



ADAPTATION FUND

AFB/B.36/4
29 March 2021

Adaptation Fund Board
Thirty-sixth meeting
Bonn, Germany (Virtually held), 6-8 April 2021

Agenda item 7

REPORT OF THE THIRTY-FIFTH MEETING OF THE ACCREDITATION PANEL

WORK OF THE ACCREDITATION PANEL

1. The Accreditation Panel (the Panel) continued its work reviewing both new and existing applications. The Panel held its thirty-fifth meeting in a virtual manner on 3–4 February 2021. The Vice-Chair of the Accreditation Panel Ms. Eleonora Cogo (Italy, Western Europe and Others) presided over the meeting.

2. For the thirty-fifth Panel meeting, the Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat (the secretariat) has received 4 new accreditation applications for 4 potential National Implementing Entities (NIEs). The Panel has continued reviewing 13 re-accreditation applications (7 NIEs, 2 Regional Implementing Entities (RIEs) and 4 Multilateral Implementing Entities (MIEs) and 11 accreditation applications of 8 potential NIEs, 2 potential RIEs and 1 potential MIE that were previously reviewed but required additional information for the Panel's review. As of December 2020, one NIE candidate's application has been dormant for four consecutive six-month periods. Therefore, in accordance with Board Decision B.31/26, the Secretariat sent the fourth and final letter of notification to the Designated Authority (DA) and the focal person informing them of the inactivity of the applicant entity on 29 December 2020. In the letter, and in accordance with Board Decision B.31/26, the Secretariat also informed the NIE applicant entity that its application will be removed from the accreditation pipeline as of the date of when the final letter was sent.

3. After considering the recommendations by the Panel, the Adaptation Fund Board (the Board) had intersessionally approved during the period from 2 October 2020 to 1 March 2021: fast-track re-accreditation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as a Multilateral Implementing Entity (MIE) of the Adaptation Fund (the Fund) (Decision B. 35-36/1); fast-track accreditation of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) as MIE of the Fund (Decision B. 35-36/2); fast-track re-accreditation of the Department of Environment (DoE) of Antigua and Barbuda as an NIE of the Fund (Decision B. 35-36/5); fast-track re-accreditation of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) as MIE of the Fund (Decision B.35-36/11); accreditation of the International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) as RIE of the Fund (Decision B. 35-36/17); and the accreditation under the streamlined approach of the Comisión de Acción Social Menonita (CASM) of Honduras as NIE of the Fund (Decision B. 35-36/19).

4. As of the thirty-fifth meeting of the Panel, 11 accreditation applications, comprising of 8 potential NIEs, 2 potential RIEs, and 1 potential MIE were under review by the Panel as per the following list:

1. National Implementing Entity NIE018
2. National Implementing Entity NIE041
3. National Implementing Entity NIE046
4. National Implementing Entity NIE057
5. National Implementing Entity NIE066
6. National Implementing Entity NIE113
7. National Implementing Entity NIE140
8. National Implementing Entity NIE142

- 9. Regional Implementing Entity RIE008
- 10. Regional Implementing Entity RIE016
- 11. Multilateral Implementing Entity MIE017

GENERAL TRENDS

5. As at 1 March 2021, the total number of accredited implementing entities amounted to 54: 33 NIEs, 7 RIEs, and 14 MIEs (Figure 1). Among the 33 NIEs, there were 9 accredited NIEs that were from Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and 7 accredited NIEs that were from Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) (Figure 2). Out of the 54 accredited implementing entities of the Fund, 28 entities (52%) had been re-accredited: 13 NIEs, 4 RIEs and 11 MIEs. With respect to the geographic coverage of the 33 NIEs and 7 RIEs, 15 entities were from Latin America and the Caribbean, 15 were from Africa, 9 were from Asia-Pacific and 1 entity was from Eastern Europe (Figure 3).

Figure 1. Accredited Implementing Entities by type

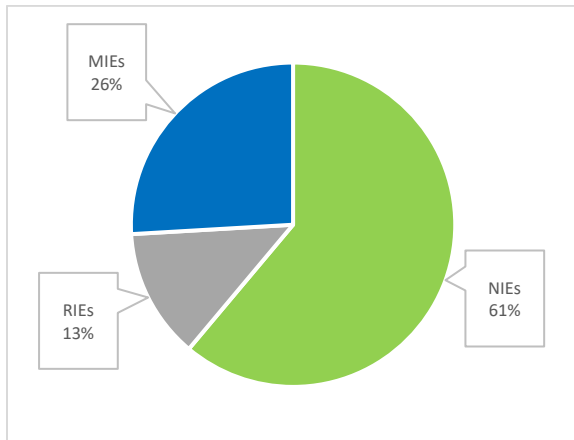


Figure 2. LDCs and SIDS among accredited NIEs

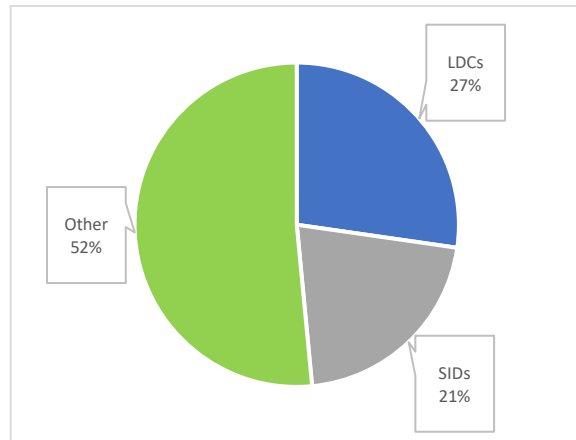
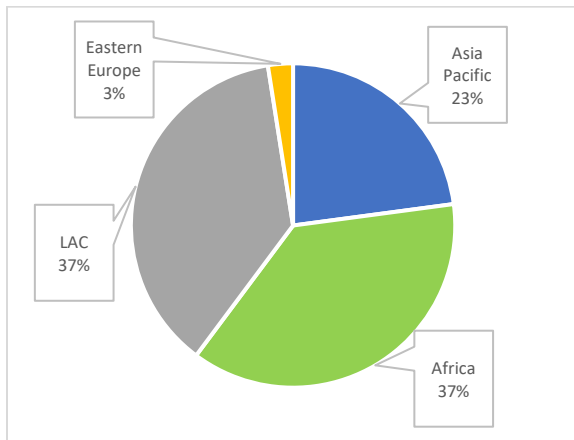


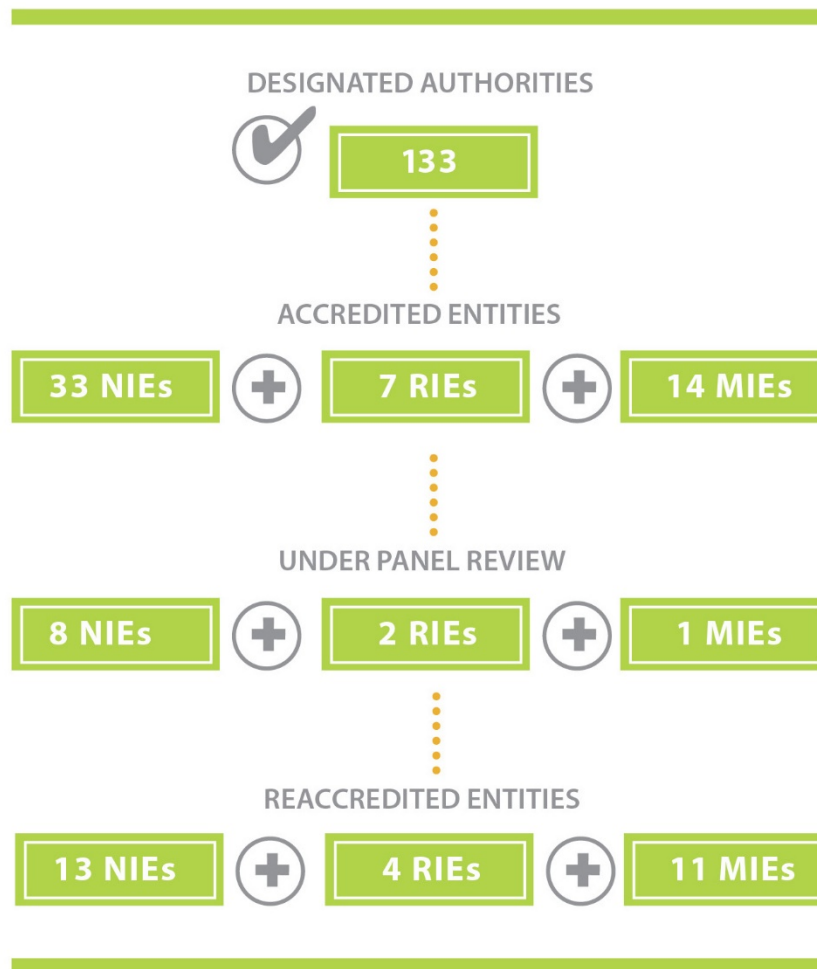
Figure 3. Accredited NIEs and RIEs by region



ACCREDITATION PIPELINE

6. The following infographic (figure 4) provides an update on the current accreditation pipeline which does not include re-accreditation applications.

Figure 4. The accreditation pipeline of the Adaptation Fund as of 1 March 2021.



STATUS OF APPLICATIONS UNDER REVIEW

	SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION	REFERENCE FOR BACKGROUND INFORMATION	CURRENT STATUS
EXISTING APPLICATIONS			
NIE018	Aug-18	AFB/B.35.a-35.b/23	The Panel reviewed the documents submitted by the applicant on 20 February 2020. In early December, the Secretariat shared the Panel's list of questions with the applicant, including a suggestion to consider applying under the streamlined approach. The applicant provided responses to the Panel's list of questions and uploaded several documents to the workflow on 20 January 2021. In response to the Panel's suggestion, the applicant also submitted an official letter on 8 December 2020 confirming its willingness to be considered under the streamlined approach. This was followed by another letter to the Secretariat on 11 December to confirm the change of its DA. Upon review, the Secretariat, on 29 January 2021, requested the applicant to send a revised letter duly signed by a higher authority, either a Minister or Ambassador. The Panel has also suggested having a follow up discussion with the applicant, and this is pending further confirmation from the applicant.
NIE041	Oct-9	N/A	The application was resubmitted to the Secretariat on 9 October 2020, and after screening, it was passed on to the Panel for their initial review in mid-October 2020. As at the time of the AP 35 meeting, the initial analysis by the Panel was ongoing. The Secretariat expects to receive updates on the application soon.
NIE046	Dec-12	AFB/B.35.a-35.b/23	After an extended period of no response from the applicant on the latest set of questions from the Panel, the Secretariat, in accordance with Decision B.31/26, sent the first letter to the DA informing the inactivity of the applicant on 25 June 2020. On 9 July 2020, the Secretariat received a response from the applicant. As this was the first time the applicant had been notified of its dormant status, the Secretariat replied to the applicant offering further clarifications. The Panel's October 2019 list of residual questions was subsequently reshared with the applicant on 31 July 2020. The applicant acknowledged receipt on 2 August 2020 and further expressed interest in completing the final stages of the application. A videoconference was held in October 2020, wherein the Secretariat provided clarifications to the applicant on how to respond to the pending issues. Applicant agreed to revert after reviewing the pending issues.

NIE057	Apr-14	AFB/B.35.a-35.b/23	The latest set of documents submitted by the applicant in response to the Panel's outstanding list of questions were uploaded to the workflow on 13 May 2020. As most of the prior documents the applicant had uploaded were old, the Panel conducted a re-assessment of the application and produced an updated list of questions which the Secretariat shared with the applicant on 15 September 2020. No further updates have since been received from the applicant despite several efforts by the Secretariat to get the applicant to address the AP questions.
NIE066	Apr-15	AFB/B.35.a-35.b/23	In response to the Panel's latest queries and further to the dormant application notification the Secretariat had sent to the applicant and the DA in June 2020, the focal person uploaded additional documentation to the workflow on 2 September 2020. The Secretariat informed the Panel about the applicant's progress on 23 September, re-iterating that the application is no longer dormant. In preparation for the AP 35 meeting, the Secretariat organized two video conferences with the applicant and the Panel in January 2021 to establish a mutual level of understanding of the current status of the application and the way forward. During the call, the applicant reiterated its interest in making good progress on the application and looks forward to getting back to the Secretariat soon with updates.
NIE113	Dec-15	AFB/B.35.a-35.b/23	Despite several attempts by the secretariat to ascertain the progress of the application process, the applicant's response to the Panel's questions shared on 13 May 2019 is still pending. In accordance with Decision B.31/26, the Secretariat sent the first letter to the DA informing the inactivity of the entity on 25 June 2020. In July 2020, the Secretariat received updates from the focal point reiterating their interest to prioritize the accreditation process. As of 18 January 2021, the application was no longer in "dormant application status", following the applicant's submission of several documents to the workflow. On 19 January 2021, the Secretariat organized a virtual call with the applicant to better understand their progress and offer further clarifications on the accreditation process. As of the time of the AP 35 meeting, no further updates have been received from the applicant.
NIE133 (Dormant Application)	Feb-17	AFB/B.35.a-35.b/23	In accordance with Decision B.31/26, the Secretariat sent the first letter to the DA informing the inactivity of the entity on 19 June 2019; the second letter on 30 January 2020; the third letter on 25 June 2020 and the fourth (final) letter on 29 December 2020. The application was subsequently removed from the accreditation pipeline on the same day the final letter was sent.

NIE140	Sept-19	AFB/B.35.a-35.b/23	As no responses have been received, despite the Secretariat's several requests for updates, the application became dormant. In accordance with Decision B.31/26, the Secretariat sent the first letter of notification to the DA and the focal person about the inactivity of the application on 29 December 2020. On 4 January, the Secretariat received a response from the focal person indicating their plan to upload some documents to the workflow in response to the outstanding issues. In early January, some documents were uploaded to the workflow, indicating that the applicant was no longer in "dormant application status". The latest documentation upload permitted the Panel's closure of some outstanding questions. As at the time of the AP 35 meeting, the applicant's response to the other main issues raised in the Panel's initial follow up questions was still pending.
NIE142	Feb-19	AFB/B.35.a-35.b/23	Following the Panel's review of the latest documents submitted by the applicant, the Secretariat conveyed to the applicant, the Panel's suggestion for the streamlined approach. A subsequent virtual call was held on 7 October 2020 between the Secretariat and the applicant to offer further clarifications on the suggestion. On 16 October 2020, the Secretariat received an official letter from the applicant confirming its interest in being considered for the streamlined approach. As at the time of the AP 35 meeting, the Panel's review of the submitted information and documents under the streamlined approach was ongoing.
RIE008	Jan-14	AFB/B.35.a-35.b/23	The Panel's latest list of follow up questions was shared with the applicant on 23 September 2020, followed by a request for updates by the Secretariat on 30 September 2020. In response, the applicant uploaded some documents on 16 October 2020 to the workflow. As at the time of the AP 35 meeting, the Panel was awaiting further documentation upload from the applicant in order to resume the review process. Since the applicant is already accredited with the Green Climate Fund (GCF), it is eligible for the fast-track accreditation process.
RIE016	Mar-17	AFB/B.35.a-35.b/23	Since the AP 34 meeting, the applicant has not made significant progress regarding the Panel's list of outstanding questions and issues. The focal person indicated that the operations of the organization had been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which made their timely response to the Panel's questions difficult. In preparation for the AP 35 meeting, the Secretariat held a call with the applicant on 18 January 2021 to learn more about their progress with the application process and to offer clarifications as required. During the call, the applicant assured that they had made substantial progress and looks forward to getting back to the Secretariat with an update soon.

MIE 017	Jul-22	N/A	The application was submitted on 22 July 2020, and then after screening by the Secretariat, it was passed on to the Panel for their initial review on 13 August 2020. The Panel shared its initial review questions with the Secretariat on 7 December 2020, which was subsequently transmitted to the applicant on 9 December 2020. The applicant's response to the Panel's questions is pending.
RE- ACCREDITATION			
NIE016	Aug-16	AFB/B.35.a-35.b/23	Accreditation expired on 13 December 2016. The applicant has made no significant progress since the last documentation upload in February 2020. In late September 2020, the applicant inquired from the Secretariat about the status of its re-accreditation application. On 2 October 2020, the Panel responded to the applicant's request by offering clarifications on the outstanding issues. The Panel shared a more detailed review comments on 13 November 2020, which the Secretariat transmitted to the applicant on 16 November 2020. In the same exchange, the Panel requested further support from the Secretariat relating to E&S and Gender policies aspects. As of 25 January 2021, the Secretariat had recruited a senior expert to aid the Panel members on E&S and Gender-related issues. In order to facilitate the re-accreditation process, a videoconference call was held on 17 February 2021 between the Secretariat and representatives from the applicant entity organization. Further, the Secretariat re-organized the Panel's outstanding list of questions and shared it with the applicant the next day.
NIE034	Aug-19	AFB/B.35.a-35.b/23	Accreditation expired on 12 August 2019. The Panel had expressed concerns about the ability of the applicant to meet the criteria in Section II-4 of the re-accreditation application form. In response to the Secretariat's request for updates in late July 2020, the focal person uploaded several documents on 5 November 2020. Though the Panel has reviewed the latest responses from the applicant, the applicant's responses still appear to be incomplete or not meeting some of the criteria for fast-track re-accreditation because of the protracted issue of solvency and going concern. Subsequently, the Secretariat will conduct an ad-hoc performance review of the AF funded project performance, which is currently under implementation by the applicant, and communicate the outcome to the Panel. The Panel will then update the assessment report and prepare a recommendation note for the other Panel members' comments. Once finalized, the recommendation will be circulated, through the Secretariat, to the Board for a decision.

NIE037	Jan-19	AFB/B.35.a-35.b/23	Accreditation expired on 18 November 2017. In September, October, and December 2020, the applicant requested for updates from the Secretariat regarding its late March 2020 documentation uploaded to the workflow, to which the Panel advised they were reviewing the submission and drafting the report. The Panel completed its review of the submitted information and documentation and produced a follow-up list of questions, which the Secretariat shared with the applicant on 26 January 2021. A draft report is expected to be shared shortly with the Panel members for comments and inputs.
NIE039	Feb-20	AFB/B.35.a-35.b/23	Accreditation expired on 9 April 2020. After the AP 34 meeting, the Secretariat sent a request for updates on 30 September to the applicant regarding the Panel's late July 2020 initial list of questions. The applicant provided its response to the Panel on 7 October 2020. The applicant, with support from the Secretariat, uploaded on 19 January 2021, all the annexes it had earlier embedded in its earlier response. Upon review, the Panel produced a second list of follow up questions which the Secretariat transmitted to the applicant on 8 February 2021. A report to the Panel has been drafted and reviewed and will be updated once responses to the follow up list of questions are received and adequate. Applicant is eligible for fast-track re-accrreditation and a possible increasing of project and programme proposals cap.
NIE042	Jun-18	AFB/B.35.a-35.b/23	Accreditation expired on 20 March 2019. Following the Secretariat's request for updates, the applicant uploaded several documents to the workflow on 14 and 23 December 2020. During the review of the documents, the Panel observed that most of the documents the applicant had uploaded were not in English and requested the Secretariat to convey the message to the applicant. After a series of exchanges on this issue, the Panel has agreed to identify the specific sections of the documents that needed translation. The panel has prepared a final list of questions to be sent to the applicant by the Secretariat. Initial report to the Panel is on hold, pending the applicant's submission of a high-level letter of commitment to abide by the AF E&S and Gender policies.
NIE054	Aug-14	N/A	Accreditation expired on 9 April 2020. The applicant submitted the application on 14 August 2020, and then after screening by the Secretariat, the application was sent back to the applicant with comments. The application was resubmitted on 2 September 2020, and then after screening by the Secretariat, it was passed on to the Panel for their initial review on 8 October 2020. The last correspondence with the applicant was on 29 January 2021 when the applicant requested for updates on its application.

NIE076	Sep-18	N/A	Accreditation expires on 17 March 2021. The application was submitted on 18 September 2020, and then after screening by the Secretariat, it was sent back to the applicant with comments. The applicant resubmitted the application on 26 October 2020, and then after screening, the Secretariat passed it on to the Panel for their initial review on 4 November 2020. Following the Secretariat's confirmation to the Panel that the applicant is eligible for the fast-track re-accreditation process, the Panel updated its draft report and produced a list of initial questions, which the Secretariat shared with the applicant on 16 February 2021.
RIE010	Sep-22	N/A	Accreditation expires on 25 February 2021. The application was submitted on 22 September 2020, and then after screening by the Secretariat, it was sent back to the applicant with comments. The application was resubmitted on 3 November 2020, and then after screening, it was passed on to the Panel for their initial review on 4 November. The legal memo was prepared and shared with the Panel on 18 November. Draft report will be finalized once the applicant submits required documents on ESP and Gender policy.
RIE012	Sep-9	AFB/B.35.a-35.b/23	Accreditation expired on 8 October 2020. The application was submitted on 9 September 2020, and then after screening by the Secretariat, it was sent back to the applicant with comments. The application was resubmitted on 16 November, and then after screening, it was passed on to the Panel for their initial review the same day. The Panel completed its review and produced a list of initial questions which the Secretariat transmitted to the applicant on 3 February 2021.
MIE002	Mar-20	AFB/B.35.a-35.b/23	Accreditation expired on 30 March 2020. There have not been any significant updates on this application since the AP 34 meeting. Initial drafting of the report to the Panel remains on hold, pending further updates regarding the resolution of the lack of the letter of commitment to abide by the AF E&S and Gender policies. Following the B.35.b meeting in October 2020, the Secretariat informed the applicant on 12 November about the decision of the Board to take further consideration of the issue intersessionally, to identify feasible and optimal option(s) to address the matter of the high-level management statement at the B.36 meeting.
MIE003	Apr-20	AFB/B.35.a-35.b/23	Accreditation expired on 30 July 2020. There have not been any significant updates on this application since the AP 34 meeting. Initial drafting of the report to the Panel remains on hold, pending further updates regarding the resolution of the lack of the letter of commitment to abide by the AF E&S and Gender policies. Following the B.35.b meeting in October 2020, the Secretariat informed the applicant on 10 November about the decision of the Board to take further consideration of the issue intersessionally to identify feasible and optimal option(s) to address the matter of the high-level management statement at the B.36 meeting.

MIE007	Sept-19	AFB/B.35.a-35.b/23	Accreditation expired on 30 March 2020. There have not been any significant updates on this application since the AP 34 meeting. Initial drafting of the report to the Panel remains on hold, pending further updates regarding the resolution of the lack of the letter of commitment to abide by the AF E&S and Gender policies. Following the B.35.b meeting in October 2020, the Secretariat informed the applicant on 10 November 2020 and 14 January 2021 about the decision of the Board to take further consideration of the issue intersessionally to identify feasible and optimal option(s) to address the matter of the high-level management statement at the B.36 meeting.
MIE011	Mar-19	AFB/B.35.a-35.b/23	Accreditation expired on 20 March 2019. There have not been any significant updates on this application since the AP 34 meeting. Initial drafting of the report to the Panel remains on hold, pending further updates regarding the resolution of the lack of the letter of commitment to abide by the AF E&S and Gender policies. Following the B.35.b meeting in October 2020, the Secretariat informed the applicant on 10 November and 23 December 2020 about the decision of the Board to take further consideration of the issue intersessionally to identify feasible and optimal option(s) to address the matter of the high-level management statement at the B.36 meeting.

OTHER MATTERS

7. The Secretariat introduced a senior expert who will be providing supplementary technical review of the environmental, social and gender safeguards in relation to the accreditation and re-accreditation application submissions to the Fund.

8. **Update on the Issue of the IE's/Applicant IE's TLMS on Environmental and Social Policy (ESP) and Gender Policy (GP) commitment:** The purpose for this discussion was for the Secretariat to provide an update on the issue. The issue came up after some IEs that were undergoing the AF re-accreditation process expressed their reservations on and/or objections to providing 'top level management statement of commitment to abide by the AF ESP and GP,' which caused their re-accreditation process to be stalled. The Secretariat presented to the Board different options to address the matter at the last Board meeting in October 2020. In line with Decision B.35.b/18, an intersessional survey is currently being conducted intersessionally among the Board to identify the most feasible and optimal options. Based on the results of the survey, the Secretariat will conduct a further analysis on selected options and then prepare an outcomes document to be presented at the 36th meeting of the Board for consideration.

9. **Discussion on classification of implementing entity applicants as regional implementing entities:** The Secretariat presented to the Panel, an analysis prepared in line with Decision B.34/2 on how to classify IE applicants as RIE, taking into account relevant Board discussions on the designation of MIEs and RIEs at its twenty-third and twenty-fourth meetings as recorded in documents AFB/B.23/7 and AFB/B.24/7. The analysis contains a proposal of a

Certified Self-Assessment to be completed by the IE applicants. The purpose of the self-assessment is to obtain information on the entity applying for accreditation which will help ascertain whether such applicant entity is eligible to apply as an RIE. The Secretariat will present the document to the 27th Meeting of the Ethics and Finance Committee (EFC), and the EFC will be invited to consider the report and recommendations contained in the document AFB/EFC.27/11, and to make a recommendation to the Board for approval.

10. **Update on the AF Readiness Programme Activities related to accreditation:** The Secretariat presented to the Panel, the activities and achievements of the Readiness Programme, including the ones that support the accreditation process. Given that navigating the accreditation process and fulfilling the requirements of the accreditation criteria can be a challenging experience for countries, receiving support and guidance from an already accredited NIE of the Fund can help developing countries that are going through the accreditation process to quickly navigate through the accreditation requirements and reduce the length of the accreditation process. So far, three NIEs that have benefited from the Readiness South-South Cooperation (SSC) grants have been accredited. Fourteen other entities have received SSC grants and the same collaboration support. Two entities are participating in the Readiness Support Package, which is a small grant meant to facilitate the delivery of more enhanced, targeted and tailored readiness support for accreditation to developing countries. The window for readiness support package grants is currently in its pilot phase and is not open for applications. The Secretariat stressed the significant work that has been done by the Readiness Programme and Knowledge Management teams, in terms of the e-learning course on “Direct Access: Unlocking Adaptation Funding” which has helped facilitate entities’ understanding of the accreditation process. The Secretariat has witnessed a net improvement in the recently submitted accreditation applications.

11. The thirty-sixth meeting of the Accreditation Panel will be held on 1-2 September 2021. The format of the meeting will depend on how the COVID-19 situation evolves. The Panel expressed interest to hold an informal meeting in-between AP meetings.