEs since the adoption of the GP and GAP in March 2016, the Secretariat has been vigorous, as detailed documentation on the Fund's website showcases.²⁸ The most prominent of those readiness activities are the annual multi-day NIE seminars, with the 2019 Sixth NIE Annual Seminar conducted in late August 2019 featuring separate gender-focused days of discussions and workshops. The Fund's GP and GAP and more importantly the sharing by NIEs of their GP implementation experiences and challenges have featured in every NIE Annual Seminar post-GP approval starting with the Third NIE Annual Seminar in July 2016. Since Spring 2016, the Secretariat has also organized six regional readiness workshops, all of which presented the Fund's GP and GAP as well as the ESP, including with respect to accreditation requirements, safeguards compliance and risk management, and project development and implementation. Six targeted climate finance readiness webinars, focusing for example specifically on knowledge management or results monitoring, were held during the same time-frame, although a discussion on the mandates for NIEs resulting from the Fund's GP featured only in some of them. This indicates that the Secretariat in hosting those thematically more narrow webinars thinks of gender in the Fund's proceedings still primarily as a safeguards and risk management procedure and not yet enough in terms of gender equality and women's empowerment as a crosscutting task for the Fund with gender implications that should be addressed even in those seminars focusing on specific Fund operational procedures and requirements apart from the GP and the ESP.

Roster of gender experts. The GAP suggested the establishment of a roster of gender expert consultants. While this has been discussed internally by the AFB Secretariat, the development of such a roster under the auspice of the AFB Secretariat has been deemed impossible for legal reason. The Secretariat, however, has started initial discussions with the UNFCCC Secretariat Gender Team on whether the UNFCCC Secretariat might be able to initiate efforts to develop and host such a roster of gender and climate change experts and is further exploring the possibility of referring its partners to already existing gender expert rosters from other partner organizations (such as for example UN Women or the GCF).

AF Gender Advisory Group. The GAP also recommended that the AFB Secretariat consider the establishment of a Fund Gender Advisory Group with experts drawn from Fund partners (including DAs, IEs, civil society, and Board). This was not further pursued during the GAP's duration. When asked what the possible role and the functions as well as the composition of such a gender advisory group, if it were to be established, should be, an overwhelmingly majority (55 out of 64 respondents) of those surveyed has some specific suggestions and recommendations. While one Board member in his response felt the establishment of such a group would need additional Board discussion and consideration, a large group of respondents welcomed the idea. They suggested that a Fund gender advisory group could provide concrete support to the AFB and Secretariat in reviewing project proposals for their gender content and by keeping them abreast of overall challenges and gaps to gender mainstreaming efforts in the Fund's portfolio, as well as ensuring their coherence and comprehensiveness. They also saw a role for such a

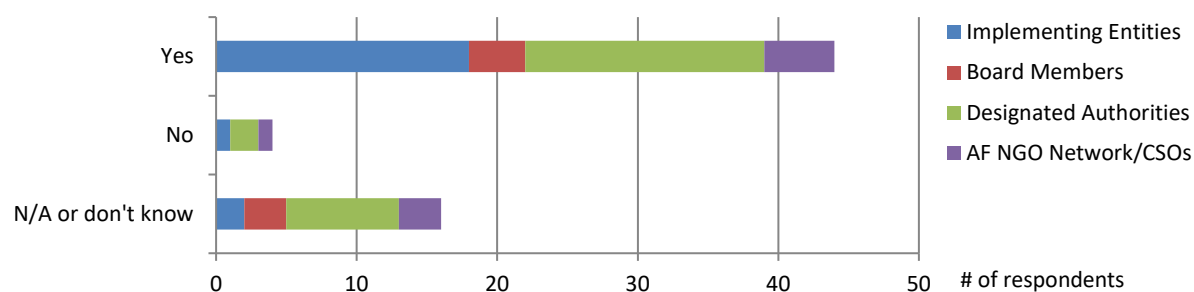
²⁸ <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/readiness/news-seminars/>.

group in rendering concrete technical assistance and more detailed gender guidance to IEs for how to conduct gender assessments and in particular develop gender-responsive indicators and collect and analyze gender-differentiated data. In terms of the group's composition, respondents suggested a diverse a makeup with gender experts, IE and DA representatives, some Board members, and civil society representatives, including members from local and grassroots communities. While expert advice, including as related to different sectors, was requested, many respondents also felt an awareness and knowledge of such a group of the realities on the ground and an understanding for the workability of gender integration efforts throughout the Fund's project/programme cycle should be guaranteed. A gender advisory group, if established, could be one way to address the expressed interest of many surveyed Fund partners (IEs, Board, DAs) to receive more information and training on gender-responsive adaptation practices. One possibility could be to convene an in-person meeting of such a group at least once a year, ideally on the side-lines of other scheduled Fund events (such as a Board meeting or the NIE Annual Seminar), in addition to other exchanges facilitated electronically. Undoubtedly, this would require some additional financial resources – the scale of which would depend on the breadth of the group's mandate – set aside in the Fund's administrative budget for this purpose.

4. Results-based management

The implementation of the GP and accountability for related results in enhancing gender equality and the empowerment of women as part of the overall outcomes of Fund's projects and programmes is strengthened by the Fund's Strategic Results Framework, improvements to its Performance Monitoring and Reporting System, its evaluation approach, and its learning and knowledge management. Over the time-frame of the GAP (2017-2019), a number of key efforts to improve existing templates, guidance and practices was made, which also raised the awareness among key Fund stakeholder groups for the importance of focusing attention on reporting of gender results. In targeted survey with stakeholders undertaken for this review, 44 out of 64 respondents agreed that the adoption of the GP and GAP has led to a noticeable improvement in the attention to gender in the reporting of Fund results (Question 5c).

Question 5c: Do you feel that with the Adaptation Fund Gender Policy and Gender Action Plan operational since March 2016, there has been a noticeable improvement in the attention to gender in reporting of AF results?



Strategic Results Framework. The update of the Strategic Results Framework, scheduled to be tackled as one of the tasks in the GAP under the priority area of results-based management in FY 2017, was only completed in FY 2019 and presented to the Board in March 2019 mainly because the Strategic Results Framework was also to be updated with a view to becoming in line with additional mandates under the AF's Mid Term Strategy (MTS), including by adding additional outcome and output indicators targeting operational processes, organizational culture, and strategic competencies.²⁹ As approved, however, the Strategic Results Framework in its update missed an opportunity to add the gender dimension to many of the existing and proposed indicators as it continues to refer only to “no. of beneficiaries covered” (Indicator 1.2); “percentage of target population” (Indicators 1.2.1; 3.1; 3.2; 6.2), “percentage of households and communities” (Indicator 6.1) or “type of income sources for households” (Indicator 6.2.1) without stipulating the breakdown by gender where possible. This is a missed opportunity to more visibly anchor the gender dimension of the strategic results expected from the Fund's adaptation investment portfolio in its Fund-wide results-based management tool and in light of the MTS' focus on adding gender equality and the empowerment of women as a cross-cutting priority.

Performance Monitoring and Reporting System, including Fund Gender Score Card. The Fund has two approved impact-level results focusing on the increased adaptive capacity of communities and increased ecosystem resilience. These impacts are tracked via a set of five associated core indicators . This allows for the Fund to aggregate quantitative indicators at the portfolio level for a diverse array of Fund project and programmes covering several different sectors and a diversity of activities on the ground. These five core indicators are reported in the Fund's Annual Performance Report (APR). As part of the GAP result area on results-based management (RBM) it was mandated that the document on “*Methodologies for Reporting AF Core Impact Indicators*,”³⁰ which dates from 2014 and thus pre-approval of the GP, was to be updated to ensure that more specific guidance is given to IEs on how to go about collecting gender-disaggregated data as a way to improve the quality of reporting at the project/programme level in line with the mandate to support gender equality and the empowerment of women associated with the implementation of adaptation measures. This update is not yet completed at the time of writing this review. Similarly the suggested update of the “*Results Framework and Baseline Guidance – Project Level*”³¹, dating from 2011, which was to be completed in FY 2017, has not yet been finalized: a draft update is still under review as of September 2019. As this document is meant to comprehensively collate the different reporting forms and templates and explain to IEs how they should be completed to comply with the Fund's reporting mandate on results achieved, it is important that the document to be finalized stresses gender reporting requirements throughout, including where currently existing templates might not be explicit enough.

A core part of the Fund's RBM at the project/programme level is the “*Project Performance Report (PPR) Template*” which includes the “*Performance Report (PPR) Results Tracker*” with the related guidance

²⁹ https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/AFB.EFC_.24.4.Rev1_Review-of-the-Strategic-Results-Framework-and-Fund-Level-Efficiency-Framework.pdf.

³⁰ <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/AF%20Core%20Indicator%20Methodologies.pdf>.

³¹ <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Results%20Framework%20and%20Baseline%20Guidance%20final%20compressed.pdf>

document³². The PPR Template update has been completed in March 2019, although not in time to be applied to RBM of projects during the duration of the GAP.³³ In the PPR results tracker, IEs report on all five Fund core indicators, including where relevant gender-disaggregated information. For example, under indicators 6.1 and 6.2, IEs are specifically asked to report on female headed households benefitting from diversified livelihood opportunities. Similarly under indicator 1 for relevant threat and hazard information disseminated, IEs are asked to report on the percentage of females targeted. Indicator 2.1.1 asks the IEs to provide data on the percentage of female staff trained, while indicator 3.1 asks for details on the percentage of females participating in targeted training. In March 2019, the Board adopted an improved performance monitoring and evaluation system in line with the GP, including an updated project/programme performance report (PPR) template (Board Decision B.32-33/17). The new PPR Template includes now a separate tab on “Gender Policy Compliance”, which in four sections asks about quality at entry, such as whether an initial gender assessment has been completed; quality during implementation and at exit, asking for progress made and results of specific gender equality and women’s empowerment issues the project/programme tackles; asks the implementing entity to detail the implementation arrangements for those issues; and specifically asks also if there have been gender-related grievance issues and how they have been addressed. Importantly, the updated PPR Template now also includes under the ‘lessons learned’ tab a request for qualitative reporting beyond gender-disaggregated data to detail the experiences gained by the IE of implementing gender-responsive measures. As mandated under the MTS, PPRs will be posted online³⁴, a process which could contribute to further gender learning, including peer-to-peer learning, in the Fund.

The Results Tracker Guidance Document³⁵ was updated recently (it is available as of the writing of this review in draft form and awaiting Board approval) to comply with the new PPR template and the Board’s decision from March 2019 to review the Strategic Results Framework in order to reflect the MTS. The mandate of the GAP to include a default reporting requirement on gender actions, related outputs and the gender-related outcomes of implemented projects and programs has thus been fulfilled only with some delay, with some elements still to be completed. This means that a backward-looking assessment on whether and to what extent the Fund’s project and programme implementation during 2016-2019 has complied with the GP is difficult if primarily based on a lack of required gender-specific granularity in mandated IE reporting during that period. As one IE respondent in a targeted survey indicated, IEs were also missing guidance from the Secretariat on how to report on gender for projects and programmes approved before the GP and GAP became operational. The next phase of the GAP (GAP-2) is recommended to set a strong focus, alongside developing IEs’ capacity to design and implement gender-responsive projects, on further improving guidance to and strengthening the capacity of IEs to report on gender equality results as part of Fund project/programme implementation.

³²<https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/AF-ResultstrackerGuidance-final2.pdf>; the document is not yet updated to reflect the Board decision from March 2019 to review and update the Strategic Results Framework.

³³ Available at <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/projects-programmes/project-performance/>

³⁴ See MTS, p.29.

³⁵ <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/AF-ResultstrackerGuidance-final2.pdf>

Since the adoption of GP and the GAP in March 2016, the Board has also adopted a guidance document for projects/programmes with unidentified sub-projects (USPs)³⁶ to comply with the Fund's ESP and GP. Examples of USPs are individual project grants awarded for activities under a small grants facility for example. Typically, projects with USPs face difficulties in demonstrating compliance with ESP and GP, compared to the fully developed activities, due to many reasons. While the guidance is comprehensive with respect to ESP compliance requirements, it could be further strengthened with respect to GP compliance, elaborating for example that sub-project specific gender assessments or gender-responsive indicators might be necessary, whenever feasible, in addition to the initial overarching project/programme assessment and the overall project/programme results framework, depending on the specific circumstances of individual sub-projects. Also, in order to pro-actively encourage programming for gender equality results in such circumstances that goes beyond risk mitigation through a project/programme-wide environmental and social management plan (ESMP), it might be necessary to elaborate a specific gender action framework for such approaches, which provide then guidance to the individual gender-integration efforts to be pursued at the level of USPs.

The GAP had also mandated the development and application of a new Fund **Gender Score Card** at the portfolio level to be used by the Secretariat and report on to the Board as part of the Annual Performance Report (APR) as a way to monitor the gender policy implementation portfolio-wide by tracking and reporting annually on quality at entry of Fund projects and programmes and quality during implementation and at exit (both elements are incorporated in the PPR Template now). As of the review of the GP and GAP, a comprehensive draft gender score card is under review and still to be finalized.³⁷ Several versions are proposed. In the most comprehensive version (Option 3), the gender score card would look at quality of entry judged as composite overview (derived from the technical review of project/programme proposals) of the percentage of projects/programmes that at the time of first submission as a full proposal have conducted a gender assessment (and the adequacy of this assessment); have a results framework which includes gender-responsive indicators; have a plan for ensuring gender assessments and related actions for USPs; and include a grievance mechanism capable to accept grievances and complaints related to gender equality and women's empowerment during proposal preparation. For quality during implementation and at project/programme exit, this option of the proposed gender score card would draw on IE's reporting in the PPRs. It suggests to look at the percentage of projects/programmes that in the past encountered gender issues during implementation; the percentage of projects/programmes where both the IE as well as the EE(s) have put in place implementation arrangements to comply with the GP during the reporting period and the effectiveness of those arrangements; potentially identified capacity gaps affecting GP compliance; and the percentage of projects/programmes having received gender-related grievances during the reporting period. Such a comprehensive gender score card would be welcome, as it will contribute significantly to gender learning

³⁶ USPs are defined as project activities for which at the time of funding approval it is not possible to adequately identify environmental and social risks because the activity is not yet sufficiently identified. https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/AFB.B.32-33.7_Combpliance-with-ESP_Update-of-PPR_and_Guidance-for-USPs_revised-1.pdf.

³⁷ Further discussion of the Gender Score Card is drawn from the draft document shared for the purpose of this review.

in implementation of the Fund's project/programme portfolio. The next phase of the GAP (GAP-2) should be used as the test-phase for its application, with a possible review and adjustment at its end.

Evaluation. As part of the Fund's approved *'Evaluation Framework'*³⁸ projects/programmes with more than four years of implementation are to be evaluated at their mid-point of implementation and for their terminal evaluation by an independent evaluator to be selected by the IE. In order for such evaluations to consider whether the project/programme implementation contributed to gender equality and women's empowerment in line with the GP, the IEs need to be able to select independent evaluators with adequate gender knowledge as well as detail to prospective independent evaluators that the scope of their evaluation has to include the gender dimension. Some relevant guidance for IEs on how to develop the terms of reference (ToR) for such gender-responsive evaluation and analytical questions to be assessed by the independent evaluator is detailed in the *'Guidance document for Implementing Entities on Compliance with the Gender Adaptation Fund Gender Policy'*. However, these recommendations have not yet been integrated into the existing guidance document for terminal evaluations (TEs), namely the *'Guidelines for Project/Programme Final Evaluations'*³⁹, which were drafted before the adoption of the GP and GAP and have not been updated since. Even more pressing than the update of the guidelines for TEs is the development of guidelines for the mid-term evaluation (MTEs) of projects/programmes, which do not yet exist. Moving ahead, the development of such MTE guidelines, which are in compliance with the GP, should be a priority under the next phase of the GAP (GAP-2), as many of the Fund project and programmes approved since March 2016 (and thus required to be in full compliance with the GP) come up for MTEs already in 2019/2020. The update and development of guidance for project/programme level TEs and MTEs respectively could be a role for the new Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Fund (AF-TERG) in line with its ToR approved by the Board (Decision B.21/25), which not only explicitly include the quality review of project-level mid-term and final evaluation reports, but also include gender expertise and competence as one of the qualifications a TERG member should possess⁴⁰. The TERG would thus be well positioned to also oversee the potential future evaluation and review of the GP and a GAP-2, potentially timed to coincide with the evaluation of the Fund's MTS.

Learning and Knowledge Management. The GAP for learning and knowledge management (KM) recommended the development of an online repository of gender-related information on the Fund's website, which has been set up⁴¹, but is still in a somewhat rudimentary form. It is also hidden under the "Knowledge Management" tab as the first developed specific theme highlighted under KM, and thus, gender as a cross-cutting mandate and strategic priority for the Fund's operations is not immediately

³⁸ https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Evaluation_framework.pdf. The *'Evaluation Framework'* does currently make no reference to evaluating whether gender equality and women's empowerment benefits have been achieved as part of effectiveness of the Fund's overall portfolio and actions. This could be addressed as part of a possible review by the Fund's Technical Evaluation Reference Group (AF-TERG). The TERG at its first meeting in August 2019 included the 'Review of the AF Evaluation Framework' as one of the items in its provisional work programme.

³⁹ https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Guidelines%20for%20Proj_Prog%20Final%20Evaluations%20final%20compressed.pdf.

⁴⁰ See Annex III of the report of the 31st AFB meeting; <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/AFB.B.31-final-report.pdf>.

⁴¹ https://www.adaptation-fund.org/knowledge-learning/knowledg_ie-themes/gender/.

visible on the homepage. Other comparable climate funds such as the GCF, the GEF and the CIFs, have approached the documentation of their respective gender mandates differently, including by highlighting the gender mainstreaming mandate more strongly as a core aspect of the overall work on respective sub-sites.⁴² To reflect the importance of gender equality as a strategic approach for the Fund and increase the topic's visibility, in the medium-term, some gender knowledge product or gender impact finding (such as annual gender score card results) could be presented already at the homepage.

As of the writing of this report, several gender-related learning and knowledge sharing products commissioned and prepared by the Secretariat were under development, such as an e-learning course on how to integrate ESP and GP throughout the project/programme life cycle and aimed to be shared and made accessible to a broader set of Fund stakeholders than just IEs. This self-learning course, which will provide a certificate of successful completion upon check of knowledge gained, is to be finalized in Fall 2019. A gender case study analysis looking at five Fund projects either completed or in final implementation stages to draw some lessons on how gender integration in Fund project implementation can be strengthened, is also in the final stages of review. Further gender-related outreach and communication activities that have been undertaken to address the mandates of the GP and GAP are detailed in the sub-sections of this report on 'readiness' and 'collaboration and communication', such as webinars or readiness workshops. Related gender-learning products and exchanges, such as webinar presentations addressing compliance with the Fund's GP or peer-to-peer learning experiences such as the NIE Country Exchanges⁴³ under readiness efforts also should be posted or cross-referenced on the KM gender sub-site. While the sub-site currently contains only Fund produced content (such as the GP, a flyer on the ESP and GP, the guidance document, or some video clips detailing success stories of project implementation), it is planned to expand it further to include more gender relevant information from IEs, including some of their gender products, own gender policies, gender projects and gender-related success stories. It should be also explored whether the sub-site can serve as a hub for relevant gender information by other Fund partners as well (for example incorporating and documenting gender-relevant exchange and collaboration with other climate funds, the UNFCCC Secretariat or with UN Women or by drawing on select postings/publications from the collaboration with CDKN under the '*Climate Finance Ready*'⁴⁴). At a minimum, the sub-site could provide a section with links to further gender and adaptation resources developed or posted by partners.⁴⁵

⁴² For examples, see for the GEF (<https://www.thegef.org/topics/gender>); the GCF (<https://www.greenclimate.fund/how-we-work/mainstreaming-gender>); or the CIFs (<https://www.climateinvestmentfunds.org/mainstreaming-gender>).

⁴³ <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/readiness/country-exchanges/>.

⁴⁴ See for example <https://climatefinanceready.org/meeting-adaptation-funds-environmental-social-gender-requirements-expert-insights/>.

⁴⁵ This should not be a liability issue as in the case of the development of a Fund roster of gender experts, as a simple disclaimer note would suffice to indicate that the Fund does not provide any guarantee for the accuracy of partners' postings and the quality of linked resources.

5. Resource allocation and budgeting

Adequate resourcing. The administrative budgets of the AF Secretariat list the cost of personnel related to gender, such as the staff cost for the gender focal point with a partial share of her work work-time and including consultancies for ESP and gender as core expenditures for the implementation of the GP mandates; this includes costs of activities such as training to increase the gender awareness and gender expertise of Secretariat staff and/or the Board in any given year.⁴⁶ The portion of the budget set aside for the consultancies for ESP and gender in the Secretariat’s administrative budget for FY 2020 is with US\$ 70,440 relatively small, considering that the pure ‘gender share’ under that joint ESP/GP budget code is even smaller. Other gender-related expenditures are listed under the separate readiness budget, which also includes US\$ 24,640 for consultants on ESP and GP to support readiness activities. Funding for the GP-related technical assistance grants (TA-GP, TA-ESGP) is available outside the secretariat’s administrative budget, and there is also some gender-related expenditure under the budget line for knowledge management activities.

The issue of adequacy of funding for implementation of the GP’s mandates is a separate issue. Overall expenditures related to ESP and gender (including readiness provision) appear to be relatively stable for FY 16- FY18, but show a significant increase for FY 19 (although it is hard to say if this is related to one-time expenditures such as the GP and GAP review and update or an uptick that can be sustained). According to the gender-related expenditures that the Secretariat put together, which included not only fees for gender consultants but also gender training cost as well as portions of staff travel costs who engaged in gender related events, in FY16 USD17,400, in FY17 USD24,532.61, in FY18 USD19,772.96 and in FY19 USD 65,851.69 were spent. In light of the survey responses from IEs, which are looking for more detailed guidance and increased technical assistance by the Secretariat to strengthen the gender integration efforts in their project/programme implementation, the noted increase for FY19 should probably be carried forward into subsequent budgets. In an interview the Secretariat likewise pointed out that with the increasing expectation and demand for gender mainstreaming related support an increase in both financial and human resources might be considered.

Tracking of expenditures. The GAP recommended the transparent tracking of expenditures for the implementation of the Fund’s GP through inclusion in the Fund’s budget and reconciliation. While expenditures related to gender do appear in the Fund’s Administrative Budget, resources available for gender mainstreaming efforts are ‘co-mingled’ with other expenditures for the implementation of the ESP, readiness, knowledge management or communication, and the staff position serving as gender focal point is also serving in other functions, so that it does not become clear how much of staff time is dedicated to working on GP implementation related tasks exclusively. While this makes it very hard to know exactly how much money overall is available for gender-related Fund expenditures, it allows for some flexibility within the budget to respond to unexpected expenditures to some extent. This co-mingling is also in line with an understanding of gender mainstreaming as a cross-cutting activity for the Fund’s operations, including under its Mid-Term Strategy programming goals. This, however, should not

⁴⁶ The current secretariat administrative budget does not include the budget for accreditation and readiness program which also include gender-related expenditure. https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/AFB.EFC_.24.8-Admin.-budget-FY20_final.pdf.

distract from the fact that the current overall resourcing for the GP implementation might not be sufficient for continued and intensified efforts under a new GAP. In the long run, and with the expectation for an overall growth of the Fund's size and programming portfolio, the Secretariat might want to consider applying a gender marker to track its gender-related expenditures, in particular resources (programming and administrative) with a 'principal' focus on gender (such as a dedicated staff person, dedicated readiness or assistance grants, dedicated knowledge management products and communication efforts).⁴⁷

Financing of gender elements and gender budgeting. In addition to Fund resources made available to IEs in the form of technical assistance readiness grant for building the IE's gender capacity (TA-ESGP and TA-GP), and for project formulation (through PFG and PFAG) and new funding made available under the MTS in the form of innovation grants and learning grants that could be utilized to strengthen gender mainstreaming efforts, it is important for the IEs to include and adequately finance expenditures related to the implementation of project/programme elements focused on gender equality and women's empowerment in project/programme budgets. IEs are encouraged to do so as part of the gender guidance document and in their readiness engagements with the Fund, for example in readiness workshops covering ESP and gender. A quick spot check of a number of proposals (full project proposals and innovation grants) for consideration at the 34th AF Board meeting⁴⁸, however, reveals that gender-related expenditures are rarely indicated or captured in overall project budgets, despite promises in the narrative project proposals that they would. The results of this non-representative sample indicates that while it is not advisable for the Fund to give guidance to the IE/EEs to set a rigid percentage of the project budget for gender-related implementation measures, as targeted expenditures are to be in line with project design and based on the initial gender assessment (and thus project-specific), the Secretariat staff encourage IEs in submitting their project budgets to describe and where possible explicitly delineate allocated financial resources for the implementation of related gender equality and women's empowerment measures.

6. Collaboration and communication

Active participation in knowledge exchange opportunities. The AFB Secretariat mainly through its Gender Focal Point has participated over the past few years in joint events and learning opportunities on gender with the operating entities of the UNFCCC financial mechanism, the GEF and the GCF, as these funds likewise work on strengthening their gender mainstreaming efforts in all of their operations. In the

⁴⁷ This is drawing loosely from the practice of the OECD DAC Gender Equality Policy marker. See: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/dac-gender-equality-marker.htm>. In contrast to the OECD DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker, which tracks development aid expenditures with a 'principal' (=main focus) or 'significant' (one objective among others) focus on gender equality, in the case of future possible gender-related expenditure tracking under the Fund only expenditures with a 'principal' focus on improving gender equality should be tracked; the assumption is here that because of the gender-mainstreaming mandate of the Fund under the GP, most other expenditures would have some elements focusing on gender equality (some staff time of resource officers dealing with readiness, knowledge management or results management, for example).

⁴⁸ The spot check looked at the detailed budgets of a sample of six funding proposals (for four projects, one learning grant and one innovation grant) listed under <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/projects-programmes/proposals-concepts-under-review/> (accessed on September 6, 2019).

future more regular exchanges with the other gender specialists at the GEF, GCF and the CIFs are planned, building on the informal exchanges on sharing implementation challenges and experiences that have happened already periodically. This exchange among peers is helpful. Especially the exchange with the GCF is recommended to be regularized and expanded, as there is an effort to further align the safeguards and gender approaches and practices of both funding institutions under the mandate of complementarity and coherence (which is also articulated under the Fund's Medium-Term Strategy), and since both are sharing similar funding approaches and implementation partners (providing direct access to NIEs and RIEs, a significant number serving both institutions,⁴⁹ and supporting them through readiness funding in building institutional and programming capacity). The newly founded Community of Practice for Direct Access Entities (CPDAE)⁵⁰, which brings the Fund's NIEs together with direct access entities (DAEs) of the GCF, should be explored further as a suitable forum for cross-fund experience sharing, collaboration and peer-support on gender-mainstreaming efforts in project and programme implementation.

The AFB Secretariat has also actively engaged with the UNFCCC Secretariat as they are implementing their own gender mandates under the Lima Work Programme and own GAP and has participated in gender and climate change expert workshops and events allowing for exchange of the UNFCCC constituted bodies during the meetings of the Subsidiary Bodies (SBs) and the Conference of the Parties (COPs) at least twice a year. The AFB, receiving guidance from and accountable to the CMP, has also included an update on its gender work in its annual report to the CMP. This has contributed to the UNFCCC technical synthesis report on '*Entry points for integrating gender into UNFCCC workstreams*'.⁵¹ Outside of the UNFCCC context, the Fund has sought active engagement on gender and adaptation in dedicated adaptation expert fora, such as the Adaptation Futures conference in 2018, and has also engaged with experts from UN Women on specific areas of collaboration, for example by bringing UN Women's expertise to the NIE annual seminar.

Active communication of the Fund's GP commitments. The AFB Secretariat over the past three years has communicated its commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment to its partners and the broader public in a variety of ways, including in information materials such as flyers and brochures⁵², gender-focused videos⁵³, in news releases⁵⁴ in targeted communication's outreach and through the

⁴⁹Of the Fund's 31 NIEs, 16 are also accredited with the GCF; of the Fund's six RIEs, all six are accredited with the GCF (status as of September 2019).

⁵⁰ CPDAE is an initiative conceived by accredited NIEs of the Fund and DAEs of the GCF to provide an avenue for knowledge exchange, learning and experience sharing, collaboration and peer support with support from the Fund and GCF as well as other partners such as the African Development Bank's Africa Climate Change Fund (ACCF). The CPDAE held its first face-to-face meeting from 5-7 June 2019 in Durban, South Africa at which it validated and finalized the Governance framework of the community; and developed an action plan to address gaps and challenges identified by the entities.

⁵¹ UNFCCC Technical Paper FCCC/TP/2018/1, <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/01.pdf>.

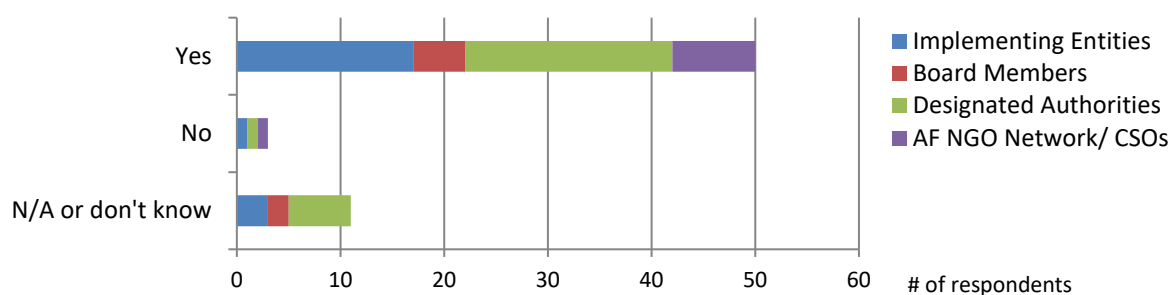
⁵² See for example <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/AF-Gender-Environment-06.2018-WEB.pdf>.

⁵³ See for example <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/gender-pivotal-difference-maker-adaptation-fund-projects/>.

⁵⁴ See for example <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/adaptation-fund-webinar-share-country-experiences-environmental-social-gender-approaches-projects/>.

provision of learning materials (for example to IEs through readiness events⁵⁵ and readiness finance provision⁵⁶), in blogs and postings⁵⁷, or through the Fund’s representation in international processes and at conferences and expert gatherings. It is also seeking broad and participatory feedback from stakeholders and partners on the ongoing review of the GP and GAP. Those stakeholders and partners in responses to the targeted surveys overwhelmingly (50 out of 64 respondents) confirmed a noticeable improvement in the attention to gender in the Fund’s external outreach and public communication efforts since the adoption of the GP and GAP in March 2016 (Question 5d).

Question 5d: Do you feel that with the Adaptation Fund Gender Policy and Gender Action Plan operational since March 2016, there has been noticeable improvement in the attention to gender in the Fund’s external outreach and public communications (via website, documents and news bulletins, events and workshops)?



III. Alignment of the GP and GAP with the AF Medium-Term Strategy

With Decision B.39/42, in March 2018 the AFB adopted a five-year Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) for the AF (2018-2022).⁵⁸ The MTS emphasizes the core strengths of the AF in supporting country-driven concrete adaptation projects that directly reach, engage, empower and benefit the most vulnerable communities and social groups. It is built strongly and refined around the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and serving the Paris Agreement. Both implementation commitments recognize and prominently articulate that the tremendous challenge of addressing climate change and sustainable development requires the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. It is thus appropriate that *Advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls* is articulated as one of four cross-cutting themes to be mainstreamed into AF processes as a necessary condition for MTS implementation success. This is clearly interlinked and mutually reinforced through mainstreaming efforts supported by the other three cross-cutting themes of the MTS, namely *Engaging and empowering the most vulnerable communities and social groups*; *Strengthening long-term institutional and technical capacity for effective adaptation*; and *Building complementarity and coherence with other climate finance delivery channels*. Each of these is likewise supportive of more gender-responsive AF processes, procedures and projects.

⁵⁵ See for example <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/adaptation-fund-webinar-share-country-experiences-environmental-social-gender-approaches-projects/>.

⁵⁶ See for example <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/instructions-for-applying-for-the-technical-assistance-grant-for-the-gender-policy-ta-gp/>.

⁵⁷ See for example <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/proactive-focus-environment-social-gender-policies/>.

⁵⁸ <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Medium-Term-Strategy-2018-2022-final-03.01-1.pdf>.

This echoes explicitly articulated mandates in support of the AF gender mainstreaming approach in the GP and GAP, for example the targeted interventions proposed for building and strengthening the institutional and technical gender capacity of AF partner and stakeholder organizations and groups (para. 21 GP; para.13 GAP) or the mandate to engage in knowledge exchange on gender and adaptation finance in particular with other climate funds under the UNFCCC serving the Paris Agreement (para. 24, GP; para. 26 GAP). Thus, the GP and the core actions and mandate under the GAP (a number of which will need to be continued during its next phase) are in line with the intent and ambition of the MTS.

The MTS articulates three strategic pillars, namely Strategic Focus 1: Action; Strategic Focus 2: Innovation; and Strategic Focus 3: Learning and Sharing. All activities to be taken under those pillars are supposed to be designed in such a way that they are gender-responsive and benefit the most vulnerable. While these are compatible with mandates under the GP and GAP in its current form, the MTS allows for thinking the GP and the next iteration of the GAP further.

Strategic Focus 1: Action. The emphasis under SF1 of the MTS is on providing support to eligible developing countries to design and implement high quality concrete adaptation projects and on strengthening the long-term capacity of its partners for effective adaptation. Arguably, further strengthening and enhancing the gender-responsiveness of AF adaptation projects and the capacity of AF partners to implement them effectively are a necessary condition to achieve the required strategic focus under the MTS. Thus, an updated GAP could focus on enhanced readiness support provision; additional gender-focused technical support, and at looking at how the AF's Enhanced Direct Access modality could better serve to provide AF resources to sub-national and civil society institutions, including such as women's cooperatives or gender and women's rights groups or associations, in the form of small grants.

Strategic Focus 2: Innovation. The emphasis under SF2 of the MTS is on the development and diffusion of innovative adaptation practices, tools and technologies, often facing barriers and bereft of champions⁵⁹. The generation of evidence of success, and the ability to replicate and scale of viable innovations are inherently linked to the innovation focus. Innovation can, but is not necessary technical, in particular high tech. Many traditional low-tech solutions for adaptation exist, but are either not known or dismissed. Indeed social innovation through the empowerment of women and girls in traditionally patriarchal societies and legal regimes, acknowledgement and replication of proven success of niche approaches and techniques, such as the traditional knowledge and practices of women in natural and social stewardship used in support of the resilience of families, communities and the environment can be considered to fall under this strategic focus of the MTS. With a dedicated Innovation Facility set up in support of delivering on SF2, in particular the use of micro-grants (US\$ 250k) under that facility to support adaptation techniques, approaches and tools spearheaded by women or women entrepreneurs could be given a special consideration. The AF Website informing about the innovation grants specifically mentions social inclusion and the advancement of gender equality as potential thematic areas for the innovation support under the MTS, with related funding request documents asking for the

⁵⁹ MTS, p.19.

elaboration of gender considerations of proposed innovation interventions.⁶⁰ A focus to be added to the next iteration of the GAP could be also the creation of a gender-focused intervention evidence base for AF projects, including through gender-differentiated data collection (base-line and implementation results).

Strategic Focus 3: Learning and Sharing. Under SF3 of the MTS, the AF commits to learning and sharing as a way to enhance its own process and activities, as well as those of others. A strong tool in the implementing of this strategic focus will be support for collaborative learning and sharing across adaptation communities of practice. This is especially important for the efforts to further gender mainstream AF processes, procedures and projects. As a nimble climate finance institution with a specific role, guided by continuous learning and with appetite for innovation and direct partnerships with its stakeholders, the AF in the next phase of the GAP could focus on increased South-South learning opportunities through shared experiences, mentorship and other types of exchanges and collaboration focusing on how to ensure gender-responsiveness of projects, including through the provision of micro-grants for this purpose. This is well in line with the proposals in the MTS to support “cross-project learning” , by for example also integrating the traditional and local knowledge of women as key adaptation actors. The development of further guidance documents and approaches on gender integration, for example focused on the development of and measurement via gender-responsive project indicators, including those that notice and report emerging social and cultural system shifts through AF project implementation could be pursued in line with the MTS through a strategic partnership with a specialized agency like UN Women.

Overall, the existing GP and its core mandates are judged to be in full alignment with the MTS, while the structure of the current GAP highlights core focal areas with relevance for an updated new GAP (GAP 2) that should guide the integration work from 2020 onward. In a GAP 2, targeted actions will go beyond initial gender integration efforts to deepening understanding and operationalization of the GP’s mandates. Regarding the next phase of the GAP, it is recommended that in a revised version some of the opportunities created by the three strategic foci of the MTS are further elaborated as gender mainstreaming action points for its next implementation phase. It is also recommended that the implementation period of the updated GAP (GAP 2) matches that of the MTS in covering the remaining 3-4 years until 2022. This will send the clear signal that strong continued action on gender integration is a necessary condition for reaching the vision of the MTS. This will also bring the two independent evaluations scheduled to provide accountability for the effectiveness, efficiency and relevance of actions taken under the MTS as well as the MTS as a whole, and the independent process evaluation of AF institutional arrangements, strategic priorities, policies and processes in sync with the evaluation of the new GAP as well as a reconsideration of the GP to see if an update is warranted. In timing those evaluation processes together, a thorough review and potential Fund-wide corrective action can be taken to ensure that gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are further strengthened in all AF

⁶⁰<https://www.adaptation-fund.org/apply-funding/innovation-grants/>

processes and procedures in an envisioned second Medium-Term Strategy for the 2023-2027 period of AF operations.

IV. Practices of Peer Climate Funds in Implementing their own Gender Policies and Action Plans

A. Green Climate Fund (GCF) Interim Gender Policy and Gender Action Plan

The GCF is the first multilateral fund to begin funding with key building blocks for a comprehensive gender-responsive approach to its operations in place. The governing instrument for the GCF includes several references to gender and women in the Fund's governance and operational modalities, including on stakeholder participation and anchors a gender mainstreaming mandate prominently under its funding objectives and guiding principles.⁶¹ It mandates gender balance for its staff and Board. Board decisions taken in the context of operationalizing the fund requested the formulation of a separate GCF gender policy and action plan, both of which were approved in March 2015 after some delay as an interim policy subject to a mandated review, which was to be undertaken a year after the GCF gender policy's effectiveness.⁶² Equally important to a dedicated gender policy and action plan, however, was the, the simultaneous integration of gender considerations in core operational modalities and policies and they were developed and approved. These include the integration in the GCF's accreditation approach by requiring GCF implementing entities to have their own gender policies or action plans as well as the capacity and track record to implement in compliance with the GCF gender policy. Gender impacts of GCF funding proposals are considered in the investment framework via several sub-criteria in a technical expert review. Every project/programme proposal in order to be considered for Board approval must include a project/program-specific gender impact analysis, ideally accompanied by a gender action plan. The publication of these project/programme gender documents⁶³ since December 2016 has contributed to increased efforts by GCF implementing agencies to fully comply with this requirement. The GCF results management and performance measurement framework mandates the collection of sex-disaggregated data for both its mitigation and adaptation portfolio.

A senior social and gender specialist on the Secretariat staff was tasked to oversee implementation of a principles-based gender policy and comprehensive three-year gender action plan (FY14-17) which however lacked clear success indicators and responsibilities. In addition to accountability for monitoring gender impacts of GCF-funded actions, both focus on increasing the gender competencies of GCF staff, key advisory and decision-making bodies and on gender capacity-building for the Fund's external partners

⁶¹ GCF Governing Instrument, https://www.greenclimate.fund/documents/20182/1246728/Governing_Instrument.pdf/caa6ce45-cd54-4ab0-9e37-fb637a9c6235.

⁶² (Interim) GCF Gender Policy and Action Plan, https://www.greenclimate.fund/documents/20182/818273/1.8_-_Gender_Policy_and_Action_Plan.pdf/f47842bd-b044-4500-b7ef-099bcf9a6bbe

⁶³ All project-specific gender assessment and gender action plans for GCF approved projects and programs are available on the GCF website at: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/how-we-work/mainstreaming-gender/gender-action-in-practice>.

(National Designated Authorities and Implementing Agencies), including through the GCF Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme. A mandated consultative review process for improving the GCF gender policy and action plan produced a forward-looking updated draft Gender and Social Inclusion policy (GESI) in 2018 drawing also on a wider call for public input.⁶⁴ It broadened the gender mainstreaming mandate of the initial policy to focus on wider social inclusion, including by highlighting the intersectionality of existing gender discriminations with other factors such as class, race or ethnicity, age, sexual orientation or gender identity. This was considered too far-reaching by some GCF Board members. Several further updates, following consultations, haven been produced, with the latest version still awaiting Board consideration and approval as of the writing of this report.

In its latest version, the draft GCF Updated Gender Policy and Action Plan 2019-2021⁶⁵ is structured around some core objectives in line with those of the AF GP to promote the goals of gender equality and women's empowerment through its decisions on the allocation of funds, operations and overall impact with comprehensive scope and coverage. It emphasizes gender responsiveness much more explicitly, moving from gender sensitivity as core of the interim policy. It also seeks to align more explicitly with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It articulates human rights, country ownership, stakeholder engagement and consultation and information disclosure as guiding principles, and delineates the respective responsibilities of the GCF, the IEs and National Designated Authorities (NDAs) and project-level requirements. The policy update articulates in much clearer detail the requirements and respective responsibilities of all GCF partners at the project inception, implementation, monitoring and reporting stages. For example, the submission of a project-specific gender action plan is now a requirement in addition to the mandatory gender assessment. Implementation priorities for the updated Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan are (A) governance; (B) competencies and capacity development; (C) resource allocation, accessibility and budgeting; (D) operational procedures; and (E) knowledge generation and communications. The draft update does not include an automated review period, but indicates that a review and update would be determined by the GCF Board.

The original AF GP and GAP had been developed with consideration of the interim GCF gender policy and action plan by following a similar structure around core objectives and guiding principle for the policy and largely mirroring the implementation priorities of the initial GCF Gender Action Plan, adjusted to reflect consideration of the AF's operational framework, in the AF GAP. However, already at its development, the AF GP went beyond the interim GCF GP, for example in stipulating that no AF project proposal without articulated gender integration will be approved (para. 22) and requiring gender-responsiveness of actions. Looking at the compatibility of the AF's gender mainstreaming approach with that of the GCF made sense in 2016, when the AF GAP was drafted. Continuing such a broad alignment of principles and objectives for an updated version of the AF GAP with the gender approach in the GCF should be also maintained

⁶⁴ GCF Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Policy and Action Plan 2018-2020 (GCF/B.19/25), https://www.greenclimate.fund/documents/20182/953917/GCF_B.19_25_-_GCF_Gender_Equality_and_Social_Inclusion_Policy_and_Action_Plan_2018_2020.pdf/dc9ac06d-2cef-4442-8346-3bfbc7995a0.

⁶⁵ GCF Updated Gender Policy and Action Plan 2019-2021 (GCF/B.22/06), https://www.greenclimate.fund/documents/20182/1424894/GCF_B.22_06_-_Updated_Gender_Policy_and_Action_Plan_2019_2021.pdf/615cc0e0-4582-28f4-083a-43f12657ea24.

going forward as many of the AF IEs have since been accredited as implementing entities to the GCF or are applying for GCF accreditation. While the mandate of the GCF is broader in financing both mitigation and adaptation actions, including at a scale and with financial instruments not available to the AF, GCF and AF share also important similarities in their operational model (both AF and GCF have a strong focus on direct access entities which are now the majority of implementing entities in both funds; both have a commitment to readiness finance support; both pilot and support enhanced direct access), and thus conceivably are confronted with similar challenges and opportunities in gender mainstreaming smaller scale adaptation actions.

Analyzing the latest publicly available draft of the GCF's Updated Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan 2019-2021, the current AF GP and GAP in their objectives, principles and core implementation priorities are significantly congruent.

B. Global Environment Facility (GEF) Policy on Gender Equality and Gender Implementation Strategy

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) serves the financial mechanisms of several multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) since 1992, including the UNFCCC and the other Rio Conventions. The GEF, which is also serving the Paris Agreement, is thus the longest standing international climate fund, but gender considerations were initially not prominent in program review and approval processes, for mitigation actions under its climate change focal area and in adaptation actions supported by the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) and the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF). In 2011, the GEF adopted its Policy on Gender Mainstreaming which required all existing GEF agencies (mostly MDBs and UN agencies) to be assessed for their compliance with the GEF gender mainstreaming mandate.⁶⁶ It also made the gender capacity of new implementing agencies a criterion for GEF accreditation. All GEF implementing agencies were asked to demonstrate that they have made efforts to analyse gender considerations in GEF projects. It also required all implementing agencies to establish policies, strategies, or action plans that promote gender equality and satisfy minimum requirements on gender mainstreaming. In parallel, the GEF Secretariat worked on strengthening its own gender mainstreaming capacities and appointed a Gender Focal Point tasked with screening attention to gender in proposals and forging networks and collaborations with partners who can support gender sensitive approaches. In October 2014, the GEF Council, its decision-making body, approved the GEF's Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) as a concrete road map to implement its gender mainstreaming policy during the GEF's sixth replenishment period (GEF-6, FY15-18).⁶⁷ The establishment of the GEF Gender Partnership (GGP) as an inter-agency working group involving implementation partners, Secretariats of other multilateral environmental agreements and civil society, and focusing on results management by providing guidance for gender-responsive indicators in focal areas as well as GEF-wide indicators, were centre pieces of the GEAP.

⁶⁶ https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/Gender_Mainstreaming_Policy-2012_0.pdf.

⁶⁷ <https://www.thegef.org/publications/gender-equality-action-plan>.

A 2017 gender mainstreaming evaluation by the GEF Independent Evaluation Office (IEO)⁶⁸ lauded the role of the GEAP and the GEF Gender Partnership in securing modest improvements, but recommended a revision and upgrading of the 2011 Gender Mainstreaming Policy in light of a continued lack of adequate gender integration in GEF projects and programmes, in particular in the climate change focal area.⁶⁹

Acting on these recommendations, the GEF Council approved a new Policy on Gender Equality in November 2017.⁷⁰ It introduces new principles and requirements to mainstream gender in the design, implementation, and evaluation of GEF projects and programs, making it a policy requirement for the GEF and its partners to more strategically and pro-actively work to address gender benefits (“do good”) and thus move beyond a safeguard-oriented “do no harm” approach, including through requirements for improved monitoring and reporting of results both on the project- and portfolio level. This includes a now mandatory project-specific gender analysis to be provided at or prior to GEF CEO endorsement or approval and well as a sharpened focus on the capacity of GEF agencies to collect sex-disaggregated data and report on sex-disaggregated targets and results.

The new policy, which came into effect in mid-2018, superseded the gender mainstreaming policy from 2011 and will remain in effect until the GEF Council decides on the review or revision of the policy (i.e. without a time-bound revision mandate). It is built around a set of guiding principles and then articulates mandatory policy requirements in four areas, namely (A) project and program cycle; (B) monitoring, learning and capacity development; (C) GEF agency policies, procedures and capabilities; and (D) compliance.

A comparative analysis of the new GEF Policy on Gender Equality with the AF gender policy shows that while differently structured, the content and focus of both policies is largely in sync. In some instances, the current AF Gender Policy already goes further than the GEF Policy on Gender Equality, for example in articulating the responsibilities of the AF Board and the Fund’s Designated Authorities for the success of its gender mainstreaming mandate and highlighting the need for IEs to identify a gender-responsive grievance mechanism. The AF GP also highlights the active support role of the AFB Secretariat for gender learning by the IEs, including through the provision of readiness support – aspects missing in the GEF Policy on Gender Equality. The GEF Policy on Gender Equality, which is silent on accreditation of new agencies, mandates a high bar of demonstrated gender capabilities, procedures and policies by all its implementing agencies, which in light of the new policy are to be reviewed by end of 2019 (with agencies found missing given the option to submit a concrete, time-bound action plan on how to achieve full compliance with the new policy). Continued compliance is then secured through self-assessment by the agency and independent third party assessment commissioned by the GEF Secretariat towards the end of a GEF replenishment cycle in line with the GEF Policy on Monitoring Agencies’ Compliance.⁷¹ This different

⁶⁸ <http://www.gefio.org/evaluations/evaluation-gender-mainstreaming-gef-2017>.

⁶⁹ The GEF IEO evaluation judged almost half of the analysed sample of 70 GEF climate projects to be largely gender-blind, and considered only 5% to have successfully mainstreamed gender, including in two LDCF adaptation projects. Gender mainstreaming efforts were evaluated as having been less successful in the GEF climate change focal area than in other GEF focal areas.

⁷⁰ GEF Policy on Gender Equality (GEF/C.53/04), https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/EN_GEF.C.53.04_Gender_Policy.pdf.

⁷¹ https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/Monitoring_Agency_Compliance_Policy_0.pdf.

requirement reflects both the smaller number of GEF agencies (18 versus 49 implementing entities for the AF), the fact that those are mostly multilateral agencies, the expectation of few new additional GEF implementing agencies, and the lack of a formal time-bound re-accreditation requirement and procedure as in the case of the AF implementing entities.

The implementation of the GEF Policy on Gender Equality is supported by a GEF Gender Implementation Strategy, approved in June 2018 and superseding the time-bound GEAP (FY 2015-2018).⁷² The document combines the strategy to address identified key gender gaps and an action plan. It elaborates a set of actions in four priority action areas, namely (A) systematic promotion of gender-responsive approaches and results in GEF programs and projects; (B) strengthened capacity of the GEF Secretariat and GEF partners to mainstream gender and seize strategic entry points to promote gender equality and women's empowerment; (C) improved GEF collaboration with partners to generate knowledge and contribute on links between gender and environment; and (D) enhancing GEF's corporate systems for tracking and reporting on gender equality results.

A comparative analysis of the priority areas of GEF Gender Implementation Strategy with the priority action areas of the current AF GAP shows that they are substantively the same and articulate similar priority actions to achieve desired mainstreaming results. For example, the proposed introduction of a GEF's gender tagging system is largely comparable to the AF gender score card, already mandated under the existing AF GAP, and now close to being fully operationalized by the AF Secretariat. Many of the updates to operational procedures and modifications to guidance on gender for GEF partners⁷³ mandated under action area 1 of the GEF Gender Implementation Strategy have been the focus of the initial AF GAP for AF IEs and have been largely completed. And a similar role as the one given in the GEF Gender Implementation Strategy to the existing GEF Gender Partnership in leveraging skills and experiences on gender from across the GEF partner spectrum is already intended to be fulfilled in the current AF GAP by a multi-stakeholder gender advisory group and could be further strengthened in the future through expanded South-South learning among AF partners in a gender community of practice.

C. Climate Investment Funds (CIFs) Gender Policy and Gender Action Plan

The Climate Investment Funds (CIFs) were established in 2008. The CIF portfolio comprises investments in four programs in both mitigation and adaptation, namely Clean Technology Fund (CTF), Forest Investment Program (FIP), the adaptation-focused Pilot Program for Climate Resilience (PPCR) and Scaling up Renewable Energy in Low-income Countries Program (SPREP). These are implemented by the multilateral development banks (MDBs) and the World Bank which have their own gender policies or gender action plans and respective gender mainstreaming mandates. Initially, the CIF implementation relied exclusively on these for gender mainstreaming efforts. However, a 2013 comprehensive CIF gender review confirmed that the CIFs needed to do much more to address gender considerations

⁷² GEF Gender Implementation Strategy (GEF/C.54/06), https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/EN_GEF.C.54.06_Gender_Strategy_1.pdf.

⁷³ See for example the new GEF guidance on gender to comply with the new GEF Policy on Gender Equality, <https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/publications/GEF%20Guidance%20on%20Gender.pdf>.

systematically.⁷⁴ Specifically, the CTF, which finances large-scale mitigation in large economies and accounts for 70% of the CIFs' pledged funding portfolio, fell short, with the other programs considering gender to varying extent. While efforts to secure greater involvement, empowerment and benefit-sharing of women and other vulnerable groups in the CIFs remained unevenly addressed, several of the recommendations of the CIF gender review were taken up. Investment criteria under the FIP and the SREP included gender equality as either a co-benefit or core criteria, and the technical review of investment programs for the PPCR, FIP and SREP monitored some gender dimensions. All three programs (but not the CTF) also included gender indicators at core and co-benefit level in their results frameworks.

In 2014, the CIF governing bodies approved a two-year CIF Gender Action Plan (FY15-16) with a focus on monitoring and evaluation, including through annual reporting of gender indicators and CIF gender portfolio scorecards for each of the programs, overseen by a new gender focal point in the CIF Administrative Unit (AU) in coordination with the MDBs as implementing entities.⁷⁵ A CIF Gender Action Plan Phase 2 (FY17-20) approved in December 2016 is focused on deepening institutional efforts from Phase 1 while aiming to further strengthen accountability of gender results and utilizing increased CIF AU capacity for targeted technical assistance for more gender-transformative outcomes of CIF investments.⁷⁶ It is organized around three main pillars, with pillar 1 focused on internal CIF functions and inputs (including CIF policy requirements and procedures; gender technical support; gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation); pillar 2 looking at regularized use of gender-inclusive approaches in government planning and local governance (coordination of CIF country-level investment plans with national women's machinery and ministries and use of gender-budgeting process); and pillar 3 aiming to address key sectoral investment areas under the CIFs in support of gender equality outcomes, such as energy transition, food security, health, or tenure security. A continued focus of the CIF Gender Action Plan during its Phase 2 remains on knowledge generation on gender and climate finance by the CIFs in the form of analytical work, including specific sectoral gender implementation notes. The CIF Gender Action Plan - Phase 2 also includes a detailed results and logical framework with a series of articulated quantitative impact, outcome and output indicators.

While a FY17 CIF gender progress report⁷⁷ showed improvements for most CIFs under the CIF Gender Action Plan, the gender-responsiveness of the CTF continues to lag behind. As a consequence, in 2018, an overarching CIF Gender Policy was approved to stand as a governance framework for gender integration in the CIF irrespective of a CIF Gender Action Plan time-bound to a specific implementation period by addressing overarching approaches, procedures as well as issues related to staffing and budgeting for gender efforts in all CIF programs.⁷⁸ It is articulated to complement the gender and safeguard policies of the individual MDBs, which have policy primacy at CIF project level gender integration efforts, particularly

⁷⁴ <https://www.climateinvestmentfunds.org/documents/cif-gender-review-report-march-2013>.

⁷⁵ <https://www.climateinvestmentfunds.org/knowledge-documents/cif-gender-action-plan-fy15-16>.

⁷⁶ CIF Gender Action Plan – Phase 2 (CTF-SCF/TFC.16/6/Rev.1), https://www.climateinvestmentfunds.org/sites/cif_enc/files/ctf_scf_decision_by_mail_cif_gender_action_plan_phase_2_final_revised.pdf

⁷⁷ https://www.climateinvestmentfunds.org/sites/cif_enc/files/meeting-documents/joint_ctf_scf_17_inf.5_fy17_progress_report_on_cif_gender_program_final.pdf

⁷⁸ CIF Gender Policy (Revised), https://www.climateinvestmentfunds.org/sites/cif_enc/files/knowledge-documents/joint_ctf-scf_17_4_rev.1_cif_gender_policy_rev1_2_final.pdf.

for CIF country-level investment plans and related procedures. The CIF Gender Policy also expanded gender staff at the CIF AU.

It is difficult to compare the CIF Gender Policy and the AF GP one-to-one, due to the very different business and delivery model of the CIFs (working exclusively through MDBs on a wider range of climate-related investments, including through programmatic approaches with separate multi-project multi-year country-level investment plans). There are, however, some core congruencies indicating a shared overarching normative framing and approach, including an acknowledgement of women's human rights as a starting point. Like the AF GP the CIF's Gender Policy articulates similarly the policy objectives of providing men and women with equal access to and benefit from CIF investments, of seeking to advance gender equality and of strengthening women's effective participation. The CIF Gender Policy is structured similar to the AF GP around principles that include a comprehensive approach to engender all CIF operations, and articulate accountability, learning and knowledge management components. Thus, the approach of the AF GP is largely in line with core principles and mandates of the CIF gender policy.

Many of the CIF Gender Policy's specific features though are befitting its unique operational procedures that are very different from the AF's. The CIF Gender Policy, for example, puts – as it complements separate MDB gender mandates – a particular focus on expanding the internal gender staff capacity of the CIF AU and mandates within the CIF administrative budget a separate budget line for the gender program. Due to the CIFs' different business model, the CIF Gender Policy does neither address the need for gender capacity building for its implementing partners nor accreditation nor compliance requirements, but focuses instead more on country level government engagement in CIF pilot countries, for example recommending that the relevant government line ministry nominates a gender focal point for CIF Investment Plan Implementation. It also establishes a CIF Gender Working Group narrowly composed of only MDB and World Bank representatives.

V. Assessment Findings and Recommendations

The mandated review of the Fund's GP and GAP after three years has been an important opportunity to take stock of the status of gender mainstreaming efforts in the Fund's operations undertaken since the GP and GAP were approved in March 2016. The findings and recommendations are not to be considered as a simple "pass or fail" assessment, but should be read in the context of acknowledging that the gender mainstreaming mandate for the Fund's operations stemming from the Fund's GP is a long-term process, with the tracking of advances made in integrating gender equality and women's empowerment considerations throughout Fund processes, procedures and operations providing the guidance to the Fund as a learning institution toward further consolidation and expansion of the progress made over the past three years. As is to be expected, there is room for further improvement. Nevertheless, the assessment finds that the implementation of the Fund's GP, aided by a set of targeted actions and mandates under a time-bound GAP, is well underway. Indeed, after three years, the analysis shows that substantial headway has been made in moving the Fund from partial and haphazard efforts to create more gender-awareness before the GP and GAP toward more mainstreamed, organized and sustained collaborative efforts of all Fund partners, spearheaded by the AFB Secretariat, towards gender-sensitivity

throughout the Fund's operation after the GP and GAP, even if further efforts are necessary to achieve full gender-responsiveness in a number of Fund operational areas, including, most prominently, in project/programme implementation and results monitoring and accounting.

The review of the Fund's GP, including in comparison to similar policies of peer climate funds (GEF, GCF and CIFs) shows that its strong principle-based, human-rights centered approach is in many ways still state-of-the art, stands the test of time and is considered to continue to be largely fit-for-purpose for the Fund with its niche and special value added in the global climate finance architecture (focused heavily on direct access and concrete smaller scale fully grant-financed adaptation measures).

Nevertheless, as the global approach to and understanding of gender is not static, but continuously evolving over time, it is recommended that the Fund considers some selected minor updates to the existing GP from 2016 to further improve the policy and its impact on the Fund's mission. These are in particular:

- 1) Anchoring the GP more strongly in the overall vision, goal and impact for the Fund's contribution to the overarching theory of change for the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable as articulated in the Fund's MTS.
- 2) As a forward looking fund operating in a niche segment of the global climate finance architecture and having distinguished itself as a trendsetter on how to address the vulnerability of countries, people and their livelihoods and ecosystems through new approaches, the updated policy should highlight the intersectionality of gender with other determinants contributing to people's vulnerability toward the adverse impacts of climate change, such as race, age, class or religion, and how those evolve over time. Given its strong partnership with its implementing partners, its flexibility of approaches to ensure compliance with its mandated policies and a focus on the human dignity of its beneficiaries, the Fund is well positioned to its GP beyond a narrow binary approach towards a recognition of broader gender-related intersectionality in its operations.
- 3) An update to the existing GP should make it even clearer that its mandate is not one narrowly relegated toward a safeguards and risk management approach (focusing solely on "do no harm" with respect to gender), but instead requires an understanding of and commitment to "do good", meaning to address existing gender inequalities and the discrimination of women as a required outcome of all fund activities, including by conceiving of and implementing concrete adaptation actions markedly differently than before.
- 4) While the GP should retain a focus on the explicit empowerment of women, an update to the existing policy should re-iterate more strongly that gender considerations apply to 100 percent of the targeted beneficiaries of Fund investments, and that includes targeted actions to address the special role of men in contributing to gender-responsive adaptation measures and the societal changes that this requires.

Those possible changes to the existing GP are overall reinforcements and re-iterations of the broader intent of the GP; these can be addressed with targeted edits and clarifications within the existing GP and do not require a significant rewrite or the development of an entire new policy.

In fact, a comprehensive rewrite of the policy at this stage of progress achieved with the implementation of the existing GP would be counterproductive. The analysis of the extent to which mandates of the GAP have been completed clearly revealed that the challenge to further gender integration efforts within the Fund's operations lies with the implementation of the policy, not the policy itself (and thus substantially rewriting the policy with a host of additional mandates and expectations will not address those difficulties). Only some three years after the approval of the GP and GAP are now some of the core operational foundations for securing the full implementation of the existing GP ready, such as the update to the PPR and PPR Results Tracker to monitor and account for the progress in gender integration of Fund project/programme implementation, a gender score card to transparently account for the successes in gender mainstreaming the Fund's project/programme portfolio, a host of other updated guidance and operational policy documents, as well as specific Fund-developed knowledge management and learning products on gender. A completely rewritten new GP would then restart the clock on the update and development of related procedural templates and guidance. This would also cause confusion in the Fund's partner network at a time when the acceptance and knowledge of the existing GP has been building over the past three years.

Instead, it is recommended that going forward the main-focus should be on a new time-bound GAP, which in its second phase concentrate on actions and mandates aiming to consolidate and deepen the progress on gender mainstreaming made so far in the Fund's operations. As highlighted in the assessment report, the new GAP should put particular emphasis on targeted actions providing guidance and support to IEs to strengthen the integration of gender equality and women's empowerment considerations in project/programme conceptualization and proposal development, including through further improved and iterative readiness support, as well as on strengthening the Fund's ability to support knowledge generation and joint learning on gender and adaptation via NIE communities of practice and South-South learning exchange and learning opportunities. The assessment report already provides a number of important recommendations for concrete actions to be pursued over the next few years to strengthen gender mainstreaming in the Fund's operations. These should be carefully considered for incorporation into the new GAP.

In developing the new GAP, it is recommended to adjust the action areas of the new GAP to be more in line with the core strategic foci of the Fund's MTS (innovation, learning & sharing, and action). It is also recommended to align the time-frame of new GAP (GAP-2) with the remaining time-frame of the MTS and thus cover the time-period FY 2020-2022. This would have the advantage of potentially linking the review of the MTS, for which gender is a cross-cutting theme, with and including an in-depth review of the implementation of the GAP-2 and the continued suitability of the updated GP. This would also further cement and reiterate that continued improvements in gender mainstreaming in the Fund's operation remain a core strategic mandate for the fulfillment of the Fund's mission for the foreseeable future.

VI. Next Steps

It is expected that this GP and GAP assessment report will be presented as an information document for the Fund Board to be noted at its 34th Meeting in October 2019. Following this, a proposed draft update to the GP and a draft new GAP for a second phase from FY 2020-2022 (GAP-2) will be developed to be published and shared for comments and inputs from the Board and stakeholders for a time-frame of several months (November 2019 to mid-January 2020). Comments and suggestions received on the proposed update to the Fund's GP as well as the new GAP (GAP-2) will be taken into account in a revised GP and GAP-2 document to be finalized by mid-February 2020, which is then planned to be submitted to the Fund Board at its 35th meeting March 15-16, 2020 for the Board's consideration and adoption.

Annex

List of people interviewed to inform the preparation of the GP and GAP assessment report

Name	Function	Organization
Mikko Ollikainen	Manager	AFB Secretariat
Young Hee Lee	Legal Operations Analyst and Gender Focal Point	AFB Secretariat
Saliha Dobardzic	Senior Climate Change Specialist	AFB Secretariat
Alyssa Maria Gomez	Projects, RBM and KM ET Consultant	AFB Secretariat
Martina Dorigo	Program Analyst	AFB Secretariat
Aya Mimura	Financial Analyst	AFB Secretariat
Cristina Dingel	Knowledge Management Officer	AFB Secretariat
Farayi Onias Madziwa	Readiness Program Officer	AFB Secretariat
N.N.	Member, Accreditation Panel	AFB Secretariat
Julia Grimm	Coordinator, AF NGO Network	Germanwatch