**ADAPTATION FUND**

# Lessons Learned

from the continuous process of capacity strengthening of Implementing Entities through re-accreditation to the Adaptation Fund

**MARCH 2022**

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# Acronyms

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| **AF** | **Adaptation Fund** |
| **AFB** | **Adaptation Fund Board** |
| **AML-CFT** | **Anti-money laundering/ Countering the Financing of Terrorism** |
| **AP** | **Accreditation Panel** |
| **CDM** | **Clean Development Mechanism** |
| **E&S** | **Environmental and Social** |
| **ESP** | **Environmental and Social Policy** |
| **GCF** | **Green Climate Fund** |
| **IAF** | **International Accreditation Forum** |
| **IE** | **Implementing Entity** |
| **KM** | **Knowledge Management** |
| **M&E** | **Monitoring and Evaluation** |
| **MIE** | **Multilateral Implementing Entity** |
| **NDA** | **Non disclosure agreement** |
| **NIE** | **National Implementing Entity** |
| **OPG** | **Operational Policies and Guidelines (Adaptation Fund)** |
| **QAE** | **Quality-at-Entry** |
| **RIE** | **Regional Implementing Entity** |
| **UN** | **United Nations** |

# Acknowledgements

# Executive summary

The Adaptation Fund (AF) was the first climate fund to fully operationalize direct access to climate finance through which National Implementing Entities (NIEs) are able to access finance and manage all aspects of climate adaptation and resilience projects, from design through implementation to monitoring and, evaluation. In 2013, the AF was also the first climate fund to develop and launch a re-accreditation process, which has resulted in 28 of the AF's 54 accredited entities having been re-accredited[1] — which is required every five years. There have also been three entities that have been re-accredited twice and to date, all entities with expiring accreditation have opted to move forward with the re-accreditation process.

The AF secretariat has commissioned this analysis and production of a brief report to catalogue lessons learned from the re-accreditation process as well as ways in which implementing entities (IEs) have maintained competencies and developed new ones prior to and during the re-accreditation process. Through a survey and interviews of re-accredited IEs, it is evident that many IEs have benefited from the re-accreditation process, in particular, **the process provides organizations an opportunity to upgrade systems and introduce new procedures to maintain alignment with international good practice.**

For the AF, the re-accreditation process ensures that IEs are complying with evolving procedures such as the Fund's progressive environmental, social and gender policies that promote human rights, biodiversity, equal opportunity for women and men, and empowering the most vulnerable groups. More importantly, however, for the AF is that the re-accreditation process ensures that AF IEs maintain and improve their organizational systems with the end goal of improving project design and performance to effectively implement adaptation actions on the ground and build the resilience of the most vulnerable communities.

The improvement of capacity is a continual process from an entities' initial accreditation through its engagement with the AF whether it is in the form of project development and implementation or participation in the Readiness Programme.[2] The re-accreditation is an additional tool for capacity-building and verification checks of documents in an IEs overall interaction with the AF. Once an IE is initially accredited, there are many opportunities between the accreditation and re-accreditation process to build capacity. For example, developing and implementing an AF project, allows an IE to utilize and strengthen their own systems. Other opportunities include accessing small grants such as technical assistance grants through the Readiness Programme that help NIEs build their capacity to address and manage environmental and social as well as gender associated risks within their projects.

The AF has accumulated a significant body of knowledge on its own processes that not only benefits the AF and its IEs but can be examined by other funds undertaking a similar process such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF). From this brief study that examined the experience

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1. As of May 31, 2021
2. The AF Readiness Programme aims to support regional and national entities through small grants, capacity building programmes and workshops, support during both accreditation and re-accreditation process and to build cooperation and partnerships between entities.

of 22 of the 28 re-accredited IEs, the overall response from IEs is that the AF's re-accreditation process is straightforward. The majority of the IE respondents were generally pleased with the support and guidance provided by the AF and agreed that the process was beneficial.  Key overall findings from this analysis of the re-accreditation processes included the following:

1. The re-accreditation process provides an opportunity for **IEs to engage in a continuous improvement model**. The process enables IEs, particularly national and regional entities, to ensure their organization is (i) documenting all of its management and operating procedures; (ii) conforming to internationally recognized standards; (iii) operating effectively; and (iv) establishing permanent capacity building of national staff.
2. Through the implementation of AF projects, organizations are able to **strengthen internal capacities**, including for project management, due diligence approaches, reporting templates and methods, field control and audit procedures. Implementing an AF project, in particular for NIEs and RIEs, provides an opportunity to test new policies and procedures and to ensure systems are functioning properly.
3. As an IE moves from the accreditation stage to project implementation and eventually to the re-accreditation stage, it is **critical to document compliance** with policies, strategies, and guidance that have been put in place. Putting in place procedures for documenting processes and demonstrating that internal processes not only exist but also function properly goes a long way toward facilitating the overall re-accreditation process.
4. Both the accreditation and re-accreditation process allowed several NIEs and RIEs to **introduce, strengthen, or adopt specific policies** to not only comply with the AF's standards but to meet international good practice standards.
5. The AF's re-accreditation **written guidance and directions provided were clear and easy to follow**. This stems both from written guidance as well as from direct communication between the IEs and the AF secretariat and the Accreditation Panel (AP) experts. Direct communication with the AF was highlighted several times as contributing to the straightforward overall re-accreditation process.

The main areas for improvement that the IEs who were surveyed and interviewed highlighted were as follows: (i) **upgrading the AF's online portal** to automate the difference in requirements for the regular versus fast-track re-accreditation process; (ii) exploring the possibility of **adding flexibility to the requirements to accommodate other international processes** that IEs must also comply with; and (iii) examining the feasibility of the AP members and/or AF secretariat **signing a non-disclosure or confidentiality agreement** to speed up the IEs ability to provide confidential information.[3]

For IEs that have yet to go through the re-accreditation process, the IEs surveyed and interviewed provided several key areas of advice, including:

1. **Ensure enough time** to complete the re-accreditation application and allow for back and forth between the IE and AP. Start at least one year in advance of the IE's accreditation expiration to ensure no lapse in accreditation status. Interactions with the AF can be undertaken prior to re-accreditation, for example for NIEs through accessing Readiness Programme small grants.

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3. The AF does have an Open Information Policy, which was sufficient for most IEs to provide confidential information. All IEs re-accredited ultimately were able to submit the required/requested documentation, however, the recommendation stems from organizations where those putting the re-accreditation application together need other parts of their organization to provide necessary documentation and this was identified as a bottleneck.

2. **Document compliance and processes** to provide evidence that the policies and procedures are not simply documents but are being implemented properly. Implementing an AF project can support the ability of an IE to document policies. Communicate the need for evidence of implementation to the appropriate department or units. Collect, organize, and store this evidence so that when the re-accreditation process rolls around, the IE is able to easily provide supporting documentation.

3. **Communicate with the AF secretariat and AP** to clarify any confusion early on in the re-accreditation process about what the re-accreditation standards entail and to address any challenges the IEs are facing. From the experience of the IEs that have gone through the re-accreditation process, the AF team is highly responsive and helpful. IEs should therefore not spend too much time debating internally instead, bring up any issues or confusion to the AF to avoid delays in the process.

4. **Designate a focal point** to lead the process and follow-up with other units/divisions to collect required documentation. The focal point should have the backing of senior management to ensure responsiveness from other members.

5. **Organize internal systems** to readily access needed documentation and update the status of different polices, strategies, and guidance on a periodic basis (i.e. quarterly, semi-annually, annually). This should be done well before the re-accreditation process starts and will allow for institutional memory to be codified and will avoid a situation where every five years an IE is starting from scratch.

Overall, the findings from the analysis re-enforced the notion that the re-accreditation process does indeed further strengthen institutional capacities and organizational systems and serves as a reasonable quality assurance measure to confirm project funding continues to be effectively and efficiently managed by IEs on the ground. Engagement with the AF whether it is through implementing projects or participating in the AF's Readiness Programme, provide the opportunity for IEs to continuously engage and improve their systems prior to applying for re-accreditation.

The AF is committed to a process of continued learning and improvement. The findings and conclusions from this report will be taken into consideration as the AF continues to pioneer direct access throughout its operations.

# Introduction

The Adaptation Fund (AF) was the first climate fund to fully operationalize direct access to climate finance through which National Implementing Entities (NIEs) are able to access finance and manage all aspects of climate adaptation and resilience projects, from design through implementation to monitoring and evaluation. At its seventh meeting (2009), the Adaptation Fund Board (AFB) adopted the fiduciary standards against which implementing entities (NIEs, RIEs and MIEs) would be accredited: Financial Integrity and Management; Institutional Capacity; and Transparency and Self-investigative Powers.

During the AF's accreditation process, each type of entity undergoes an assessment for accreditation to make sure the entity adheres to sound fiduciary standards and implements effective social and environmental safeguards to identify any project risks in advance, prevent any harm and improve the effectiveness and sustainability of results. The AF's highly experienced Accreditation Panel (AP) of experts conducts a detailed assessment and delivers comprehensive advice and suggestions to help applicants strengthen various aspects of their accreditation standards in order to meet eligibility. The Panel provides a recommendation on accreditation to the AFB, which determines final approval of the application.[4]

As part of the Fund's Operational Policies and Guidelines (OPG), accreditation is "valid for a period of five years with the possibility of renewal." The five-year time frame for accreditation is consistent with other accreditation processes where accreditation is granted for three to five years (i.e. International Accreditation Forum (IAF), Accreditation process of Clean Development Mechanism (CDM)).[5] At the Board's twenty-second meeting (2013), the Board adopted a re-accreditation process which was later updated at its twenty-eighth meeting (2016) to include a fast-track re-accreditation process for implementing entities accredited with the Green Climate Fund (GCF) within a period of four years prior to the submission of the re-accreditation application to the AF.

It should be noted that the improvement of capacity is a continual process from an entities' initial accreditation through its engagement with the AF whether through project development and implementation or participation in the AF's Readiness Programme. The re-accreditation is an additional tool for capacity-building and verification checks of documents in an IEs overall interaction with the AF. Once an IE is initially accredited, there are many opportunities between the accreditation and re-accreditation stages to build capacity. For example through developing and implementing an AF project, which allows an IE to utilize and strengthen their own systems. Other opportunities include accessing small grants such as technical assistance grants to help NIEs build their capacity to address and manage environmental and social as well as gender associated risks within their projects in accordance with the Fund's Environmental and Social Policy (ESP) and Gender Policy. Figure 1 below provides an overall process diagram to depict the continuous capacity improvement for IEs from first accreditation through to the re-accreditation stage.
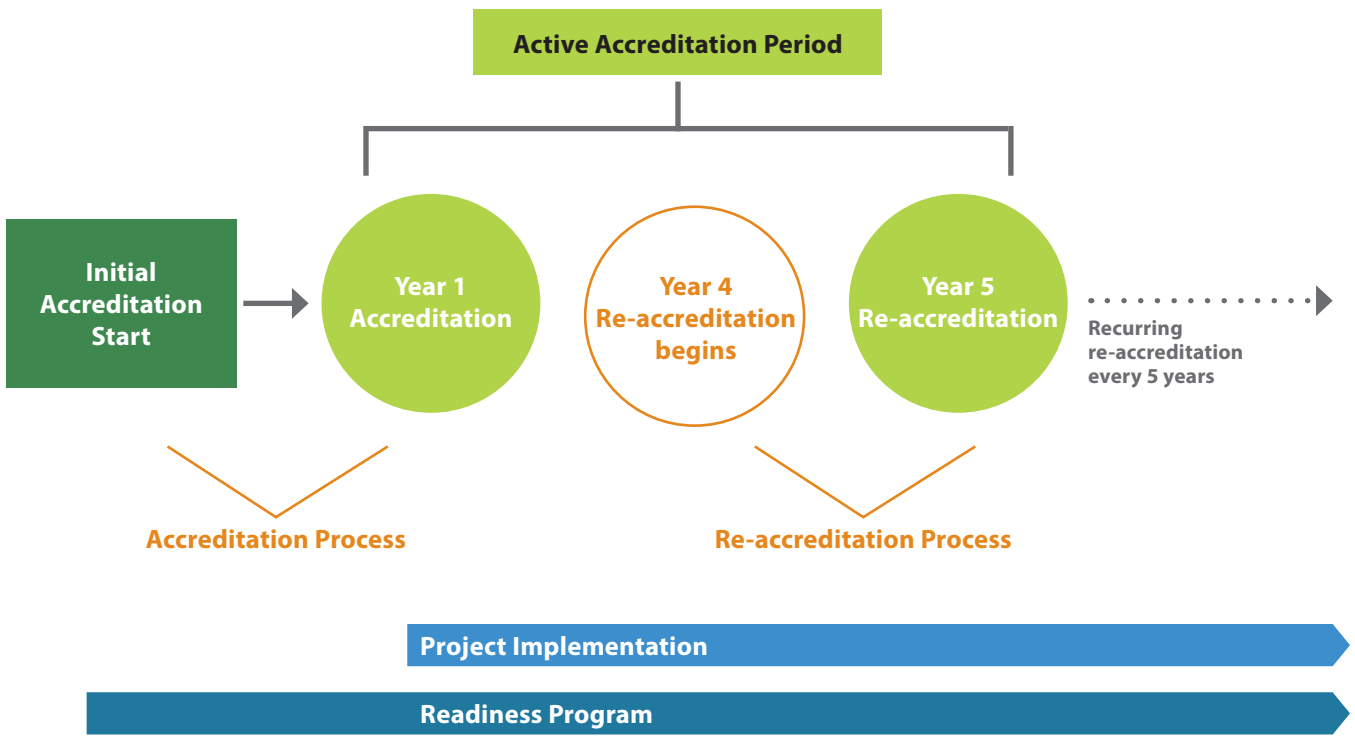
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4. The full accreditation application can be found here: https://www.adaptation-fund.org/apply-funding/accreditation/accreditation-application/
5. Re-Accreditation Process (Approved October 2013 and revised October 2019).

**FIGURE 1.**

Continual Capacity Improvement from Accreditation to Re-Accreditation

# Study objectives

The AF approved its five-year [Medium-Term Strategy and Action Plan in 2018](#) based on the pillars of Action, Innovation, and Knowledge and Sharing. Through the Knowledge and Sharing pillar, the AF secretariat has commissioned the analysis and production of this brief report consisting of lessons learned from the re-accreditation process and of ways to maintain competencies and develop new ones during the re-accreditation process. As the first climate fund to develop and launch its re-accreditation process, documenting the successes and challenges of the process will not only provide information to those implementing entities that have yet to go through the process but the report can also be used by other funds that are either starting or will go through a similar process.

The main objective of this study is to accelerate learning about the re-accreditation process and institutional strengthening through the process. It examines ways that the process supports capacity building and institutional strengthening while also aiming to increase the understanding among implementing entities (IEs) whose accreditation may expire soon in the process. The study will allow IEs to better prepare for the process and pull out what has worked well as well as delineate challenges that have been faced during the re-accreditation process. The report also examines the ways IEs maintained competencies and developed new ones during the implementation of projects, to support their re-accreditation process.

In summary, the report provides an overview of the re-accreditation process, outlines ways IEs have built or maintained institutional capacity through the re-accreditation process, and details challenges faced as well as lessons learned from the process.

# Background to
# AF's re-accreditation process

Since its establishment more than 13 years ago, the AF has accredited 54 IEs of which 52% have been re-accredited. Those re-accredited include 13 national implementing entities (NIEs), 11 multilateral implementing entities (MIEs) and 4 regional implementing entities (RIEs). As highlighted in the introduction, the AF is the first climate fund to institute and undertake a re-accreditation process.

The Fund's re-accreditation application process takes two forms: (i) regular re-accreditation or (ii) fast-track re-accreditation. Each one focuses on specific areas of assessment and documentation requirements, but unlike regular re-accreditation, the fast-track re-accreditation process applies to IEs that have already been accredited with the GCF within the previous four years. The latter process is aimed at enhancing complementarity between funds and is simpler, faster and easier.

Review of a 'regular' re-accreditation focuses on four areas:
1. Continued compliance with the Fund's fiduciary standards;
2. Compliance with the Fund's Environmental and Social Policy[6] and Gender Policy[7];
3. Results of the assessment of the IE's performance regarding quality at entry (QAE) and project/programme implementation; and
4. Review of policies and procedures related to anti-money-laundering/countering the financing of the terrorism. (AML-CFT)

Within the 'regular' re-accreditation process, those IEs that have implemented or are implementing an AF project, are not required to provide evidence for every criterion. Evidence to be submitted by the IE as it relates to the QAE standard are differentiated depending on (i) whether the IE has projects funded by the Adaptation Fund; and (ii) which stage such project(s) implementation stands at the time of submission of re-accreditation application.

For IEs implementing AF projects, less documentation is required. Depending on the stage of AF project implementation, different types of evidence is required. For those IEs that have completed a project from project design through to project closure and evaluation, no documentation is required from the IE under Section III (Requisite Institutional Capacity) for criteria 6-9. Please see the latest version of the Re-Accreditation Process (October 2019), paragraph 18 for the full differentiation of documentation required.

At its twenty-second meeting (2013), the Board approved an Environmental and Social Policy and at its twenty-seventh meeting (2016), the Board approved a Gender policy including a set of principles that projects/programmes financed by the AF must comply with. In addition, at its thirty-second meeting (2018), the Board approved the revised accreditation form including 'examples of supporting documentation' related
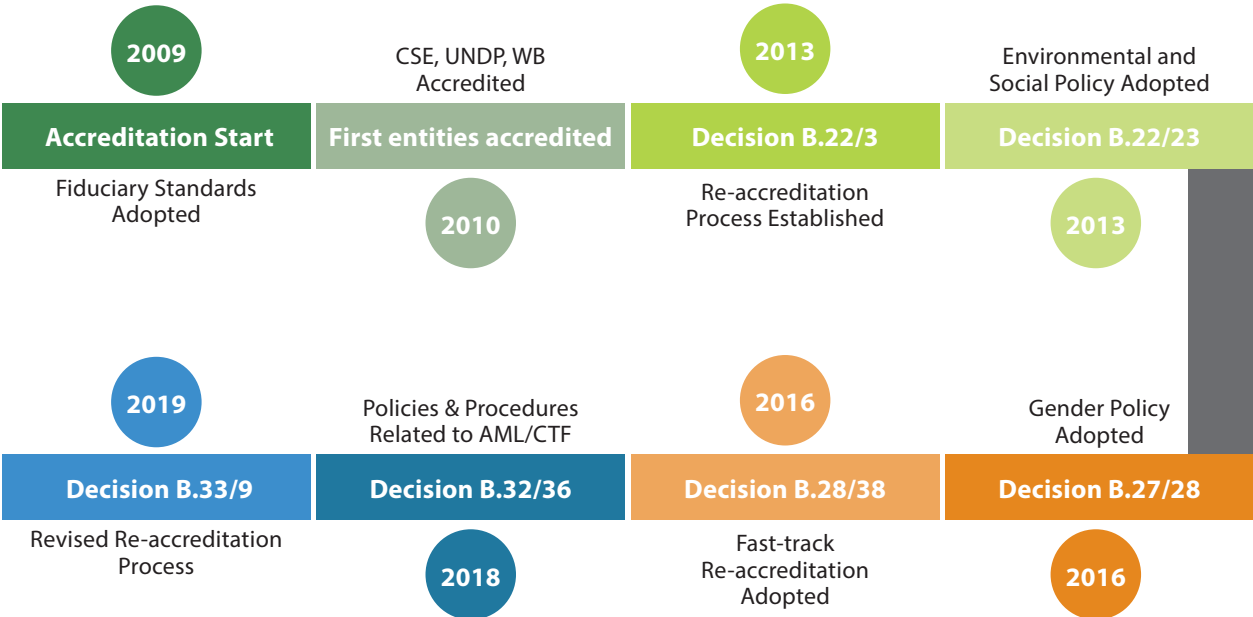
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6. Approved in October 2013 and amended in March 2016. Available at https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Amended-March-2016_-OPG-ANNEX-3-Environmental-social-policy-March-2016.pdf
7. Approved in March 2016. Available at https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/OPG-ANNEX4_Gender-Policies-and-Action-Plan_approved-in-March-2016-1.pdf

to Anti-Money-Laundering/Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CTF)[8]. Figure 2 below provides an overall timeline of the various policies and procedures related to the AF's re-accreditation process.

**Timeline of Policies and Decisions Related to Re-Accreditation Process**



**2009**
CSE, UNDP, WB Accredited
**2013**
Environmental and Social Policy Adopted

**Accreditation Start** | **First entities accredited** | **Decision B.22/3** | **Decision B.22/23**

Fiduciary Standards Adopted
**2010**
Re-accreditation Process Established
**2013**

**2019**
Policies & Procedures Related to AML/CTF
**2016**
Gender Policy Adopted

**Decision B.33/9** | **Decision B.32/36** | **Decision B.28/38** | **Decision B.27/28**

Revised Re-accreditation Process
**2018**
Fast-track Re-accreditation Adopted
**2016**

8. The full decision can be found here: https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/AFB.B.32.12-Report-of-the-32nd-meeting.pdf

# Approach and methodology

The methodology consisted of two phases. The first phase consisted of a desk-study of policies, re-accreditation and accreditation related documents. Documents reviewed include the following:

1. Accreditation Application Form (October 2016)
2. Accreditation Standards Related to AML-CFT (October 2018)
3. Adaptation Fund's Direct Access to Climate Adaptation Resources
4. Bridging the Gaps in Accreditation
5. Environmental and Social Policy (2013)
6. Gender Policy (2016, amended 2021)
7. Guidance on Accreditation Standards (2016)
8. Guidance document for Implementing Entities on compliance with the Adaptation Fund Environmental and Social Policy (2016)
9. Guidance document for Implementing Entities on compliance with the Adaptation Fund Gender Policy (2017)
10. Implications of the Re-organization of an Implementing Entity (2019)
11. Medium-Term Strategy and Action Plan in 2018-2022 (2018)
12. Open Information Policy (2013)
13. NIE Accreditation Toolkit Manual (2011)
14. Regular Re-accreditation Application Form
15. Re-Accreditation Process (Approved October 2013 and revised October 2019)
16. Report of the Twenty-Second Meeting of the Board (October 2013)
17. Report of the Twenty-Seventh Meeting of the Board (March 2017)
18. Report of the Twenty-Eighth Meeting of the Board (October 2016)
19. Report of the Thirty-Second Meeting of the Board (October 2018)
20. Report of the Thirty-Third Meeting of the Board (March 2019)
21. Value of Re-accreditation in Advancing Adaptation on the Ground (Blog, October 2020)

Phase 2 included the development of a survey that was sent out to the 28 IEs that have been re-accredited as of May 2021. Out of the 28 IEs who received the survey, 22 provided their responses (~79%) (see Annex 1 for the survey questions). A summary of results from the survey is provided in the section below.

In addition to the survey, semi-structured interviews were undertaken with three IEs as well as members of the Accreditation Panel, to identify successes in the process as well as potential challenges encountered. The interviews examined in greater detail the following: (i) new policies that were developed by the IE to meet the AF's initial accreditation requirements; (ii) details surrounding any challenges re-accreditation posed; (iii) approaches the IE took for re-accreditation that helped to make the process easier; (iv) ways competencies have been strengthened through the implementation of an AF project; and (v) capacity or institutional enhancements made to support the re-accreditation process.

# Assessment and results of survey

This section includes an analysis of the results of a survey sent out to all IEs that have gone through the Adaptation Fund's re-accreditation process. The survey questions were structured to support the documentation of lessons learned from the continuing process of strengthening the capacity of IEs through re-accreditation. Survey questions included themes related to the following, inter alia: (i) clarity of re-accreditation processes and procedures; (ii) level of effort and difficulty required for completing the re-accreditation process; (iii) improvement or acquirement of new organizational competencies; (iv) extent of the benefit of going through the re-accreditation process; and (v) extent to which the re-accreditation process contributed to an increase in institutional capacity. Annex 1 provides the complete survey questionnaire.

Out of the 28 re-accredited entities, 22 provided responses to the survey. A breakdown by type of entity, type of re-accreditation, and length of re-accreditation of the 22 IEs that submitted the survey is provided in Table 1 below.
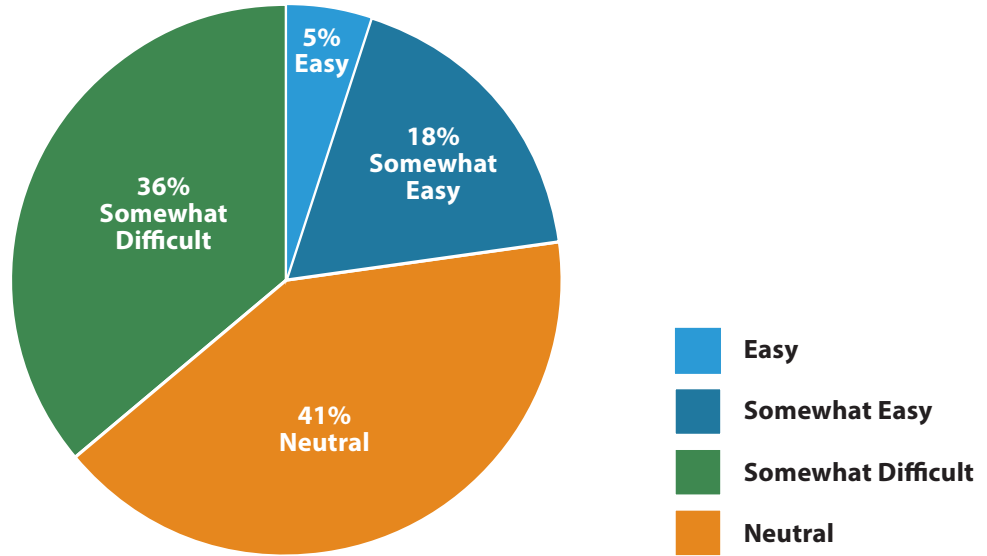
### TABLE 1.
**Summary of re-accredited IE responses**

| Type of IE | Re-accreditation type | Length of time for re-accreditation |
|---|---|---|
| **9**<br>**NIEs**<br><br>*out of 13 re-accredited* | **4** fast-track | **2** under 9 months<br>**1** between 9-18 months<br>**1** over 18 months |
| | **5** regular | **3** under 9 months<br>**1** between 9-18 months<br>**1** over 18 months |
| **3**<br>**RIEs**<br><br>*out of 4 re-accredited* | **3** fast-track | **2** under 9 months<br>**1** between 9-18 months |
| **10**<br>**MIEs**<br><br>*out of 11 re-accredited* | **7** fast-track | **6** under 9 months<br>**1** between 9-18 months |
| | **3** regular | **2** between 9-18 months<br>**1** over 18 months |

In terms of the overall difficulty of the re-accreditation process, 41% (9) of respondents rated the overall difficulty of the re-accreditation process as neutral (neither easy nor difficult), and 36% (8) as somewhat difficult. None rated the process as difficult and 23% (5) rated the process as somewhat easy or easy. See figure 3 below for a full breakdown.
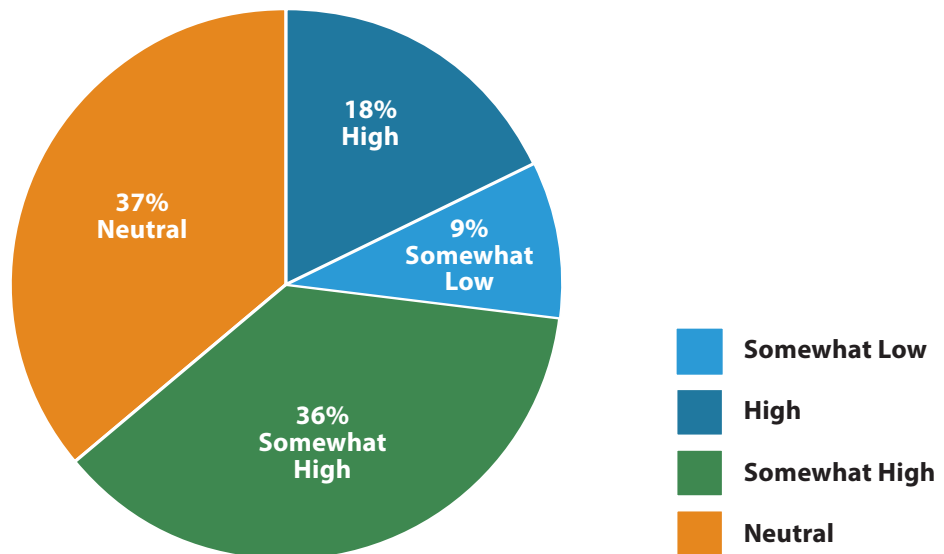
FIGURE 3.

**Re-accreditation process level of difficulty**



Legend:
- Easy
- Somewhat Easy
- Somewhat Difficult
- Neutral

(Pie chart: 5% Easy, 18% Somewhat Easy, 36% Somewhat Difficult, 41% Neutral)

On level of effort required to go through the re-accreditation process, 36% (8) of the respondents rated the process as neutral (neither a high nor low level of effort), 36% (8) at somewhat high, 18% (4) as difficult. Only 9% (2) rated the level of effort as somewhat low. See figure 4 below for the full breakdown.

FIGURE 4.

**Re-accreditation process level of effort**



Legend:
- Somewhat Low
- High
- Somewhat High
- Neutral

(Pie chart: 18% High, 9% Somewhat Low, 36% Somewhat High, 37% Neutral)

While the majority of the IE respondents rated the re-accreditation effort as requiring a neutral to somewhat high level of effort, most of the respondents did agree that the re-accreditation guidance and directions provided were clear and easy to follow (78% agreeing or strongly agreeing). See figure 5 below for the breakdown.

**FIGURE 5.**

**Re-accreditation process level of effort**
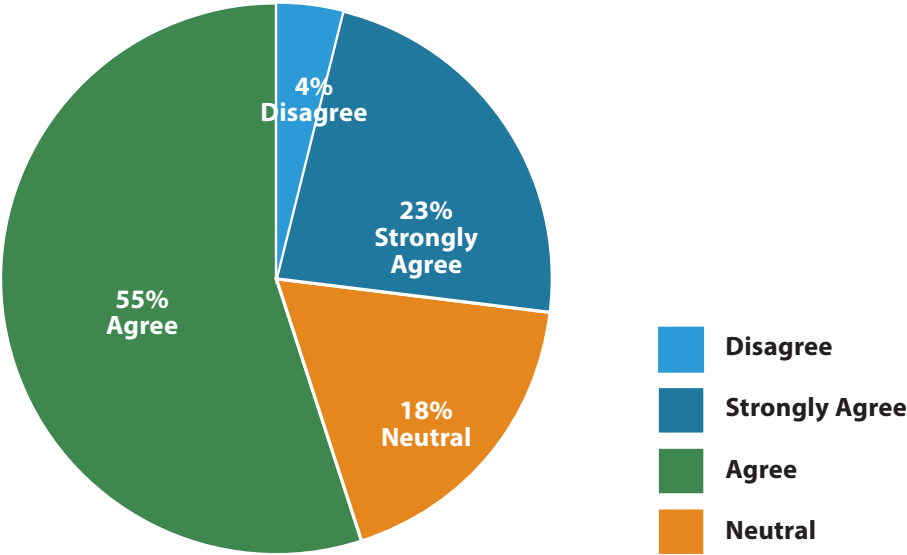


Out of the 22 IE respondents, 18 indicated that their organization acquired or improved certain competencies during the initial AF accreditation process with an Environmental and Social mechanism or framework being the most referred to with 14 IEs indicating this area as having been acquired or improved for the organization. Table 2 below provides the full breakdown of which competencies IEs indicated were acquired or improved through the AF's accreditation process.

**TABLE 2.**

Number of IEs indicating improvement or acquirement of particular organizational competencies

| Item | Competency | # of IEs | Type of IE |
|------|------------|----------|------------|
| 1) | Internal Control Framework | 7 | 3 MIE<br>4 NIE |
| 2) | Business and budgetary planning | 4 | 3 MIE<br>1 NIE |
| 3) | Procurement system | 8 | 3 MIE<br>5 NIE |
| 4) | Project preparation and appraisal | 10 | 3 MIE<br>7 NIE<br>1 RIE |
| 5) | Quality-at-Entry Review | 7 | 2 MIE<br>4 NIE<br>1 RIE |
| 6) | M&E framework/procedures | 8 | 4 MIE<br>3 NIE<br>1 RIE |
| 7) | Policies and framework to handle financial mismanagement/malpractice | 6 | 2 MIE<br>3 NIE<br>1 RIE |
| 8) | E&S mechanism/framework | 14 | 5 MIE<br>6 NIE<br>3 RIE |
| 9) | Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-financing of Terrorism (AML-CFT) | 6 | 3 MIE<br>1 NIE<br>2 RIE |

For the two MIEs that did not indicate any improved or acquired competency during the AF's accreditation process, one MIE mentioned that due to institutional memory loss, it was not clear whether the organization improved or acquired any competencies. The other MIE mentioned that "our systems are continuously improving and so therefore cannot say that the AF reaccreditation process improved our systems. Though perhaps we can say that the process re-emphasized the importance of certain issues."

In more general terms, 27% (6) of IEs indicated that the re-accreditation process contributed somewhat highly or highly to an increase in institutional capacity, 45% (10) indicated that the re-accreditation process was neutral and 27% (6) that its contribution to increasing institutional capacity was somewhat low or low. See figure 6 below for a full breakdown.

**FIGURE 6.**

Extent to which re-accreditation process contributed to an increase in institutional capacity
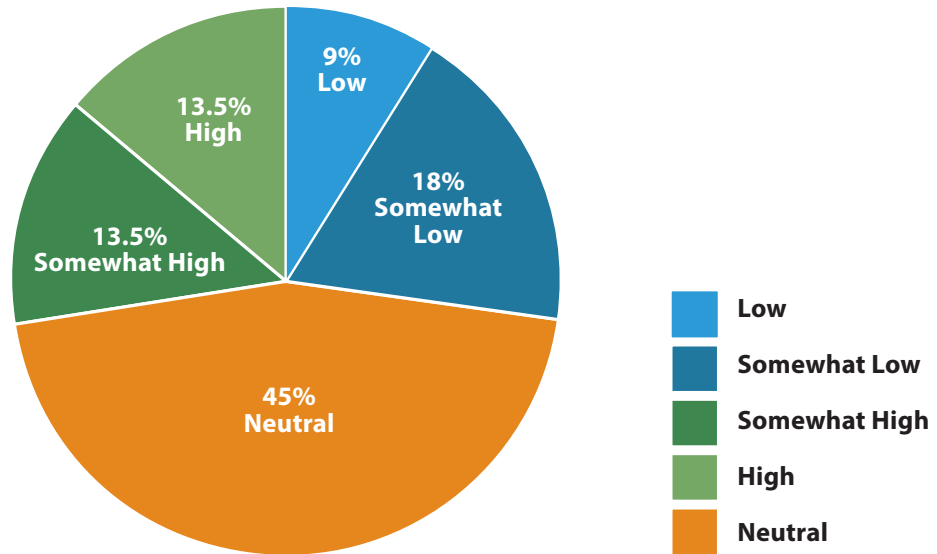


In terms of benefiting from the re-accreditation process, 68% (15) of IE respondents perceived some benefit or high benefit from the process, 18% (4) were neutral, and 14% (3) perceived little to no benefit. See figure 7 below for a full breakdown.

**FIGURE 7.**

Extent to which IE benefited from re-accreditation process
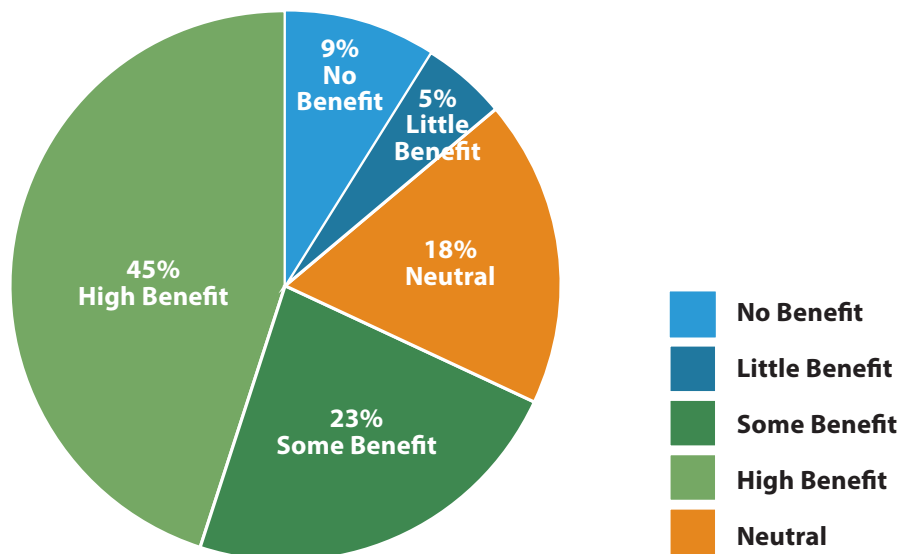
During initial accreditation, 55% (12) of the IEs surveyed were not required to have an Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML-CFT) framework in place and 36% (8) were not required to have a mechanism to deal with complaints on Gender harms caused by projects and programmes. Table 3 below provides more detail on which competencies were not required during the IEs initial accreditation process.

To develop the new competencies required (if needed), the majority of the IE respondents (73%) indicated that they utilized their organizations own internal resources. Six respondents (27%) indicated that they utilized other donor funds and two utilized an AF technical grant. One IE that utilized a technical grant to develop an AML-CFT framework commented "The AF technical support was excellent in working with us to understand what was required and how to approach this."

**TABLE 3.**

**Competencies not required during IEs initial accreditation process**

| Competencies | # IEs |
|---|---|
| Capacity and commitment to assess and manage Environmental and Social (E&S) risks | 5 |
| Mechanism to deal with complaints on E&S harms caused by projects and programmes | 5 |
| Mechanism to deal with complaints on Gender harms caused by projects and programmes | 8 |
| Framework to handle AML-CFT | 12 |

To the question of whether any competencies were strengthened through the implementation of an AF project, nine IEs either didn't respond or indicated that the IE had yet to implement an AF project, so the question was not applicable. Others responded affirmatively with several indicating that monitoring of E&S and gender indicators during project implementation helped to improve the overall monitoring and evaluation function of the organization. Other areas included project design, risk mitigation, coordinating executing entities, procurement, financial management, and adaptative management. A few specific statements included the following:

*"The implementation of an AF project has strongly strengthened [our] internal capacities, project management, due diligence approaches, reporting templates and methods, field control and audit procedures, Supervision and follow up tasks, financial and procurement. [AF project implementation] has also brought additional experience [to the organization] in project formulation."*
*-Regional Implementing Entity*

*"Definitely, the overall management capacities of [our organization] could be reinforced through the challenging implementation of AF-funded projects in different regional and national settings. This is a reality that remains highly relevant and true for impending new projects benefiting from AF funding."*
*-Multilateral Implementing Entity*

*"Policies, procedures, and practices were more comprehensively applied throughout implementation…. This has allowed for continuous strengthening of organizational competencies."*
*-National Implementing Entity*

The survey also asked if there were any specific policies that an IE put in place for its initial accreditation to the AF. Most of the MIEs stated that there weren't, with one mentioning putting in place a gender policy and a second stating that various UN-wide policies were explicitly adopted by their MIE to ensure compliance. For the NIE and RIE respondents, close to all introduced, strengthened, or adopted specific policies. These included:

- Environmental and Social Safeguards
- Gender Mainstreaming
- Code of Conduct and Complaints Mechanism
- Operational Manual/ Accounting and Operations Procedures
- Technical Manual for implementing projects
- Internal Audit Framework
- AMT-CFT
- Monitoring and Evaluation

Overall, the survey provided an indication that while the re-accreditation process is not an easy one, it is not so difficult as to be prohibitive. The majority of the IE respondents also provided an indication that the re-accreditation process was a beneficial one to their organization and several indicated that the process contributed to building their institutional capacity. This was true more so for NIEs and RIEs than it was for MIEs as the MIEs were less likely to indicate they benefited from the process (only 3 out of 10 versus all 12 NIEs and RIEs indicated some benefit from the process). The specific challenges faced by IEs as well as lessons from the re-accreditation process are detailed in the section on key lessons learned.

# Case studies from IEs

As detailed in the methodology section above, semi-structured interviews were undertaken with three IEs so as to further examine the following:

(i)  new policies that were developed by the IE to meet the AF's initial accreditation requirements;
(ii) capacity or institutional enhancements made to support the re-accreditation process;
(iii) details surrounding any challenges re-accreditation posed;
(iv) approaches the IE took for re-accreditation that helped to make the process easier;
(v) ways competencies have been strengthened through the implementation of an AF project.

The interviews included: the fast-track re-accreditation of an NIE, the regular re-accreditation of an MIE, and the fast-track re-accreditation of an RIE.  From the three interviews a few conclusions can be drawn:

- Having a project under implementation is useful for the re-accreditation process as it allows for an IE to provide specific examples of compliance with the re-accreditation standards. It was also helpful as the AF implementation is aligned directly with the specific AF standards.
- The ability for entities to communicate directly with the AF secretariat as well as the AP experts allows the re-accreditation process to run more smoothly. All three entities encourage others to engage with the AP and AF secretariat early on in the process.
- Being familiar with the AF accreditation/re-accreditation criteria (including changes since initial accreditation) and understanding the documentation requirements of the evidence-based review by the AP can speed up the process.
- Putting in place procedures for documenting processes and demonstrating that internal processes not only exist but also function properly goes a long way toward facilitating the overall re-accreditation process.

A summary of each case is provided in boxes 1-3 below.

**BOX 1.**

## National Implementing Entity (NIE) – document evidence of working policies and processes

**Process time:** Over 18-months

**Type:** Fast-Track

**Process:** The overall process took a long time. This was in part because the NIE started its process in August of 2016 and then switched its application to the fast-track process when the Board made its decision in October of 2016. The NIE's own internal processes contributed to the delays in the initial fast-track submission for one full year till September 2017 and after three sets of review questions from the AP and responses to them, the NIE was re-accredited in April 2019.

**Insight:** (i) Having an AF project under implementation was helpful in demonstrating compliance with the AF's requirements; (ii) Going through the GCF accreditation process in-between the NIE's original AF accreditation and the re-accreditation, made the process easier as new required elements had been put in place for the GCF (such as the AML-CFT); and (iii) Building confidence in the organization's systems has been evident through the completion of both the AF and GCF's accreditation processes as well as the AF's re-accreditation process.

**Challenges:** The NIE did not anticipate the level of effort and documentation required for re-accreditation, as initially, it was thought of more as a pro-forma process. For future re-accreditation processes, the NIE is in a better position to provide the required documentation. In terms of the requirements themselves, one sticking point was an insistence by the AP to have the AF E&S safeguard commitment on the landing page of the NIE's website. Given that the NIE works with multiple donors, this was not possible. After several rounds of back and forth on this issue, the NIE and AP agreed to a mutually beneficial resolution. The NIE now has on its webpage a dedicated space where E&S grievances can be logged.

**Advice:** The AF secretariat and the AP can be approached early on the process. Make use of this availability to clarify any questions about particular requirements. The AF is also open to listening to what makes sense for an organization so, while initially the AP may insist that a requirement needs to be filled in a certain way, if the organization is able to demonstrate how their organization's own systems will meet the AF's criteria, then a mutual understanding can be reached. Finally, prior to entering the re-accreditation process, it is critical to **document compliance** with policies, strategies, and guidance that have been put in place. Putting in place procedures for **documenting processes** will go a long way toward facilitating the overall re-accreditation process.

**Final Thoughts:** The AF is an excellent donor and one that the NIE values greatly. In particular, for national implementing entities, it provides space and opportunities for exchanging ideas with other NIEs all over the globe. This type of community and knowledge exchange is of critical value and has allowed the NIE to build confidence and better engage with other funds such as the GCF.

**BOX 2.**

## Multinational Implementing Entity (MIE) – clarify requirements

**Process time:** Between 9-18 months

**Type:** Regular

**Insight & Advice:** Utilizing the MIE's AF project portfolio to provide specific examples of compliance with the re-accreditation standards was quite helpful as the AF implementation is aligned directly with the specific AF standards. This also seemed to be appreciated by the AP. It is also important to provide detailed information on each question and provide a comprehensive, transparent, and complete response. To the extent possible, it is also important to provide clear examples for the AP and to present the information in an organized, easy to follow format. Finally, be prepared for follow-up questions and discussions with the AP about specific requirements.

**Challenges:** The MIE was expecting a seamless transition, thinking the re-accreditation was more of a formality, particularly given that the MIE was implementing a portfolio of AF projects. In hindsight, the MIE had not anticipated the workload early on, which would have sped up the overall process. The other challenge was in interpreting some of the re-accreditation questions, for example, the way some of the requirements are written, it appeared as if an IE must apply AF standards across its entire portfolio and not target them to the AF portfolio (for example the AF's E&S safeguards). Since the MIE not only deals with multiple donors but is also bound to the UN's own rules (such as the UN's single audit rules), this created some challenges in clearing certain requirements.

**Final thoughts:** Overall, the re-accreditation was straightforward and clear, and the MIE was generally pleased with the process. Engaging early on with the AF secretariat and the AP to clarify any questions will mitigate any confusion and speed up the overall process.

**BOX 3.**

## Regional Implementing Entity (RIE)

**Process time:** less than 9 months

**Type:** Fast-Track

**Process:** The RIE went through a fairly straightforward process as they had just completed their GCF accreditation application and much of the information needed for the AF's re-accreditation had been gathered.

**Insight:** It is important for organizations to think clearly about why they wish to be accredited and be sure the organization not only has appropriate technical expertise but also has the resources for the initial accreditation process as well as for the longer-term. The **process does not stop once you are accredited;** there is a need for continued investment in developing and improving internal processes.

**Challenges:** One of the biggest challenges for the organization was not the re-accreditation process itself but was making sure new policies and procedures that had been approved by the organization were actually being implemented properly. This included having to raise awareness of internal staff as to what it means to **demonstrate that internal processes not only exist but also function properly.**

Another challenge was understanding how best to approach some of the requirements themselves, in particular the AML-CFT policy. The AF secretariat support was excellent in working with the organization to understand what was required. Support was also provided by the AP expert who suggested ways to streamline the process and provided advice as to how best to approach instituting a policy that met the needs of the organization.

A third challenge relates to implementing the AF's E&S Policy. The AF requires reporting against AF Principles versus reporting on mitigation of the project activities based on the Principles. The IE is not however implementing any E&S Principles but instead works to mitigate the risk of triggering any principles/safeguards. As such, it becomes difficult to 'meet the AF policy' as the reporting requirements do not match the actual work being done.

**Advice:** The creation of a project coordination unit, helped the organization have a central focal point to raise the awareness of internal units about the re-accreditation requirements. This facilitated securing necessary documentation, including evidence of implementation of policies and procedures across a range of projects.

**Final Thoughts:** The re-accreditation process forces the IE to demonstrate a track record for effective and efficient implementation. The AF's re-accreditation process enabled the organization to update and target policies to be implemented not merely having a policy on paper. **If you have a proper, functioning policy, it doesn't matter who the donor is, the organization can demonstrate the capacity to effectively implement projects and programmes.**

One final lesson learned for all Funds undertaking an accreditation process: **the Fund should be testing whether the systems of an organization meet the criteria of the Fund and not whether the Fund's own policies are incorporated into the organization's system.**

# Key lessons learned

The following section outlines some of the challenges faced by IEs during the re-accreditation process, provides insight and advice from IEs on approaches they took for re-accreditation, and concludes with suggestions for how to improve the re-accreditation process.

## Challenges

Through both the interviews conducted and the survey results, there were several challenges highlighted by multiple IEs. These included the following:

**Examples of Fraud or Complaints:** Several NIEs mentioned that it was a challenge to provide cases of fraud or evidence of cases submitted for newly formed Grievance Mechanisms. While detection mechanisms may have been put in place, several IEs noted that no cases had been reported since the implementation of these mechanisms. This caused a back and forth with the AP and was difficult to resolve.

**Capacity Constraints:** Particularly for NIEs, the amount of work required to pull together the re-accreditation application is significant and does require at least one dedicated staff member to gather all the necessary information from various units across the organization. For smaller entities, this can be a challenge as many staff have full work plans and the organization may not have the resources to hire external support. This became a more acute challenge for those NIEs working on their re-accreditation during the COVID-19 pandemic, where staffing was further reduced.

**MIEs Own Systems and Standards:** Most of the MIEs accredited to the AF are also accredited to several vertical funds. Both the development banks and the UN agencies have their own rules and regulations to implement these projects on the basis of their own policy framework, which are continuously being refined to align with the policy requirements of partners, donors, and international standards. Several MIEs noted challenges during the re-accreditation process due to the legal agreements of the AF which do not provide the level of flexibility needed to accommodate MIE policy frameworks and internal requirements. This seems to have been an issue in particular for the E&S safeguards as well as the audit function (where UN agencies are bound by the UN single audit principle). In particular, for the E&S safeguards, a "top-level management statement of entity's commitment to abide by the Adaptation Fund's environmental and social and gender policy" could not be issued to by one UN agency and some development banks due to their own internal board approved policies.[9]

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9. The Adaptation Fund Board had considered a matter of the 'Application of the Adaptation Fund's Environmental and Social Policy by Implementing Entities' at its second session of the 35th meeting (October 2020), intersessionally (B.35-36), and its 36th meeting (March 2021). Taking note of its multi-dimensional implications of the matter, the Board considered challenges expressed by some IEs and the matter's implications which are not only related to accreditation/re-accreditation process itself but also related to the project implementation and responsibility of ensuring that the AF's resources will not be spent in a way that might bring about adverse environmental and social, and gender harms throughout the project cycle. The Board also considered an independent study commissioned by the secretariat to provide the Board with a comprehensive analysis on this matter. At its 36th meeting, the Board decided to maintain the status quo of the requirement of "top-level management statement communicating the entity's commitment to abide by the Adaptation Fund's environmental and social policy and gender policy" (TLMS) for accreditation and reaccreditation (Decision B.36/43).

**Environmental and Social Safeguard Procedures:** In addition to the MIE challenges of committing to the AF's E&S safeguard policy over their own organizations' policies, seven IEs (both RIE and NIE) found that the most challenging part of the re-accreditation was the demonstration of compliance with the AF's E&S policy. While the requirement for re-accreditation is that the IE commit to comply with the AF's E&S policy for AF-supported projects, the perception from the way the re-accreditation question on E&S is asked is that, the AF is seeking the organization to comply with the AF E&S and gender standards for its entire portfolio and not just for an IEs AF portfolio.

**Organization-Wide Coordination:** Coordination of responses with other units across an organization is necessary for undertaking a successful re-accreditation process. This type of organization-wide coordination did however cause delays for several IEs as other units may not have prioritized providing the required information or did not provide the correct information in a timely manner.

**Language Barriers:** For non-English speaking IEs, one of the major challenges was the language barrier. Updated or new policies and strategies are often written and designed in the IEs native language and the NIE may not have the resources to provide translations.  One NIE suggested that the "AF should allow applications for re-accreditation to be submitted in three languages (English, French, and Spanish), especially for those national entities that do not have ample financial resources to support the costs of translations." An alternative would be to provide financial support for translations to English.

**Confidential Documents:** Some of the information requested from the AF was confidential or marked internally and not for publication which made it difficult for some IEs to get clearance to provide such information.  One entity suggested that the "AF …look to signing some form of Non-disclosure agreement (NDA) with legal teams of the IEs to enable much smoother provision of information and prevent lengthy internal discussions."

**Understanding Requirements:** Understating how best to approach the requirements could be a challenge. Several IEs mentioned that there was internal discussion about certain requirements in the re-accreditation application about what the AF was actually asking for. These issues were later resolved through discussion with the AP or the AF secretariat itself but understanding the requirements up front could have saved time.

**Examine Intent of Standard:** Funds, whether the AF or others, should examine whether the systems of an organization meet the criteria of the Fund versus trying to determine whether a Fund's own policies are incorporated into the organization's system. This type of analysis will be better capture how well an organization carries out the intent of a standard, instead of trying to have all agencies conform to a particular standard.

# Approaches and advice on the re-accreditation process

Implementing entities shared several approaches to re-accreditation that helped to make the process easier as well as provided advice to other IEs about the process. These included several overlapping suggestions from IEs, which are summarized below.

**Communication and engagement with AF staff:** Several IEs mentioned that proactively communicating with the AF secretariat staff was quite helpful. Specifically, to clarify any requirements not fully understood, to address any challenges the IE faces in responding to a particular item, and to resolve any outstanding issues as soon as possible. One MIE mentioned that discussions with the AF secretariat staff were "…really helpful and straightforward. All of the meetings were really productive."

**Strengthen entity's knowledge management systems:** Several NIEs mentioned the need to ensure that evidence is easier to access during the re-accreditation process either through investing in a better Knowledge Management (KM) system, prioritizing evidence building by integrating it into an IEs annual operation plan, or developing a specific work plan and assigning the necessary resources needed to carry out the plan. The re-accreditation process is one that requires a lot of information gathered in-house from technical units and needs a lot of consolidation of information. By nature, the process is a slow, lengthy and manual one. Use of cloud systems such as Google Drive, Dropbox, Microsoft OneDrive, etc. may help streamline the process as well.

**Collaboration across organization units:** Many IEs emphasized the need to engage in an organization-wide effort to effectively complete the re-accreditation process. One NIE suggested assigning a team with representatives from each division responsible for the areas covered by the AF's re-accreditation process (i.e., technical staff, Environmental and Social Safeguard officer, accounting officer, operations officer, M&E officer, etc.). By doing this, the IE can share responsibilities among team members rather than assigning just one person to carry the load. Similar to the NIE's suggestion, one MIE suggested that prior to submitting a re-accreditation application, in-depth consultation with colleagues from other technical or administrative departments, including Finance and Legal should be undertaken. Another MIE stated that by coordinating with the right units within the organization, those responsible for re-accreditation would be better able to get up to date information on policies and reports.

**Working with AP Experts:** A few IEs mentioned that the AP expert assigned to their re-accreditation application was quite helpful to speak with to better understand specific requirements or to engage with to discuss outstanding items. One IE mentioned that the one-on-one sessions with the AP expert helped to speed up the re-accreditation process and better understand what the AP was looking for in relation to particular items.

**BOX 4.**

## Suggested Steps for Re-Accreditation Process

One NIE highlighted the following steps to take to ensure a smoother re-accreditation process:

1. Conduct refresher sessions to ensure a clear understanding of the re-accreditation application form
2. Prepare a clear roadmap of who is responsible for collecting the required documents
3. Designate a focal point to monitor the process and ensure that deadlines are met
4. Establish a task force to review the quality of the submission package and ensure completeness
5. Do not hesitate to contact the secretariat if any difficulties of understanding arise
6. Designate at least two people to load the documents and submit them.

**Start and plan for the process as early as possible.** Begin with internal discussions for how to approach the re-accreditation and how to organize the documentation needed. If there is any confusion about the requirements, liaise with AF secretariat to clarify any questions as early as possible. Allow for a full year to complete the process and provide sufficient time prior to the end of the first accreditation to guarantee its continuity.

**Secure organization's political support.** One IE mentioned that the first step of the process should be to inform the President/CEO of the organization to ensure support from the top. The person in charge inside the organization should inform all personnel of the re-accreditation process and that support from all departments/units should be given to provide the information required to be presented to the AF.

# Suggestions for improvement of re-accreditation process

Through the survey and interviews with both the IEs and the AF's Accreditation Panel (AP), several suggestions for how to improve the re-accreditation process were discussed. These included the following:

**Electronic portal could be more user friendly** by providing clickable options to each requirement. In that way, applicants can self-assess compliance with requirements thereby speeding up the review process. In addition, the areas for assessment could be made clearly to applicants, for example, the portal could be configured so that once a unique identifier is entered  (i.e., fast track versus regular) only those areas needed are available for completion.

Use a **principle-based approach** to assess the implementing entity's existing policies and procedures. One MIE suggested the utilization of the "Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network assessments as a tool for accreditation."

Institute **suggested response times** for when the AP and AF secretariat will provide review questions and provide suggested timeframes for IEs to provide their re-submission.

A **confidentiality agreement** or NDA between AF and an IE to allow provision of internal/confidential documents would streamline internal clearance processes for IEs making the process smoother from the IE's side

Several IEs indicated that they had no areas for improvement to add as overall, the current re-accreditation process is relatively straightforward, clear, inclusive, and provides relevant guidance on the key steps to be undertaken.

# Conclusion

As the first climate fund to accredit national implementing entities, and in turn, the first fund to undertake a re-accreditation process, the Adaptation Fund has accumulated a significant body of knowledge on its own processes that not only benefits the AF and its IEs but can be examined by other funds undertaking a similar process such as the Green Climate Fund and the Global Environment Facility.

From this brief report that examined the experience of 22 IEs, the overall response from IEs is that the AF's re-accreditation process was straightforward. The majority of the IEs were generally pleased with the support and guidance provided and agreed that the process was beneficial.

Key overall findings from this analysis of the re-accreditation processes included the following:

1. The re-accreditation process provides an opportunity for **IEs to engage in a continuous improvement model**. The process enables IEs, particularly national and regional entities, to ensure their organization is (i) documenting all of its management and operating procedures; (ii) conforming to internationally recognized standards; (iii) operating effectively; and (iv) establishing permanent capacity building of national staff.
2. Through the implementation of AF projects, organizations are able to **strengthen internal capacities,** including for project management, due diligence approaches, reporting templates and methods, field control and audit procedures. Implementing an AF project, in particular for NIEs and RIEs, provides an opportunity to test new policies and procedures and to ensure systems are functioning properly.
3. As an IE moves from the accreditation stage to project implementation and eventually to the re-accreditation stage, it is **critical to document compliance** with policies, strategies, and guidance that have been put in place. Putting in place procedures for documenting processes and demonstrating that internal process not only exist but also function properly goes a long way toward facilitating the overall re-accreditation process.
4. Both the accreditation and re-accreditation process allowed several NIEs and RIEs to **introduce, strengthen, or adopt specific policies** to not only comply with the AF's standards but to meet international good practice standards.
5. The AF's re-accreditation **written guidance and directions provided were clear and easy to follow.** This stems both from written guidance as well as from direct communication between the IEs and the AF secretariat and the Accreditation Panel (AP) experts. Direct communication with the AF was highlighted several times as contributing to the straightforward overall re-accreditation process

The main areas for improvement that the IEs who were surveyed and interviewed highlighted were as follows: (i) **upgrading the AF's online portal** to automate the difference in requirements for the regular versus

fast-track re-accreditation process; (ii) exploring the possibility of **adding flexibility to the requirements to accommodate other international processes** that IEs must also comply with[10]; and (iii) examining the feasibility of the AP members and/or AF secretariat **signing a non-disclosure or confidentiality agreement** to speed up the IEs ability to provide confidential information.

For IEs that have yet to go through the re-accreditation process, the IEs surveyed and interviewed provided several key areas of advice, including:

**Ensure enough time** to complete the re-accreditation application and allow for back and forth between the IE and AP. Start at least one year in advance of the IE's accreditation expiration to ensure no lapse in accreditation status. Interactions with the AF can be undertaken prior to re-accreditation, for example for NIEs through accessing Readiness Programme small grants.

**Document compliance and processes** to provide evidence that the policies and procedures are not simply documents but are being implemented properly. Implementing an AF project can support the ability of an IE to document policies. Communicate the need for evidence of implementation to the appropriate department/units. Collect, organize, and store this evidence so that when the re-accreditation process rolls around, the IE is able to easily provide supporting documentation.

**Communicate with the AF secretariat and AP** to clarify any confusion early on about what the re-accreditation standards entail and to address any challenges the IEs are facing. From the experience of the IEs that have gone through the re-accreditation process, the AF team is highly responsive and helpful. IEs should therefore not spend too much time debating internally instead, bring up any issues or confusion to the AF to avoid delays in the process.

**Designate a focal point** to lead the process and follow-up with other units/divisions to collect required documentation. The focal point should have the backing of senior management to ensure responsiveness from other members.

**Organize internal systems** to readily access needed documentation and update the status of different polices, strategies, and guidance on a periodic basis (i.e. quarterly, semi-annually, annually). This should be done well before the re-accreditation starts and will allow for institutional memory to be codified and will avoid a situation where every five years an IE is starting from scratch.

The AF is committed to a process of continued learning and improvement. The findings and conclusions from this report will be taken into consideration as the AF continues to pioneer direct access throughout its operations.

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10. See supra note 7 and accompanying text. The Board decided to maintain the status quo of the requirement of "top-level management statement communicating the entity's commitment to abide by the Adaptation Fund's environmental and social policy and gender policy" (TLMS) for accreditation and reaccreditation (Decision B.36/43). However, it is also not impossible for the Board to revisit the matter in the future.

# Survey for AF re-accredited implementing entities

**Background:**

The following survey is being given to all implementing entities (IEs) that have gone through the Adaptation Fund's re-accreditation process. The results of the survey will be used to support the development of a brief report documenting lessons learned from the continuing process of strengthening the capacity of IEs through re-accreditation. The report is aimed at increasing understanding among IEs whose accreditation may expire soon of areas that worked well and areas that were challenging during the re-accreditation process. The report will also explore ways IEs have maintained competencies gained during their initial accreditation and how new ones were developed during implementation.

| Implementing Entity: | {NAME} | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| IE Category/Classification: | ❏ NIE | ❏ MIE | ❏ RIE | |
| Re-accreditation Type | ❏ Regular | ❏ Fast-Track | | |
| 1. Estimate of total cost needed to complete re-accreditation process (estimate in USD)[11] | Enter USD estimate here | | | |
| 2. How long did it take your entity to prepare a re-accreditation application? | ❏ Less than 9 months | ❏ Between 9-18 months | ❏ Over 18 months | |
| 3. How would you rate the overall difficulty of the re-accreditation process? | ❏ 1 Easy | ❏ 2 Somewhat Easy | ❏ 3 Neutral | ❏ 4 Somewhat Difficult | ❏ 5 Difficult |
| 4. How would you rate the level of effort required to undertake the re-accreditation process? | ❏ 1 Low | ❏ 2 Somewhat Low | ❏ 3 Neutral | ❏ 4 Somewhat High | ❏ 5 High |
| 5. To what extent do you agree with this statement: *The re-accreditation guidance and directions provided were clear and easy to follow* | ❏ 1 Strongly Agree | ❏ 2 Agree | ❏ 3 Neutral | ❏ 4 Disagree | ❏ 5 Strongly Disagree |

*(continued)*

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11. An estimate of the cost for staff time required and/or cost of contracted personnel.

| | |
|---|---|
| **6. Which (if any) of the following competencies did your entity acquire or improve during initial accreditation process? (check all that apply)** | ❏ **Internal Control Framework**<br>❏ **Business and budgetary planning**<br>❏ **Procurement system**<br>❏ **Project preparation and appraisal**<br>❏ **Quality-at-Entry Review**<br>❏ **M&E framework/procedures**<br>❏ **Policies and framework to handle financial mismanagement/malpractice**<br>❏ **E&S mechanism/framework**<br>❏ **Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-financing of Terrorism (AML-CFT)**<br>❏ **Others (please list)** |
| **7. Were any competencies strengthened through the implementation of an AF project? If yes, please describe** | |
| **8. [For Entities that have implemented an AF project] Please briefly describe how AF project implementation contributed to strengthening any competencies.** | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **9. To what extent did the re-accreditation process contribute to an increase in institutional capacity?** | ❏ **1**<br>**Low** | ❏ **2**<br>**Somewhat Low** | ❏ **3**<br>**Neutral** | ❏ **4**<br>**Somewhat High** | ❏ **5**<br>**High** |
| **10. To what extent did your entity benefit from the re-accreditation process?** | ❏ **1**<br>**No Benefit** | ❏ **2**<br>**Little Benefit** | ❏ **3**<br>**Neutral** | ❏ **4**<br>**Some Benefit** | ❏ **5**<br>**High Benefit** |

| | |
|---|---|
| **11. Which of the following were competencies not required during your entity's initial accreditation process? (check all that apply)** | ❏ **Capacity and commitment to assess and manage Environmental and Social (E&S) risks**<br>❏ **Mechanism to deal with complaints on E&S harms caused by projects and programmes.**<br>❏ **Mechanism to deal with complaints on Gender harms caused by projects and programmes.**<br>❏ **Framework to handle AML-CFT** |
| **12. How did your entity develop the new competencies required by the AF prior to the re-accreditation process? (check all that apply)** | ❏ **Through support of an AF technical grant**<br>❏ **Through support of other donor funds (please list)**<br>❏ **Internally utilizing the IEs own resources**<br>❏ **Other (please list below)** |
| **13. How did your entity maintain competencies acquired from accreditation? (check all that apply)** | ❏ **Through implementing an AF project**<br>❏ **Through implementing other projects (please list)**<br>❏ **Internally utilizing the IEs own resources**<br>❏ **Through support of donor funds (please list below)**<br>❏ **Other (please list below)** |

(continued)

| | |
|---|---|
| **14. Please list any new policies developed by your entity to meet the AF's initial accreditation requirements?** | |
| **15. Please provide a brief description of any challenges re-accreditation posed for your entity.** | |
| **16. Please provide a brief description of any approaches your IE took for re-accreditation that helped to make the process easier.** | |
| **17. Do you have any suggestions for how the re-accreditation process could be improved?** | |
| **18. Is there any advice you would give to an IE about the re-accreditation process?** | |

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