



## **Short-Term Consultant**

### **Study on lessons learned from alignment of Adaptation Fund projects and programmes with National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)**

*February to May 2025*

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Adaptation Fund is an innovative financing mechanism set up under United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)'s Kyoto Protocol, with the mandate of financing concrete climate change adaptation projects and programmes in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change. Since 1 January 2019, the Adaptation Fund is formally serving the landmark Paris Agreement.

The Fund was the first climate fund to fully operationalize direct access to climate finance through which National Implementing Entities (NIEs) can directly access financing and manage all aspects of climate adaptation and resilience projects, from design through implementation to monitoring and evaluation.

The Fund is currently implementing its second Medium-Term Strategy (MTS-2) and Action Plan for the period 2023-2027 based on pillars of Action, Innovation and Learning and Sharing. Through the Learning and Sharing pillar the Fund supports, among others, the collection and dissemination of knowledge and lessons learned from AF-funded project and programmes for countries, implementing entities and the wider climate finance community, through concrete case studies, best practices, and lessons learned, in various relevant sectors and themes.

Parties to the Paris Agreement have encouraged the Fund Board in several CMA decisions to consider supporting developing countries in enhancing the implementation of their National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and adaptation components of their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), in line with the Fund's existing mandate. In line with the Fund's [Operational Policies and Guidelines](#), all AF-funded projects and programmes should take into account, inter alia, national adaptation planning processes, such as NAPs, NDCs, Adaptation Communications (AdComs), and other relevant instruments.

Formulating and implementing [National Adaptation Plans \(NAPs\)](#) are country-driven processes under the Paris Agreement with a view to identifying medium- and long-term adaptation needs and developing and implementing strategies and programmes to address those needs. This process is designed to ensure that adaptation becomes an ongoing practice, rather than a separate exercise.

The Paris Agreement requests each country to outline and communicate its climate mitigation and adaptation commitments, known as [Nationally Determined Contributions \(NDCs\)](#). Parties to the Paris Agreement have submitted two rounds of NDCs so far, in 2015 and 2020. The third round of NDCs to be submitted in 2025, also known as NDCs 3.0, are to be informed by the outcome of the first global Stocktake that concluded in 2023. NDCs 3.0 need to be progressive and more ambitious than current NDCs.

The Adaptation Fund supports developing countries in the implementation of their NAPs and NDCs by financing concrete adaptation projects and programmes that are aligned with developing countries adaptation priorities and plans. Additionally, through the implementation of NAPs and NDCs with AF funding, including their knowledge products, countries can learn useful lessons that further contribute to informing the subsequent generation of those strategies and plans. To further support countries in the implementation of their NAPs and NDCs, the Fund is a partner organization of relevant initiatives, such as the NDC Partnership and the UN4NAPs initiative.

The Adaptation Fund is recruiting a Short-Term Consultant to undertake the task of producing a study offering an overview and analysis on the lessons learned from aligning the AF portfolio of projects/programmes under implementation with countries' NDCs and NAPs. The study should provide an initial overview of projects and programmes in the portfolio that reference and align with NDCs and/or NAPs specifically. It should also include concrete case studies from the Fund's portfolio showcasing this alignment and generate lessons learned from these case studies on current best practices and trends in NAPs and NDC implementation. The case studies should include a range of projects from various regions and sectors, as well as different access modalities and grant types.

The consultant will report to and be supervised by the Knowledge Management Officer of the AF, and work under overall oversight by the Sr. Climate Change Specialist of the Fund in charge of Results-Based Management.

## SCOPE OF WORK

### **Objective**

Carry out a study offering an overview of the AF experience and lessons learned from alignment of the AF portfolio of projects/programs with countries' NDCs and NAPs, including a general overview and concrete case studies drawn from the AF portfolio to showcase examples to share knowledge and best practices with the wider climate adaptation community.

The intended audience for the study includes implementing entities, government officials, private sector, civil society groups, other stakeholders in the climate finance community.

### **Methodology**

The approach to developing the outputs for the study will be determined consultatively with the consultant and the AF colleagues. It should include:

- Desktop literature review and synthesis of Adaptation Fund policies and guidelines that will guide in the development of the study outline ([Medium-Term Strategy 2023-2027; SPPG; Operational Policies and Guidelines Annex 5: Project Review Criteria and Project Template](#)), as well as relevant information on the current status of submission and implementation of NAPs and NDCs;
- Mapping of relevant projects in the AF portfolio under implementation and reviewing of their respective projects/program documents, including Project Performance Reports (PPRs), Mid-Term Reviews (MTR), Terminal Evaluations (TE), project completion summaries and Project Monitoring Mission (PMM) reports, where available, to assess alignment; and
- Conduct interviews (virtually) at the national level and run surveys with representatives of the Fund's implementing entities (MIEs, RIEs and NIEs) in charge of implementing projects selected as case studies.

In preparing the template and set of questions for the interviews as well as the draft outline of the study, the consultant should work closely under the supervision of the KM Officer and other AF colleagues.

### **Outputs**

The expected output for the envisaged scope of work will be a **learning product** documenting the process undertaken and the case studies.

The learning product would have several sections, and these would include:

1. Brief background of the NDCs and NAPs processes under the UNFCCC Paris Agreement;
2. General overview of status of the AF's support to developing countries for implementing their NAPs and NDCs, including an overview of the relevant policies and processes, as well as the project portfolio and its breakdown by regions and sectors);
3. Presentation of main approaches employed to align project/program interventions with NDCs and NAPs;
4. Presentation of case studies showcasing projects and programs and alignment with NDCs and NAPs;

5. Main findings and **lessons learned**.
6. Recommendations on possible ways for further strengthening alignment and support for NAPs and NDC implementation, and explore ways to further inform the Fund's MTS implementation.
7. Brief conclusion.

Additionally, the consultant is expected to share the lessons learned and findings of the study in a slide presentation as part of a **brown bag lunch** organized by the secretariat.

## INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

- The Adaptation Fund shall, solely and exclusively, own all rights in and to any work created in connection with this agreement, including all data, documents, information, copyrights, patents, trademarks, trade secrets or other proprietary rights in and to the work. The consultant is not allowed to post or publish (electronically or in print) any project-related information without the explicit permission of the Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat team.

## SELECTION CRITERIA

- A minimum of Master's degree in climate change, environmental and social studies, international relations, sustainable development, or other related fields, PhD preferred;
- At least ten years of relevant experience working in the field of climate change adaptation and the Paris Agreement, including NDCs and NAPs;
- Skills and demonstrated experience in researching and writing publications, such as reports, knowledge products, and academic literature;
- Ability to deal with sensitive or time-sensitive issues, in a prioritized manner;
- Excellent drafting skills in English, as well as strong analytical skills for synthesizing both qualitative and quantitative data and information;
- Ability to communicate often complex and technical ideas in a clear and concise language for various stakeholders and audiences; and
- Ability to speak and communicate fluently in either French or Spanish is an added advantage.

## DURATION

Contract duration will be 40 working days and candidate should be able to undertake the work remotely.

- Estimated start date is February 2025
- Submission of final version of the publication by May 2025. Please note there will be at least two round of extensive review for which the consultant should allocate a sufficient number of days.