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Agenda Item: 5 b)

**GUIDANCE IN SUPPORT OF THE
OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE EVALUATION POLICY**

ANNEX 2: DRAFT GUIDANCE NOTE, EVALUATION CRITERIA

**TECHNICAL EVALUATION REFERENCE GROUP
OF THE ADAPTATION FUND (AF-TERG)**

Comparisons for EPGD topic: Evaluation Criteria	
Current practice at the Fund	<p>The 2011 Adaptation Fund Evaluation Framework identifies five evaluation criteria (p. 14-15):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Relevance 2) Effectiveness 3) Efficiency 4) Impact 5) Sustainability
Current peer practice (e.g., GCF, GEF, CIF, UNEG or major IEs)	<p>GCF: The 2021 GCF Evaluation Policy identifies seven evaluation criteria, some of which have multiple dimensions (e.g., criteria 1):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of projects and programmes 2) (ii) Coherence in climate finance delivery with other multilateral entities 3) (iii) Gender equity 4) (iv) Country ownership of projects and programmes 5) (v) Innovativeness in result areas – the extent to which interventions may lead to paradigm shift towards low-emission and climate-resilient development pathways 6) (vi) Replication and scalability – the extent to which the activities can be scaled up in other locations within the country or replicated in other countries (this criterion, which is considered in document GCF/B.05/03 in the context of measuring performance, could also be incorporated into independent evaluations) 7) (vii) Unexpected results, both positive and negative <p>GEF: The 2019 GEF Evaluation Policy identifies four evaluation criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Relevance 2) Effectiveness 3) Efficiency 4) Sustainability <p>World Bank Group: The 2019 WBG Evaluation Principles promotes the thoughtful use of evaluation criteria that are appropriate to the object of evaluation, noting that the specific criteria used in an evaluation depend on the evaluation objectives, among other things, and are not limited to the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria of Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, and Sustainability, although one or more of these criteria may apply.</p> <p>CIF's Transformational Change Learning Partnership (TCLP) identifies five "signals" for transformational change in climate action which equate with evaluation criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Relevance 2) Systemic change 3) Speed 4) Scale 5) Adaptive sustainability <p>UNEG: The 2016 UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation refers, as an example of appropriate criteria, to OECD/DAC evaluation criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Relevance 2) Effectiveness 3) Efficiency 4) Sustainability
Proposed Change	<p>The new Fund Evaluation Policy identifies nine evaluation criteria. Four of the criteria follow closely the criteria in the Fund Framework (2011), one of the criterion (*) is substantively</p>

revised (Sustainability), and four new criteria (bold) have been added to reflect the nature of climate change adaptation interventions.

- 1) Relevance
- 2) **Coherence**
- 3) Effectiveness
- 4) Efficiency
- 5) Impact
- 6) **Equity**
- 7) **Adaptive management**
- 8) **Scalability**
- 9) Human and ecological sustainability and security

This guidance note is part of a series of technical guidance from the Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Adaptation Fund (AF-TERG) supporting reliable, useful, and ethical evaluations aligned with the Adaptation Fund's [Evaluation Policy](#). AF-TERG guidance documents are intended to be succinct, but with sufficient information to practically guide users, pointing to additional resources when appropriate. Additional AF-TERG evaluation resources on various topics can be accessed at the online [AF-TERG Evaluation Resource Webpage](#). Feedback is welcome and can be sent to AF-TERG-SEC@adaptation-fund.org.

The Adaptation Fund was established through decisions by the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol to finance concrete adaptation projects and programmes in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. At the Katowice Climate Conference in December 2018, the Parties to the Paris Agreement decided that the Adaptation Fund shall also serve the Paris Agreement. The Fund supports country-driven projects and programmes, innovation, and global learning for effective adaptation. All of the Fund's activities are designed to build national and local adaptive capacities while reaching and engaging the most vulnerable groups, and to integrate gender consideration to provide equal opportunity to access and benefit from the Fund's resources. They are also aimed at enhancing synergies with other sources of climate finance, while creating models that can be replicated or scaled up. www.adaptation-fund.org

The Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Adaptation Fund (AF-TERG) is an independent evaluation advisory group accountable to the Fund Board. It was established in 2018 to ensure the independent implementation of the Fund's evaluation framework, which will be succeeded by the new evaluation policy from October 2023 onwards. The AF-TERG, which is headed by a chair, provides an evaluative advisory role through performing evaluative, advisory and oversight functions. The group is comprised of independent experts in evaluation, called the AF-TERG members. A small secretariat provides support for the implementation of evaluative and advisory activities as part of the work programme.

While independent of the operations of the Adaptation Fund, the aim of the AF-TERG is to add value to the Fund's work through independent monitoring, evaluation, and learning, www.adaptation-fund.org/about/evaluation/

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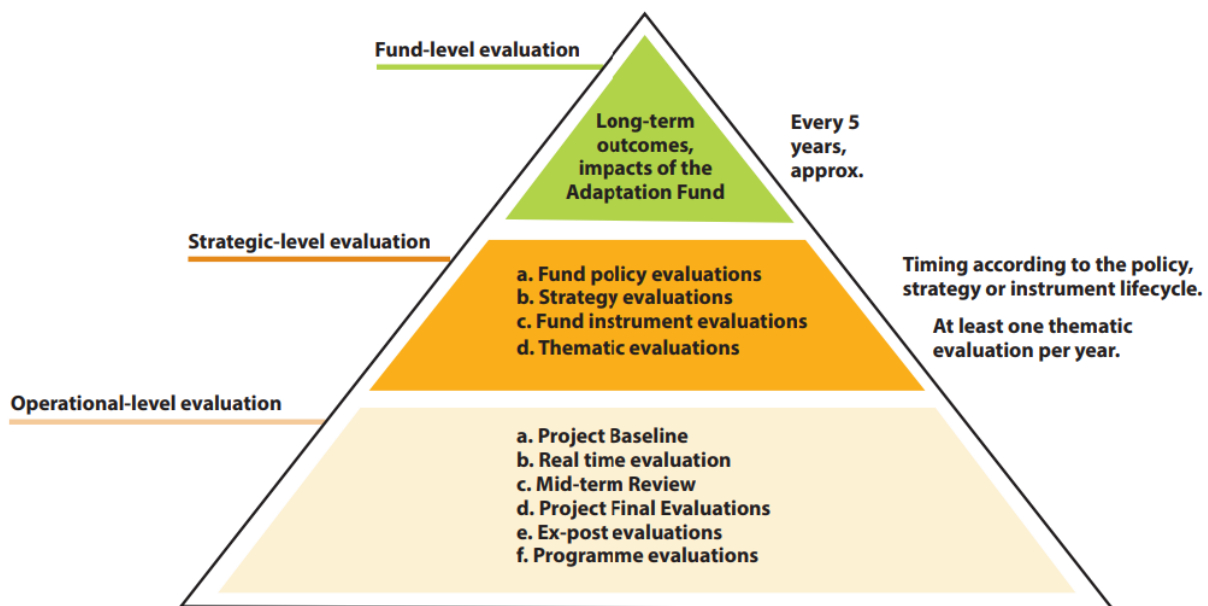
Acronyms

AF-TERG	Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Adaptation Fund
Fund	Adaptation Fund
ToR	Terms of Reference
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal

1. What is this guidance note?

This guidance note elaborates the nine evaluation criteria introduced in the Adaptation Fund's [Evaluation Policy](#). The guidance note will be most helpful to those who are preparing, commissioning, managing, or conducting a Fund evaluative activity (**Figure 1**) contracted by a Fund Implementing Entity (IE) or the Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Adaptation Fund (AF-TERG). The guidance note first examines what are and when to use the Fund's evaluation criteria, and then examines each criterion individually with guidance for its operationalization. It is important to acknowledge that the guidance is not exhaustive, and additional resources are provided at the end of this section.

Figure 1: Fund-evaluation levels and indicative types



2. What are the evaluation criteria at the Fund?

Evaluation criteria refer to results and lessons most valued by the Fund, providing the basis for what should be assessed. They are used to guide the development of evaluation questions, steer data collection and analysis, and present conclusions and recommendations. Evaluation criteria are not a methodology, but they inform the methodology used in evaluations, representing different perspectives from which to examine and assess the subject of evaluation.

Box 1: What is the difference between the Fund’s Evaluation Criteria and Evaluation Principles?

The **evaluation principles** are used to guide and ensure quality oversight of how the evaluation is planned and conducted, whereas the **evaluation criteria** and related evaluation questions focus the evaluation on what it will examine and assess. For example, while “relevance” appears as both an evaluation criteria and principle, it is used to mean different things based on whether it is applied to inform the evaluation process as a principle or the assessment of the subject of evaluation as a criteria. As a principle, relevance means the relevance of the evaluation and as criteria is the relevance of the operation or activity under evaluation.

The Fund’s [Evaluation Policy](#) (Section 4, p. 11) identifies nine evaluation criteria, summarized in Box 2 and detailed in Section 4. The first five criteria correspond with the OECD’s Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria. The Fund employs four additional criteria to capture transformative and systems change associated with climate change adaptation work. Collectively, the criteria refer to results and lessons that the Fund values and consequently guide the development of evaluative activities, questions, and analysis.

Box 2: Summary of Evaluation Criteria

1. **Relevance:** Is the intervention doing the right thing?
2. **Coherence:** How well does the intervention fit?
3. **Effectiveness:** Is the intervention achieving its objectives?
4. **Efficiency:** How well are resources being used?
5. **Impact:** What difference does the intervention make?
6. **Equity:** Are the benefits of the intervention shared fairly between groups and geographies?
7. **Adaptive management:** Does the intervention make evidence-based decisions?
8. **Scalability:** Can the intervention be replicated at a greater scale?
9. **Human and ecological sustainability and security:** Does the intervention generate continued positive or negative, intended and unintended impacts beyond its lifetime, taking into consideration, social, institutional, economic, and environmental systems?

The Fund’s evaluation criteria are interrelated. For instance, how well resources are used (efficiency) can affect how well the intervention is performing (effectiveness), which, in turn, affects what difference it is making (impact) and its potential to scale up and out impact. Collectively, the evaluation criteria provide a holistic framework from which to select from according to the evaluation’s needs, which is discussed in the following section.

3. When to apply the evaluation criteria?

All nine evaluation criteria do not necessarily need to be categorically applied in every Fund evaluation. Instead, the selection of the evaluation criteria should be based on the given evaluation’s purpose and intended use. This flexibility reflects and upholds the Fund’s evaluation principle for evaluations to be complexity sensitive and adaptive.

The selection of evaluation criteria should also be informed by the evaluation context (evaluand) and stakeholders. Key contextual considerations include data availability and the resources and capacities available to provide the analytical effort required to reliably assess each criterion. This requires detailed knowledge of the evaluand and underlines the importance of involving stakeholders in drafting the evaluation terms of reference (ToR).¹

Box 3: Criteria selection tip

An [evaluability assessment](#), (an exercise used to assess the degree to which an evaluation is justified, feasible, and likely to provide useful information), can be useful to inform evaluation criteria selection and related evaluation questions.

Relevant evaluation criteria are typically identified during the development of the evaluation ToR. As the Evaluation Policy states, "(I)f an evaluation commissioner or evaluator considers any of the policy's criteria or principles to be inapplicable to a specific evaluation, they must justify the evaluation terms of reference or inception report/evaluation design to the AF-TERG." In this case, the commissioner or evaluator should communicate with the AFTERG Secretariat to receive feedback on the justification. The AFTERG Secretariat, in consultation with the AFTERG members, would provide comments on how the criterion could be included or agree with the exclusion. This communication should be done within two weeks timeframe. This provision highlights the importance to the Fund of the nine evaluation criteria, as well as the ability to adapt evaluation criteria accordingly.

4. How to apply the criteria?

This section examines each evaluation criteria in more detail, first stating the criteria verbatim as it appears in the Evaluation Policy, followed by further explanation. This guidance is complemented by a **Checklist of Guiding Questions for each evaluation criteria in Annex 1** to help operationalize the criteria during an evaluation.

1. **Relevance** – the extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries, and global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change. Relevance also refers to the intervention's consistency with country-driven priorities. To encourage utilization, each evaluation should optimize relevance by ensuring (i) that the primary intended users of the evaluation and their intended uses are clearly identified and engaged at the beginning of the evaluation process; (ii) that "intended users" include funding, implementing, and beneficiary stakeholders; and (iii) that evaluators ensure these intended users contribute to decisions about the evaluation process.

Explanation:

The relevance criterion is used to determine if the intervention is doing the right things based on the needs and priorities of stakeholders. Depending on the intervention, relevance can include local, regional, national, and global stakeholder needs and priorities. For beneficiaries, relevance can extend beyond those receiving direct services, but can also include indirect beneficiaries at a more distant point in the results (value) chain. Relevance is not limited only to stakeholder *needs*, but also includes relevance to their *interests, resources, capacities*, policies and strategies, current and future programs, and other factors. The relevance criterion applies across the entire intervention cycle, from its design to

¹ See [Adaptation Fund Guidance Note: Terms of Reference](#) for more information.

implementation and reporting; this means that relevance should be assessed in terms of both what an intervention *is doing* as well as what it was *designed to do*.

- 2. Coherence** – the extent to which the intervention is compatible with other interventions in a country, sector, or institution.

Explanation:

This criterion is focused on the extent to which an intervention complements or undermines other interventions and priorities in a country, sector, or institution. It is helpful for identifying where implementation synergies can improve performance and, conversely, where there are overlaps or conflicting tensions. This criterion is particularly important for interventions in areas and sectors serviced by multiple organizations with similar or overlapping mandates (e.g., donors, financial institutions, government, or civil society), in which there is a potential danger of duplicating or competing efforts. In terms of analysis, the criterion is both inward and outward-looking. **Internal coherence** refers to synergies and complementarity between other interventions of the Fund and implementing entity. **External coherence** refers to complementarity, harmonization, and coordination with other organizations working in the same context toward similar goals.

- 3. Effectiveness** – the extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives and results, including any differential results across groups (considering the extent to which the evaluand has accomplished Fund Strategic Results Framework indicator targets).

Explanation:

The effectiveness criterion assesses how successful an intervention is in achieving or progressing toward its desired results. When results have not been met, for whatever reason, analysis turns to examine the extent to which results have been achieved and if the intervention is on track to achieve them at a later date. Given the focus on intended results, a critical aspect of analysis is what is identified in the intervention's design relative to what has been achieved, and *why* intended results were or were not achieved. The effectiveness criterion is of particular interest to managers who are responsible for the delivery of identified results. It is worth noting that the effectiveness criterion is distinguished from the impact criterion, which looks at longer-term, secondary effects.

- 4. Efficiency** – the extent that the intervention is cost-effective and timely and does not consume unnecessary time and resources. This includes value for money, which encompasses spending wisely, spending less, spending well, and spending fairly.

Explanation:

This criterion is concerned with whether the intervention pursues intended results in an economic and timely manner. Analysis of this criterion focuses not only on cost-efficiency and timeliness, but also resource utilization (including both human and material resources). It can include comparative analysis of different implementation modalities when appropriate.

5. **Impact** – the extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects.

Explanation:

The impact criterion assesses any positive and negative changes from an intervention, whether they are direct or indirect changes, or intended or unintended. Whereas effectiveness focuses on whether immediate results have been achieved according to the intervention design, the assessment of impact expands the focus to the longer-term and wider-reaching consequences of the intervention. This includes longer-term social, environmental, and economic effects, and is therefore related to the evaluation criteria for human and ecological sustainability and security. Impact is an especially important criterion for climate change adaptation work given that the most severe consequences of climate change impacts, and thus the need for pro-active adaptation, will occur in the next decades rather than the timeframe of the intervention. Therefore, assessment of this criterion should consider the degree any current achievements will be relevant, necessary, or sufficient for future impact.

6. **Equity** – consistent with the Fund's Environment and Social Policy (ESP) and GP, the extent to which the design and implementation includes input of the designated authority (DA) and vulnerable groups such as women, youth, persons with disability, Indigenous Peoples, minorities, and other potentially marginalized groups or locations. It also encompasses the degree to which the intervention reduced or perpetuated inequalities, and how equitably benefits were accrued to vulnerable groups.

Explanation:

The equity criterion should be contextualized with reference to the Fund's [Environment and Social Policy](#) and [Gender Policy](#). The criterion is cross-cutting and requires that equity considerations be made explicit in all evaluation criteria. For example, the impact criteria should include questions related to differential impacts on vulnerable groups, including gender. Significantly, the equity criterion applies to groups of people as well as resources and their allocation or availability to population groups. Analysis should focus on both substantive (content and goal-oriented) and administrative and management (process) aspects of the intervention, with the goal of identifying *what works, for whom, and why*.

Box 3: Terminology Tip

Equitable refers to being fair and just regardless of differences between people and their circumstance. It is also contrasted with **equality**, which treats everyone the same regardless of differences, whereas equity may treat people distinctly according to differences (i.e., in socioeconomic background and need). **Gender** refers to the social, behavioural, and cultural attributes, expectations, and norms associated with being male or female (whereas sex is biologically determined).

7. **Adaptive management** – the extent to which the intervention adapted during implementation in response to lessons and reflections during implementation; and the extent to which the intervention supports the use, development, or diffusion of innovative practices, tools, or technologies to improve or accelerate climate change adaptation.

Explanation:

Adaptive management is an, “intentional approach to making decisions and adjustments in response to new information and changes in context.”² It focuses on the capacity and extent to which the intervention responds to new information, emergent learning, and contextual changes. These are essential qualities in climate change adaptation interventions that must remain flexible and responsive to the complex contexts as well as to new knowledge and evaluative evidence made available in which they are delivered. Assessment of the criterion includes the capacity of the intervention to accelerate climate change adaptation through innovation, which can include new practices, tools, and technology. This criterion includes how climate change adaptation may be accelerated through alternative modalities and approaches.

- 8. Scalability** – the extent to which the intervention demonstrates that climate change adaptation can be increased or replicated at a broader scale, as well as in other contexts.

Explanation:

The Fund is committed to providing climate change adaptation solutions that can be replicated or increased at a broader scale to have greater impact. “Scaling” is used broadly to include spatial, temporal, knowledge, economic, and social scales. Analysis of the scalability criterion focuses on whether the object of scaling can, either by simple replication, adaptation, and expansion, increase positive impact. Three dimensions of scalability are useful to assess scalability are vertical, horizontal, and functional scalability, which are reflected in the guiding questions below.

- 9. Human and ecological sustainability and security** – the extent to which the intervention is likely to generate continued positive or negative, intended and unintended impacts beyond its lifetime, taking into consideration, social, institutional, economic, and environmental systems.

Explanation:

Human and ecological sustainability and security refers to the ability of human and natural systems to support the equitable life of all species on the planet. Human actions are inseparable from the natural systems in which they occur and for which human existence depend. This criterion encompasses the degree to which the evaluated intervention has prevented, reversed, or contributed to harmful impacts such as over-exploitation of natural resources, pollution, deforestation, biodiversity loss, and the emission of greenhouse gasses that contribute to global warming. Human security is tightly coupled with ecological sustainability, stressing human protection, food security, and resilience in the context of ecosystem shocks, such as severe weather events and extreme heat that accompany global warming.

This criterion reflects the underlying commitment in the Fund’s [Environmental and Social Policy](#) to ensure the Fund’s climate change adaptation work does not unnecessarily harm the environment, public health or vulnerable communities. Given the human dimension of the criterion, it also encompasses the underlying commitment of the Fund’s [Gender Policy](#) to uphold women’s rights and contribute to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Given its focus on both intended and unintended impacts, this criterion is also related to the evaluation criterion of adaptive management (above) and

² USAID. 2021. [Discussion Note: Adaptive management](#).

the degree to which unintended consequences are monitored and responded to as they effect human and ecological sustainability and security.

Annex 1: Checklist – Guiding Questions for Evaluation Criteria

Checklist – Guiding Questions for the Adaptation Fund’s Evaluation Criteria		
<p>This checklist consists of guiding questions to help operationalize the Fund’s evaluation criteria. The guiding questions are not exhaustive, but rather intended to initiate critical thinking about the evaluation criteria’s application. Questions should be selected and tailored according to evaluation purpose, needs, and context. Please refer to Section 4 above, “How to apply the criteria,” for further explanation of the criteria.</p>		
1. Relevance		
1)	Is the intervention doing the “right thing” to promote climate change adaptation and assist vulnerable populations? Do the different stakeholder groups view the intervention as desirable and beneficial?	
3)	Is the intervention designed and delivered to meet the needs and priorities of the most vulnerable and potentially marginalized groups (i.e., due to gender, age, disability, or social-cultural differences)?	
4)	Has the intervention considered the unique contextual realities that may affect achievement of its objectives, including those related to socio-economic, cultural, power and politics, and capacity dimensions?	
5)	To what degree is the intervention’s design and intended results (objectives) relevant and realistic to the wider context?	
6)	Did the intervention’s original objectives (intended results) remain relevant throughout its implementation? Have they been revised and adapted based on emergent learning or contextual changes? If so, to what degree do the revised objectives remain relevant today?	
6)	What recommendations are there for this or future interventions to be most relevant?	
2. Coherence		
<i>Internal Coherence</i>		
1)	To what degree is the intervention coherent with and support the policies, principles, and priorities of the Fund; i.e., the Fund’s Strategic Results. Framework, Environmental and Social Policy, and Gender Policy? Has this alignment been made explicit in both the interventions design and implementation?	
2)	To what degree is the intervention designed and implemented with attention to potential synergies and complementarities with other mandates, missions, initiatives, and workstreams from the Fund, Implementing Entities, strategic partners, beneficiaries programs, and other relevant stakeholder groups? Are mechanisms such as steering committees and advisory groups utilized to help coordinate and harmonize different but related workstreams?	
3)	Are organizational program teams or departments working together to complement each other, increase overall efficiency, and capitalize on potential synergies, or are they stuck in organizational silos, each pursuing their agenda?	
4)	Do synergies between different interventions and workstreams produce emergent outcomes greater than could be expected as a result of discreet activities?	

<i>External Coherence</i>	
5)	Is the intervention coherent with and does it contribute to international initiatives and priorities relevant broadly to sustainable development, such as the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and more specifically to climate change adaptation work, such as the Paris Agreement's Global Goal on Adaptation?
6)	To what extent is the intervention coherent with policies and programmes of other partners operating within the same context?
7)	Does intervention complement or compete with the priorities of local, national, and global public and civic actors? Does it add value while avoiding duplication of effort with other organizations?
8)	Are mechanisms such as coordinating meetings or steering committees utilized to help harmonize and complement different but related workstreams with other actors in the operational context?
9)	What recommendations are there for this and future interventions to be more internally or externally coherent?
3. Effectiveness	
1)	What are the planned results of the intervention, and to what extent have they been achieved, or are expected to be achieved? Is it doing things right, on track to achieve expected results?
2)	If planned results have not been achieved or are unlikely in the given timeframe, why, and can they be achieved over a longer timeframe?
3)	What factors have contributed to, or hampered, the achievement of desired results? To what extent is any achievement, or lack of achievement, attributable to the intervention rather than external factors?
4)	What recommendations are there for this or future interventions to be more effective?
4. Efficiency	
1)	Were resources and people's time used efficiently?
2)	Have the expected/realized results been achieved or are expected to be achieved within the planned budget and timeframe? Did the planned schedule of activities lead to the identified outputs and contribute to the desired outcomes according to the planned?
3)	How well are resources being used? Have intervention inputs been used economically? Were measures taken during planning and implementation to ensure that efficiency?
4)	Could more have been achieved with the same input, or the same achieved with less input?
5)	Was appropriate technology and other cost-saving steps taken to reduce costs?
6)	Have donor inputs been provided in a timely manner as planned?
7)	Were available inputs/resources (funds, expertise, materials) sufficient and provided in a timely manner to achieve desired results?

8)	To what extent were resources allocated in ways that considered gender equality and serving vulnerable and potentially marginalized population groups?	
9)	What recommendations are there for this or future interventions to be more efficient?	
5. Impact		
1)	What difference has the intervention made or is expected to make? What were the effects of the intervention on people's lives?	
2)	To what extent has the intervention achieved or is expected to achieve its longer-term impact objectives? Given the longitudinal timeframe for climate change, what are the prospects or trajectories for adaptation impact years (a decade) later? What has or will contribute to or hampered this?	
3)	Were there any unintended consequences or outcomes from the interventions, and if so, were they positive or negative and why?	
4)	Did any aspect of the intervention achieve a greater impact than another, and if so, why?	
5)	Were there impacts on institutions, agencies and other relevant actors?	
6)	Was the impact of the intervention the same for different genders and vulnerable and potentially marginalized population groups, and if so, why?	
7)	What recommendations are there for this or future interventions to have greater positive impact?	
6. Equity³		
1)	Where the benefits of the intervention distributed equitably across different population groups and geographies? Did one group benefit from the intervention more than another, and if so, why?	
2)	Did the intervention bring about reduced vulnerability outcomes across different population groups?	
3)	Has the intervention reduced or contributed toward the reduction of inequalities?	
4)	Did the intervention's design sufficiently integrate equity issues? o M&E systems monitor and report on equity issues/concerns. Are feedback and grievance mechanisms in place to support monitoring of and reporting on equitable implementation and potential shortfalls?	
5)	To what degree have equity concerns, including gender, informed the implementation of the intervention? Have adaptive measures been taken to improve the equity focus of the intervention?	
6)	Do partner organizations have sufficient capacity to incorporate equity concerns in their role in the intervention?	
7)	Was adequate intervention funding allocated to take into consideration equity issues?	

³ For a more exhaustive list of evaluation questions, refer to the Fund's Environmental and Social Policy, and Gender Policy.

8)	What recommendations are there for this or future interventions to be more equitable?	
7. Adaptive Management		
1)	<p>Has the intervention demonstrated flexibility in response to changing circumstances?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were any adaptations made to the intervention design (e.g., theory of change or logic model), planned targets, processes, techniques and tools based on emergent learning or in response to contextual changes? • To what extent did the intervention make mid-course corrections based on changing context or new evaluative evidence or knowledge? • Has the intervention made decisions based on a learning feedback mechanism (e.g., monitoring data, a reflection workshop, evaluation, etc.)? 	
2)	Does the intervention’s design and implementation acknowledge and respond to systems complexity?	
3)	Are assumptions identified, monitored during implementation, and responded to when they do not hold?	
4)	<p>Does the intervention prioritize a “learning culture”?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the intervention’s managers and donors receptive to changes in its design and implementation based on emergent learning and feedback during implementation? • Are managers explicitly incentivized to employ an adaptive management approach? • Are they motivated by learning-by-doing rather than strict adherence to “plan the work and work the plan”? • Is there permission and room to make “safe-to fail” errors and mistakes in search of what does and does not work? 	
5)	Are mechanisms employed to identify unintended consequences and contextual changes, supporting emergent learning and course correction during intervention implementation?	
6)	Does the intervention utilize dedicated reflection workshops, reference, steering, or advisory groups, feedback and complaints mechanisms, implementation reviews or some other dedicated process for assessing and adapting implementation?	
7)	<p>Does the intervention monitor and respond to unintended consequences (positive or negative) during implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does it look ahead and anticipate not only the immediate results of intervention implementation but also the longer-term effects? • How did the intervention react to various pressures and unexpected challenges? 	
8)	Did the intervention use, develop, or promote an innovation to adapt and accelerate climate change adaptation. If so, how did it accelerate this work, and in what contexts does the innovation work best and for who?	
8. Scalability		
1)	To what degree has the intervention contributed to conditions that enable and advance climate change adaptation at a broader scale with greater impact? Has the intervention increased the scale of benefits produced over time, place, and among people?	

2)	Vertical scalability - Has the intervention effected or contributed to trajectories to effect policy or institution change or reform to <i>scale-up</i> climate change adaptation impact? (Vertical scalability)	
3)	Horizontal scalability - Has the intervention effected or contributed to trajectories to <i>scale-out</i> outreach and impact to different people and/or geographies due to replication of adaptation? (Horizontal scalability) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can others adopt the intervention design at a larger scale? • Will a similar intervention work in different contexts? 	
4)	Functional scalability - Has the intervention increased the scope, pace, or scale of climate change adaptation via iterative adaptations of and improvement to its original design and approach? (Functional scalability)	
9. Human and Ecological Sustainability and Security		
1)	To what extent did the intervention consider human and ecological sustainability?	
2)	Did the intervention assess possible measures to avoid potential direct, indirect, transboundary, and cumulative impacts and risks that could result from the proposed project/programme?	
3)	Did the intervention cause any negative or unexpected damage to the environment or human systems, particularly gender inequity or indigenous practices related to environmental stewardship?	
4)	Is the intervention contributing to community livelihoods and to the health or well-being of the ecosystems on which they depend?	
5)	Were environmental and social risks identified and assessed at the earliest possible stage of the intervention design?	
6)	Did the intervention adopt measures to avoid or where avoidance is impossible to minimize or mitigate environmental and social risks during implementation? Does the intervention monitor and report on the measures taken and status of environmental and social risks during and at the end of implementation?	
7)	Does the intervention have a functioning grievance mechanism that provides stakeholders with an accessible, transparent, fair and effective process for receiving and addressing complaints about environmental or social harms caused by the intervention?	

Annex 2: Additional Resources

While not exhaustive, the resources below provide additional guidance and insights on evaluation criteria:

- Adaptation Fund. 2021. [Evaluation Policy of the Adaptation Fund](#)
- Adaptation Fund. 2022. [Updated Gender Guidance Document for Implementing Entities on Compliance with the Adaptation Fund Gender Policy](#)
- Adaptation Fund. 2021. [Guidance Document for Implementing Entities on Compliance with the Adaptation Fund Gender Policy](#)
- BetterEvaluation, Accessed 2022. Terms of reference
- European Commission. 2021. [Better Regulation Toolbox](#).
- Heider C. 2018. [Consulting on the “Big 5” Evaluation Criteria - What got us here?](#)
- Office of Evaluation and Internal Oversight Independent Evaluation Division. 2018. [Evaluation Manual](#).
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. 2019. [Better Criteria for Better Evaluation: Revised Evaluation Criteria Definitions and Principles for Use](#).
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. 2021. [Applying evaluation criteria thoughtfully](#)
- Peersman G. 2014. [Evaluative Criteria](#)
- USAID. 2022. [Discussion Note: Adaptive management](#)
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation. 2017. [The Step-by-Step Guide to Evaluation](#)
- WFP. 2021. [Technical Note: Evaluation Questions and Criteria](#)