

# Evaluation of the Adaptation Fund Readiness Programme

Inception Report

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Commission by the Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Adaptation Fund

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**Technical Evaluation  
Reference Group**  
ADAPTATION FUND

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## About Adaptation Fund

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 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](http://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 full-time 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/](http://www.adaptation-fund.org/about/evaluation/)

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## Preface

The Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Adaptation Fund (AF-TERG) commissioned the Evaluation of the Readiness Programme to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the programme since its inception and provide recommendations for further improvement.

The team for this evaluation consists of Vladislav Arnaoudov (AF-TERG Secretariat Coordinator & Senior Evaluation Officer and primary point of contact), Sithabiso Gandure (AF-TERG member & Focal Point for this evaluation), and Aneesh Kotru (Evaluation Analyst). This assessment has been contracted to Oxford Policy Management (OPM) and is being led by Amanda Woome and Katherine Cooke, with support from a technical team comprising Sanya Prakash (Project Manager), Kritika Singh, Adiba Khaled, Benedict Wambua, Sierra Ison, and Rachel Chowings.

The team would like to acknowledge the time and inputs provided by the members of AF-TERG and the Adaptation Fund's Readiness team in shaping the evaluation design and methodology.

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## Table of contents

Preface	i
List of tables, figures, and boxes	iii
Acronyms	iv
1 Background	1
1.1 Readiness Programme for Climate Finance	1
2 Evaluation Objectives, Scope, Criteria and Questions	5
2.1 Objectives of the evaluation	5
2.2 Evaluation Scope	5
2.3 Evaluation Criteria & Questions	6
3 Evaluation Approach and Methods	8
3.1 Evaluation Principles & Approach	8
3.2 Theory of Change	11
3.3 Evaluation Data Collection Methods	15
3.4 Evaluation Data Analysis	24
3.5 Ethical Considerations	25
3.6 Methodological Limitations	26
4 Evaluation Work Plan and Management	28
4.1 Evaluation Timeline, Milestones and Deliverables	28
4.2 Roles and Responsibilities	29
4.3 Quality Assurance	30
4.4 Risk Management and Mitigation Measures	31
Annex A Terms of Reference	34
Annex B Evaluation Matrix	43
Annex C Evaluation Criteria Assessment	50
Annex D Stakeholder Mapping	53
Annex E Data Collection Tools	55
Annex F Case Country Selection	57
Annex G Case Study Template	63
Annex H Evaluation Timeline	65

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## List of tables, figures, and boxes

Figure 1 Evolution of Readiness Programme (Source: Adapted from the Terms of Reference or ToR).....	1
Figure 2 Readiness Grants Approved to date (Region).....	4
Figure 3 Theory of Change prepared for Readiness Programme .....	14
Figure 34 Data collection methods .....	15
Figure 5 Risk matrix colour codes .....	31
Table 1: Current & Past Grant structure of the AF Readiness Programme (Source: Adapted from the ToR).....	2
Table 2: Key evaluation questions .....	6
Table 3: Summary matrix: AF-TERG Evaluation Principles mapped to OPM's broad approach.....	9
Table 4: Suggested list of stakeholders for interviews.....	17
Table 5: Case study countries .....	20
Table 6: Work Plan .....	29
Table 7: Risk matrix .....	32

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## Acronyms

A&B	Antigua and Barbuda
AFB	Adaptation Fund Board
AF-TERG	Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Adaptation Fund
CSE	Centre de Suivi Ecologique
DA	Designated Authority
ESP	Environmental and Social Policy
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
IE	Implementing Entity
KII	Key Informant Interviews
LDC	Least Developed Country
MDB	Multilateral Development Bank
MTS	Medium Term Strategy
MTS II	Second Medium Term Strategy
NIE	National Implementing Entity
QA	Quality Assurance
RIE	Regional Implementing Entity
OPM	Oxford Policy Management
SIDS	Small Island Developing State
SSC	South-South Cooperation
TA	Technical Assistance
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

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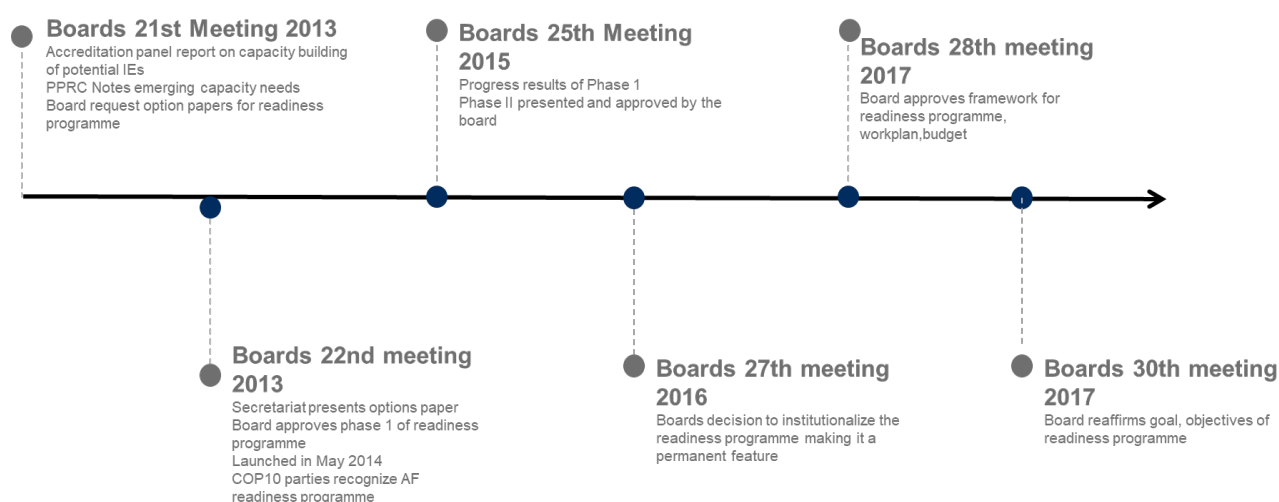
# 1 Background

## 1.1 Readiness Programme for Climate Finance

The Adaptation Fund's Readiness Programme was established to enhance access to climate finance for developing countries, particularly through direct access mechanisms. Recognizing the challenges many countries face in securing funding, the Readiness Programme provides targeted support to strengthen institutional capacities, facilitate accreditation of National Implementing Entities (NIEs), and improve project formulation and implementation processes.

Initially launched as an awareness-raising initiative and later developed into a phased programme (see Figure 1 below), the Readiness Programme was institutionalized as a permanent feature of the Adaptation Fund's operations through Decision B.27/38 at its twenty-seventh meeting<sup>1</sup>. This ensured the programme's long-term sustainability and integration within the Fund's work plan.

**Figure 1 Evolution of Readiness Programme (Source: Adapted from the Terms of Reference or ToR)**



At its thirtieth meeting in 2017, the Adaptation Fund Board approved an updated results framework for the Readiness Programme, refining its strategic objectives as follows<sup>2</sup>:

- **Objective 1:** to increase the preparedness of applicant NIEs seeking accreditation by the Adaptation Fund
- **Objective 2:** to increase the number of high-quality project/programme proposals submitted to the Adaptation Fund Board after accreditation

To achieve these objectives, the Readiness Programme is composed of four components<sup>3</sup>:

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<sup>1</sup> Adaptation Fund, 2017. Bonn, Germany, 16-17 March 2017 Agenda item 11, Proposed framework for the readiness Programme. AFB/B.29/8 6 March 2017

<sup>2</sup> Adaptation Fund, 2017. Bonn, Germany, 12-13 October 2017 Agenda item 11, READINESS PROGRAMME RESULTS FRAMEWORK AMENDED IN OCTOBER 2017 AFB/B.30/8 4 October 2017

<sup>3</sup> Data Source: <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/readiness/>

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1. **Support to accredited implementing entities (IEs):** Providing capacity-building assistance to newly accredited and re-accrediting NIEs to enhance their ability to design and implement adaptation projects effectively and to comply with the Fund's policies and procedures.
2. **Cooperation / partnership with climate finance readiness providers:** Strengthening collaboration with other climate finance readiness providers and global adaptation finance initiatives to foster knowledge exchange and leverage synergies.
3. **Support to NIEs seeking accreditation:** Assisting entities that aim to become accredited by strengthening their fiduciary, environmental, social, and gender policies to meet Adaptation Fund standards.
4. **Knowledge management:** Capturing and disseminating lessons learned through the Fund's Knowledge Management Strategy, ensuring that best practices and successful approaches are shared across IEs

Since its inception in 2014, the Readiness Programme has evolved through multiple phases to strengthen NIE capacities and improve access to climate finance. It provides support through a range of mechanisms, including training workshops; technical assistance; targeted grant funding; webinars with experts; and supporting the community of practice for direct access entities (CPDAE). The programme has introduced various grants to assist NIEs in peer-to-peer support for accreditation and in building capacity for climate finance readiness activities. These grants include:

**Table 1: Current & Past Grant structure of the AF Readiness Programme (Source: Adapted from the ToR)**

Grant Type	Description
Readiness Package Grants <sup>4</sup>	Small grants meant to facilitate the delivery of more enhanced, targeted, and tailored readiness support for accreditation to developing countries. The maximum amount of grant is US\$150,000 per NIE to support its Adaptation Fund accreditation.
<i>South-South Cooperation (SSC) Grants<sup>5</sup></i>	Provided peer to peer support through eligible accredited NIEs to entities seeking accreditation. SSC grants were replaced by the Readiness Package Grants.
Project Formulation Grants (PFG) <sup>6</sup>	Provide up to US\$50,000 for IEs to build their capacities for project design and preparation if requested alongside a project pre-concept or project concept. Originally developed only for NIEs, these grants are now open to all IEs as of 2024.

<sup>4</sup> Data Source: [Readiness Package Grant - Adaptation Fund](#)

<sup>5</sup> Data Source: [South-South Cooperation Grants](#) – Adaptation Fund

<sup>6</sup> Data Source: [Project Formulation Grants](#) – Adaptation Fund



Project Scale-up Grants <sup>7</sup>	Provide readiness funding to NIEs to support planning, designing, enhancement and overall capacity to develop scale-up pathways for Adaptation Fund funded projects nearing completion or already completed. Project Scale-up Grants are available up to a maximum of US\$100,000 per project and programme.
Technical Assistance (TA) Grants for Environmental and Social Policy (ESP) and Gender Policy <sup>8</sup>	<p>These are small grants to help NIEs build their capacity to address and manage environmental and social as well as gender associated risks within their projects/programmes in accordance with the Fund's ESP and Gender Policy. Through these grants, NIEs have the option to hire external expertise to help them address these issues. There are two types of TA grants:</p> <p><b>TA Grant for the ESP and Gender Policy (TA-ESGP):</b> Aimed at strengthening the capacity of NIEs to identify, screen, address and manage environmental and social risks as well as gender related issues in their projects and programs in line with the Fund's ESP and Gender Policy. The grant is up to a maximum of US\$25,000 per NIE.</p> <p><b>Technical Assistance Grant for the Gender Policy (TA-GP):</b> Meant for NIEs that already have robust environmental and social policies to put in place measures to avoid, minimize and/or mitigate adverse gender impacts in accordance with the Adaptation Fund's Gender Policy. The grant is up to a maximum of US\$10,000 per NIE.</p>

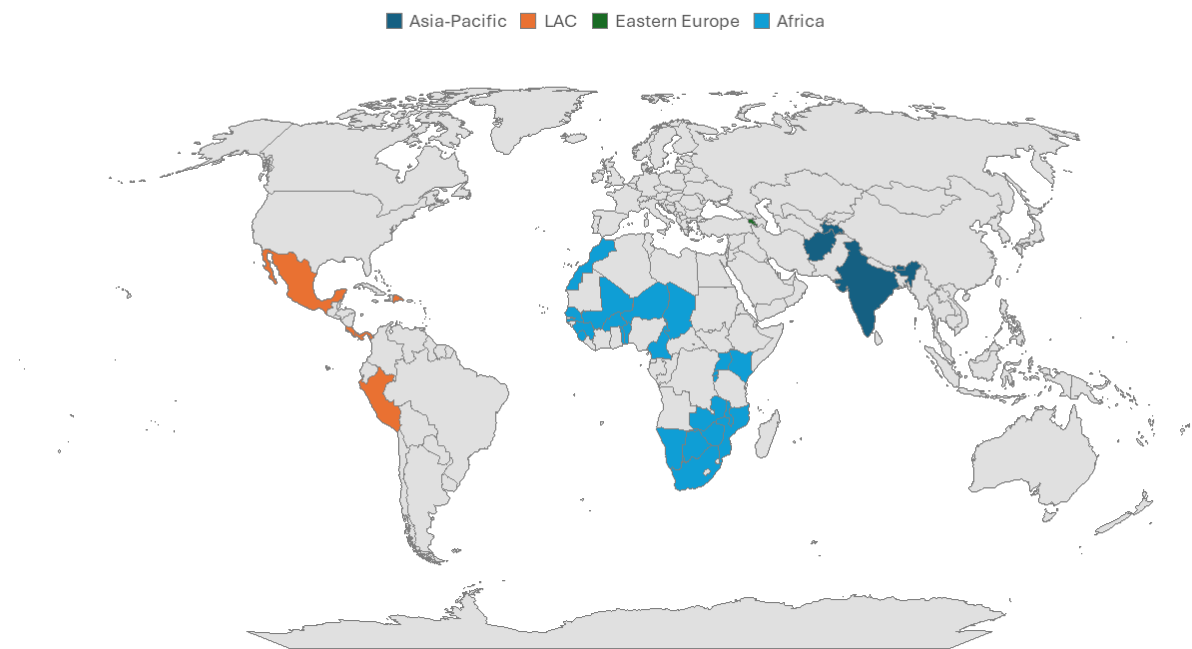
As of today, there are 50 readiness grants amounting to US\$1,888,642 (excluding project scale-up grants) that have been approved by the Adaptation Fund Board<sup>9</sup> (see Figure 2).

<sup>7</sup> Data Source: [Project Scale-up Grants - Adaptation Fund](#)

<sup>8</sup> Data Source: [Technical Assistance Grants - Adaptation Fund](#)

<sup>9</sup> *Adaptation Fund, 2024. Adaptation Fund Board Project and Programme Review Committee Thirty-fourth Meeting Bonn, Germany, 8-9 October 2024, Report of The Secretariat on The Intersessional Review Cycle For Readiness Grants AFB/PPRC.34/Inf.2 10 September 2024*

### Figure 2 Readiness Grants Approved to date<sup>10</sup> (Region)



<sup>10</sup> Data Source: Adapted from <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/readiness/readiness-grants/approved-readiness-grants/>

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## 2 Evaluation Objectives, Scope, Criteria and Questions

This section discusses the objectives and scope of the evaluation, the evaluation criteria, and key evaluation questions.

### 2.1 Objectives of the evaluation

This evaluation will focus on the evolution and the role of Adaptation Fund's Readiness Programme. As per the ToR, the purpose of the evaluation is to conduct a comprehensive assessment of Adaptation Fund's readiness programme since its inception and chart a course for its future in supporting the accreditation process effectively and increasing the number of approved project proposals by the Board. The findings will generate lessons learned and recommendations to inform the implementation of the second Medium-Term Strategy (MTS II) and support the continued enhancement of the Readiness Programme.

### 2.2 Evaluation Scope

The evaluation scope will include a **comprehensive assessment of Components 1 to 3 out of the four components of the Readiness Programme**. These are, namely:

- Component 1: Support to accredited IEs
- Component 2: Cooperation/partnership with climate finance readiness providers
- Component 3: Support to NIEs seeking accreditation

The fourth component of the Readiness Programme is Knowledge Management. Based on the original ToR, the evaluation team will conduct a brief assessment of the contribution of the other components to knowledge management.

The evaluation will cover the trajectory of the three components of the Readiness Programme from their activities and outputs to outcomes, as well as their contribution toward achieving the impact of 'Increased capacity within NIEs has increased access to funding expected to lead in the future to higher level positive impact, including increased resilience to climate disasters at the community, national and regional level'. These change pathways are illustrated in the Theory of Change (ToC) drafted by the evaluation team for this evaluation (see Figure 3 in [Section 3.2](#)). We will seek to understand how the programme has evolved over time and how it addresses new needs. Based on consultations with the AF-TERG team and the Adaptation Fund's readiness team, this evaluation will limit its scope to NIEs and will not focus in detail on the role of Regional Implementing Entities (RIEs), although we will capture the roles and perspectives of these and other stakeholders.

This evaluation builds from the 2024 [Thematic Evaluation on the Adaptation Fund Accreditation Process](#), which found that it is essential for IEs to demonstrate expertise in climate change adaptation, including project design and stakeholder engagement. It also highlighted the need for comprehensive support to accredited IEs. By evaluating the Adaptation Fund's readiness support, we will continue to develop the Fund's understanding of how it can best provide comprehensive support to entities seeking accreditation as well as those who are accredited and need further capacity support in key technical areas.

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Finally, the evaluation will also include a landscape analysis of how the Readiness Programme has interacted with and learned from other climate finance institutions and their readiness interventions, including the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ). This will help identify areas where the Adaptation Fund's Readiness Programme can fulfil a specific niche in providing support to countries to access funding to build resilience to climate change.

## 2.3 Evaluation Criteria & Questions

This evaluation will strictly adhere to the Adaptation Fund's Evaluation Policy criteria<sup>11</sup>, encompassing **Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Impact**. The evaluation will not focus on the Fund's other criteria (namely Equity, Adaptive Management, Scalability, and Human and Ecological and Security) as these criteria are intended to evaluate beneficiaries of the direct implementation of adaptation programming. In addition to the evaluation questions provided in the ToR, the OPM team refined and developed additional evaluation questions and sub-questions under each of the criteria. These are presented in the evaluation matrix in Annex B. The evaluation matrix will ground the full evaluation process and form the basis of our data collection tools (including case studies), analysis and reporting. These have been finalized collaboratively with the AF-TERG and Adaptation Fund's Readiness team, with specific attention to the ToC (see Figure 3).

The key evaluation questions are presented in the table below.

**Table 2: Key evaluation questions**

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Criteria Definition <sup>12</sup>	Key Evaluation Question
<b>Relevance</b>	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 what extent is the Readiness Programme strategically focused to address the needs and priorities of targeted stakeholders, including NIEs, and developing countries (LDCs and SIDS)?
<b>Coherence</b>	The extent to which the intervention is compatible with other interventions in a country, sector, or institution.	To what extent is the Readiness Programme of Adaptation Fund compatible with other similar programmes within a country, sector, or institution?

<sup>11</sup> Adaptation Fund. (2022) *Evaluation Policy of the Adaptation Fund*.

<sup>12</sup> The definitions of the evaluation criteria are referenced from the Adaptation Fund. (2022) *Evaluation Policy of the Adaptation Fund*.

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Criteria Definition <sup>12</sup>	Key Evaluation Question
<b>Effectiveness</b>	The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives and results, including any differential results across groups.	To what extent has the Readiness Programme achieved its objectives of (a) increase in preparedness of applicant NIEs seeking accreditation by the Adaptation Fund and (b) increase the number of high- quality project/programme proposals submitted to the Board after accreditation?
<b>Efficiency</b>	The extent that the intervention is cost effective and timely and does not consume unnecessary time and resources.	To what extent is the Readiness Programme cost effective and timely without consuming unnecessary time and resources?
<b>Impact</b>	The extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects.	To what extent has the Readiness Programme generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended, or unintended, higher-level Impact i.e. of NIEs has increased access to funding, leading to higher level positive impact, including increased resilience to climate disasters at the community, national and regional level'?

For the complete evaluation matrix, please refer to Annex B.

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## 3 Evaluation Approach and Methods

Below we outline our overarching evaluation approach and methods, which are grounded in the Adaptation Fund's evaluation principles as outlined in its Evaluation Policy.

### 3.1 Evaluation Principles & Approach

The Adaptation Fund's Evaluation Policy<sup>13</sup> introduces seven interrelated principles to guide evaluation practice. These principles were chosen to reflect the Fund's unique focus on financing concrete adaptation and resilience projects in vulnerable communities. They also reinforce the Fund's values, niche, and alignment with the Paris Agreement.<sup>13</sup>

Table 3 includes a summary of the Adaptation Fund's evaluation principles as well as OPM's response to those principles in the form of our approach. More specifically, our evaluation approach is **theory-based**, takes a **learning orientation** to support decision making within the Adaptation Fund, and is **utilization-focused** to ensure evaluation findings are converted into actionable lessons learned and recommendations. These are outlined in further detail below:

- **Theory-based:** The evaluation will be grounded in the ToC we collaboratively developed for the Readiness Programme with the AF-TERG and Adaptation Fund's Readiness team members. Developing this ToC allowed us to ensure a shared understanding of the causal pathways and related assumptions that make up the Readiness Programme and, as a result, to finalize the evaluation questions and sub-questions.
- **Learning Orientation:** Given the purpose of this evaluation, we will both explore how the Readiness Programme has incorporated learnings over time and use the evaluation findings to develop key insights that can inform future strategy and implementation. This orientation is also embodied in learning-focused questions as part of our evaluation matrix.
- **Utilization-focused:** The evaluation team will seek to maximize the utilization of findings by working closely with the AF-TERG and other stakeholders to discuss and sense check emerging findings, co-develop recommendations, and identify ways to increase the accessibility and usability of the evaluation outputs. This is also aligned with a **semi-independent evaluation**<sup>14</sup> approach and supports the learning orientation described above.

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<sup>13</sup> Adaptation Fund. (2022) *Evaluation Policy of the Adaptation Fund*.

<sup>14</sup> As per AF Evaluation Policy, semi-independent evaluations are conducted by an evaluation team comprised of a combination of independent evaluators and personnel within the management or operational structure of the entity being evaluated, as well as other relevant stakeholders.

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**Table 3: Summary matrix: AF-TERG Evaluation Principles mapped to OPM's broad approach**

<b>Evaluation Principles of AF-TERG</b>	<b>Definition of principles</b>	<b>OPM's approach is multifaceted, including theory-based, learning orientation, and utilization-focused.</b>
<b>1. Relevance and Utility</b>	Evaluations should be relevant, timely, practical, and integrated into operations to effectively serve users' information needs. These users include, for example IEs, DAs, the Board, the secretariat, the AF-TERG, civil society organizations, and other partners. Utility also refers to generating knowledge for the wider climate change adaptation and sustainable development community.	OPM will collaborate with AF-TERG and various stakeholders, including the Adaptation Fund's Readiness team as advised during kick-off, to ensure findings are relevant, accessible, and grounded in practical knowledge. This semi-independent approach will help facilitate faster integration of insights from the evaluation into the Readiness Programme.
<b>2. Credibility and Robustness</b>	Evaluations should be conducted rigorously, using justifiable and contextually appropriate methods by competent evaluators, adhering to international standards.	The evaluation will employ a theory-based approach, guided by a draft ToC developed collaboratively. Evidence gathered through various data collection methods will provide multiple sources of information and perspectives for responding to each evaluation question, including in developing actionable steps for programme improvement. This will increase the credibility and robustness of both findings and recommendations.
<b>3. Transparency</b>	Evaluations should be transparent throughout the entire process, with clear communication and stakeholder engagement, while maintaining data confidentiality and disclosing analysis methods.	Since the inception, multiple meetings have been conducted with the Adaptation Fund's Readiness team and AF-TERG, during which we have taken a collaborative and transparent approach to decision making and addressing any emergent issues. We have also established bi-weekly meetings with the AF-TERG to share updates and any obstacles or challenges that may arise, as well as to collaboratively identify solutions and the way forward.
<b>4. Impartiality and Objectivity</b>	Evaluations must be conducted impartially by independent and unbiased evaluators with full freedom from undue influence, utilizing objective methods.	The evaluation team comprises of multiple researchers as part of data collection and analysis which will help establish a degree of objectivity and impartiality by allowing the team coming together to agree on findings, thus avoiding a single researcher's bias. It is important to note that the evaluation is semi-independent, with inputs from the Readiness team and AF-TERG as indicated in the ToR, to facilitate faster uptake of evaluative insights into the Readiness Programme.

Evaluation Principles of AF-TERG	Definition of principles	OPM's approach is multifaceted, including theory-based, learning orientation, and utilization-focused.
<b>5. Equitable &amp; Gender Sensitive Inclusivity</b>	Evaluations must be inclusive and equitable, prioritizing the perspectives of vulnerable groups to ensure a complete and relevant assessment, empowering stakeholders and building ownership.	The evaluation will engage with a diverse range of stakeholders across various levels, including national and international organizations, IEs, similar organizations and the private sector. To ensure geographical representation, case studies will be conducted in carefully selected countries across multiple continents. To the extent possible, we will be mindful of gender in seeking out stakeholders to participate in data collection. Our evaluation team is also geographically and gender diverse, which increases the diversity of perspectives and experiences brought to the evaluation.
<b>6. Complementarity</b>	The Adaptation Fund promotes a whole-of-Fund approach to evaluation, emphasizing complementarity, collective learning, and knowledge sharing within and beyond the Fund.	The evaluation will assess how the Readiness Programme has incorporated learnings over time and identified insights from its operations and the broader climate finance landscape. Additionally, the utilization focused approach aligns with a semi-independent evaluation model and reinforces the learning orientation. We will work with the AF-TERG to identify ways in which we can support learning.
<b>7. Complexity Sensitive and Adaptive</b>	Evaluations should consider the complex and dynamic human and ecological systems within which interventions are implemented.	The approach of the evaluation is a whole systems approach where we will triangulate insights from different stakeholders to capture how different factors affect the implementation and outcomes of the Readiness Programme. For instance, we will interview a range of stakeholders such as IEs, government stakeholders, civil society and any support partners, which will allow us to understand the various factors that affect the uptake of the Readiness Programme.



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## 3.2 Theory of Change

To design an effective evaluation for the Readiness Programme, it was necessary to first develop a ToC to articulate how the programme intends to achieve the desired change identified as well as to gain a comprehensive overview of the processes in place to do so.

**First, the *problems* the programme aims to address were identified, as were the *solutions* it proposes to use to address those problems, and the *objectives* it aims to achieve in doing so.** This was done in collaboration with the Adaptation Fund's Readiness Team, Secretariat and the AF-TERG to ensure the evaluation team had a correct understanding of the programme and that this understanding was shared. The resulting ToC uses arrows to link these elements in the form of causal pathways. It also specifies the assumptions about how change will happen. The below sections narrate the process of developing the ToC.

### Problem

Those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change are often low-income countries, specifically SIDs and LDCs who are also struggling to access climate finance. This is often due to lack of technical and institutional capacity.

The Adaptation Fund recognizes that it is often the case that entities in these countries are lacking the capacity to access, manage and comply with fiduciary and safeguard requirements for specific climate financing. Therefore, even programmes such as the Adaptation Fund's Direct Access Modality remain inaccessible. Unfortunately, without access to such climate finance, this perpetuates their vulnerability and means that entities continue to lack the technical and institutional capacity to design, implement and build resilience, as well as to enable country and community adaptation to counter changing climate conditions. Adaptation Fund stakeholders also shared with us that there are limited mechanisms for knowledge-sharing, which they believe could enhance NIEs' learning as well as serve as a mechanism by which to share best practices when it comes to accessing and implementing adaptation finance.

In the process of designing a solution to the above problem, the Adaptation Fund recognized that the following constraints seem to be preventing this problem from being adequately addressed: limited awareness of the grant application process and support; competing funding opportunities; varied institutional capacity for proposal development and scale-up of projects; political process of choosing NIEs; lack of expertise in ESP and gender policies; complex access modalities; and limited understanding of fiduciary standards. It was with these constraints in mind that the Adaptation Fund launched the Readiness Programme to counter such obstacles, supporting NIEs to more easily access crucial climate finance.

### Solution

Launched in 2014, the Readiness Programme was set up by the Adaptation Fund with the objective of strengthening the capacity of developing countries, specifically those most vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, to access climate adaptation finance, particularly through the Direct Access Modality, as well as their overall capacity to develop and implement projects that increase their resilience. The Readiness Programme is structured around three main components, under which specific activities are carried out. The Adaptation Fund Secretariat informed us that each activity can be iteratively adapted

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and tailored to its context and informed us of the specific activities which are implemented under the various Readiness Grants (Project Scale-up Grants; Technical Assistance Environmental, Social and Gender Policy Grants; Readiness Package Grants). The activities are listed under the relevant component below.

### **1. Support to accredited IEs**

This is being achieved by hosting seminars, webinars and workshops for already accredited IEs to support with the necessary planning, design and development for scale up and/or replication of successful adaptation projects. As well as providing technical assistance on aspects of environmental, social and gender policy.

### **2. Cooperation/partnership with climate finance readiness providers**

Partnerships are being established with other funds, multilateral development banks (MDBs) and others to provide readiness support for climate finance and adaptation. For instance, through the building of outreach tools, collaborative webinars, workshops and seminars.

### **3. Support to NIEs seeking accreditation with the Adaptation Fund**

Through workshops, guidance documents, and South-South knowledge sharing, context-specific and tailored readiness support is being provided to NIEs seeking accreditation.

### **4. Knowledge management**

This is fostered through media outreach, case studies, webinars, various social media and web-based tools such as the Climate Finance Ready microsite for all IEs.

## **Outputs**

An output can be described as the tangible deliverable or product produced or provided by a series of inputs and activities that an intervention supports. As such, an output is within the direct control of an intervention, is provided to the intervention's direct participants, and expected to form the basis from which the desired change will occur.

The outputs in this case are that: the intended recipients (NIEs) actively participate in the seminars, webinars, workshops; accredited NIEs receive funding to strengthen their capacities with regards to ESP and Gender policies, and project scale-up; those NIEs seeking accreditation receive readiness grants and South-South support; and accredited IEs access and contribute to knowledge sharing platforms.

It should be mentioned that the inputs will have these desired outputs, if the following assumptions are met: IEs can attend training events, webinars and workshops; they are aware about readiness grants; and they have the time, resources and technical capacity to apply for the grants.

### **Outcomes:**

Outcomes refer to short- to medium-term changes or benefits related to knowledge, behavior, attitudes, and (later) changes in actions or policies that occur because of the outputs. Here they are split into immediate outcomes, and ultimate outcomes, the former directly relate to the log-frame, whereas the latter refer to the broader societal benefits of the programme.

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The immediate outcomes assume that Fund activities are designed to meet the specific needs of NIEs. These outcomes include the increased capacity of accredited national and regional organizations to design and implement concrete adaptation projects; the increased capacity of NIEs to meet the Fund's fiduciary and accreditation standards (including gender, environment and social risks etc.); and improved knowledge sharing platforms, improving the readiness programme's ability to facilitate direct access to adaptation finance, and the implementation of concrete adaptation projects.

Then, assuming IEs translate their improved capacities into funding applications and projects, the ultimate outcomes are an increased number of fully developed, good quality adaptation projects and proposals prepared by NIEs and approved by the Board; and more developing countries with accredited NIEs and the capacity to directly access climate finance.

### **Impact**

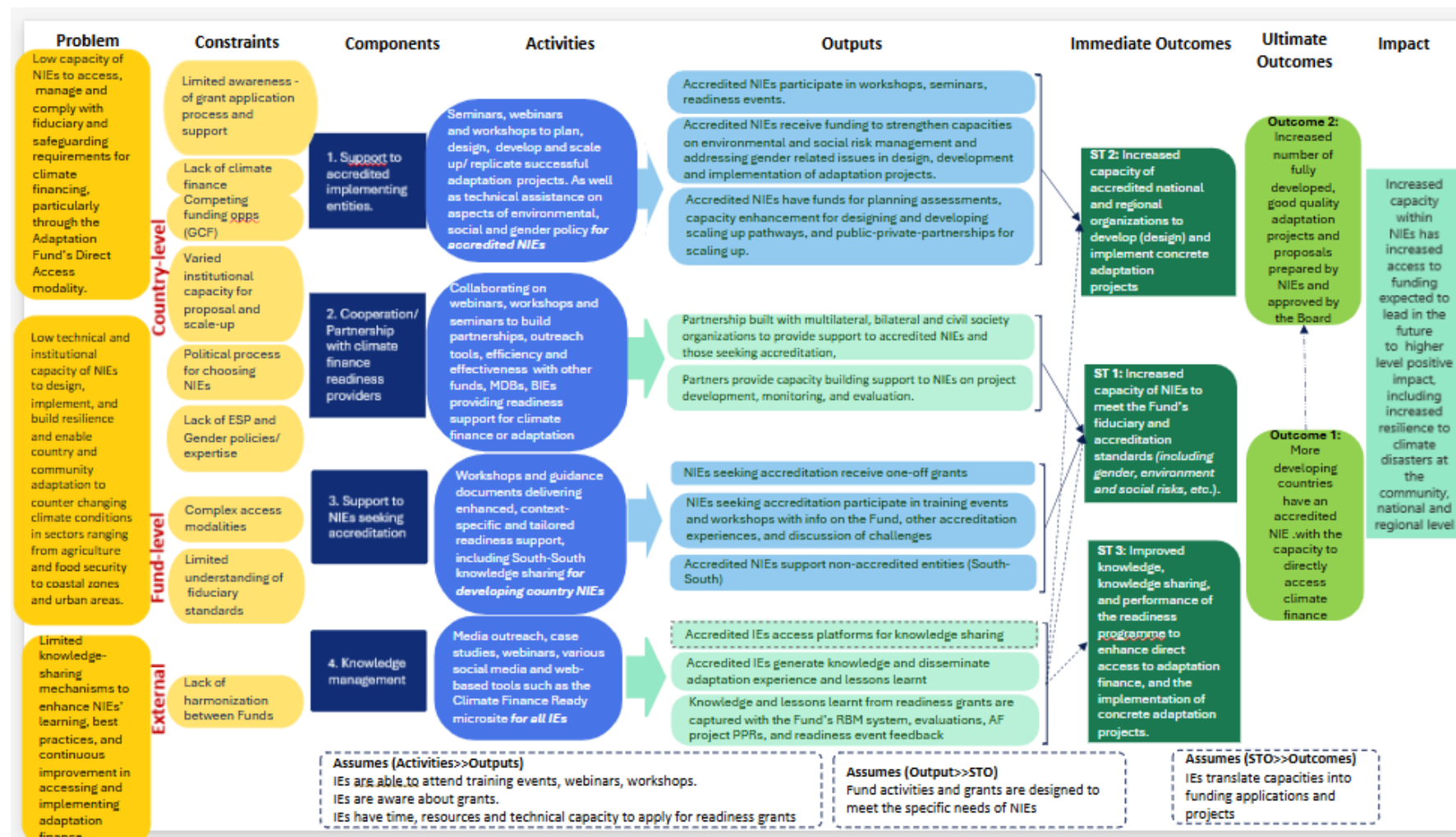
With the effective implementation of programme-supported outputs, the Readiness Programme's impact can be articulated as 'Increased capacity within NIEs has increased access to funding expected to lead in the future to higher level positive impact, including increased resilience to climate disasters at the community, national and regional level'.

### **ToC in Evaluation**

Developing this ToC assisted in identifying key areas to explore through the evaluation questions and data collection and analysis, which have formed the foundation of the evaluation matrix. With an overview of the processes and activities taking place under the Readiness Programme, we will be able to explore if these activities are contributing to the Adaptation Fund's intended outcomes and impact.

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Figure 3 Theory of Change prepared for Readiness Programme

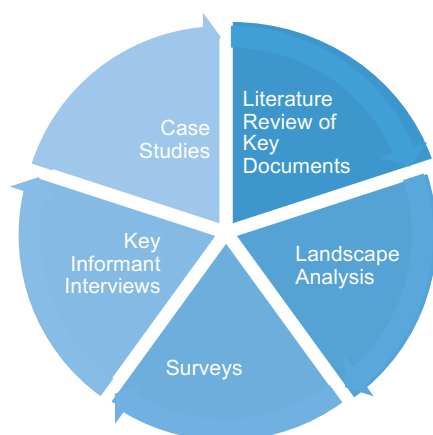


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### 3.3 Evaluation Data Collection Methods

The evaluation will use a hybrid, mixed-method (qualitative and quantitative data) approach to data collection that includes multiple methods and sources of data (including primary and secondary methods; see Figure 3). These are outlined in further detail below.

**Figure 34 Data collection methods**



#### 3.3.1 Literature review of key documents

The evaluation will start with a review of key Adaptation Fund and Readiness Programme documents. As part of the inception phase, we have conducted a thorough review of key documents including guidelines, administrative and management documents, the Adaptation Fund results framework, policy and guidance documents, proposals, progress reports, board decisions, and assessments. This review provided insights into the programme's evolution and supported the development of the ToC.

Key Readiness Programme documents that have been reviewed so far include:

1. AFB.B.22.6 Options for a climate finance readiness programme for NIEs and RIEs ([link](#))
  2. AFB.B.23.5 Execution arrangements of the Readiness Programme ([link](#))
  3. AFB.B.27.7.Rev.1\_Readiness Programme Progress Report and Proposal for FY17 ([link](#))
  4. AFB.B.27.9.Rev2\_Report for AFB 27\_Report with budget decisions as stated in AFB.B27.7.Rev.1 ([link](#))
  5. AFB.B.29.8.\_Proposed Framework for the Readiness Programme ([link](#))
  6. AFB.B.30.7\_OPG-amended-in-October-2017 ([link](#))
  7. AFB.B.30.8. Results Framework for Readiness Programme\_Amended Oct 2017 ([link](#))
  8. Thematic Evaluation of the Adaptation Fund Accreditation Process ([link](#))
  9. Bridging the Gaps in Accreditation ([link](#))
  10. Rapid Evaluation of the Adaptation Fund, 2023 ([link](#))
  11. Medium Term Strategy (2023-2027) ([link](#))
  12. Independent Evaluation of the GCF's Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme (RPSP2023) ([link](#))
  13. Experience from GIZ Climate finance readiness work([link](#))
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### 3.3.2 Landscape Analysis

Per the evaluation ToR, we will conduct a landscape analysis to assess the Adaptation Fund's position relative to other readiness mechanisms, acknowledging potential variations in readiness programme definitions across the field. This will include a review of related climate finance readiness programmes, such as those from the GCF, GIZ, etc., to position the Adaptation Fund within the wider climate finance ecosystem. The analysis will focus on comparisons, identifying ways in which the funds collaborate and any challenges, drawing lessons from these other initiatives, and showcasing the Fund's unique strengths and added value. Related methods will include a document review of publicly available institutional documents that describe or assess those programmes (e.g., the Independent Evaluation of the GCF's Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme<sup>15</sup>) as well as interviews with staff from those comparable programmes.

The landscape analysis will utilize a comparative matrix as its primary analytical tool. This matrix will systematically organize and compare various readiness programs across a set of predefined key criteria. These criteria, such as programme design, implementation strategies, stakeholder engagement, and monitoring and evaluation frameworks, will allow for a structured and consistent comparison. By using this matrix, we aim to identify commonalities, differences, best practices, and gaps, ultimately providing a clear understanding of the Adaptation Fund's position within the broader readiness landscape.

### 3.3.3 Surveys

We will conduct an online survey to gather the perspectives of and feedback from a broad range of stakeholders with experience of and perspectives on the Readiness Programme. This includes Designated Authorities (DAs) and IEs. This will complement more in-depth data collection methods such as case studies and interviews by providing for breadth beyond case study countries. In particular, the survey will provide valuable insights into:

- **Awareness** of the Readiness Programme and the support it offers.
- **Relevance** of the programme vis-à-vis IE and DA needs.
- **IE and DA experiences** with the Readiness Programme, including the application process, support received (and how it fits with other support received), and challenges faced.
- **Programme effectiveness** in enhancing IEs' and DAs' capacity to develop and implement adaptation projects.
- **Areas for improvement**, where the Readiness Programme can be strengthened to better meet the needs of IEs and DAs.
- **Stakeholder satisfaction** with the programme, identifying any unmet needs or expectations.

The survey will be administered online using a survey platform such as SurveyMonkey. This platform allows for efficient distribution, data collection, and analysis. It will be designed with a mix of quantitative (e.g., multiple-choice, rating scales) and qualitative (e.g., open-ended) questions to gather precise information and detailed feedback.

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<sup>15</sup> Independent Evaluation Unit (2023). Independent Evaluation of the GCF's Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme. Evaluation report No. 16 (September). Songdo, South Korea: Independent Evaluation Unit, Green Climate Fund

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### 3.3.4 Key Informant Interviews

A comprehensive stakeholder mapping exercise was conducted during the inception phase (Annex D) to identify key stakeholders relevant to the evaluation. Based on this, a purposive sampling approach will be employed to select stakeholders for key informant interviews (KIIs), ensuring diverse perspectives and representation from various organizations, sectors, geographies, levels of experience, etc. The final list of stakeholders will be finalized in close consultation with AF-TERG and Adaptation Fund's Readiness team to ensure alignment with the evaluation objectives and inclusivity of critical voices. The Adaptation Fund's Readiness team will share the stakeholder list as well as the final list of who was interviewed as part of the evaluation report.

We estimate a total of 62 interviews as outlined in Table 4 below. These are divided between case studies and general interviews. KIIs will be conducted both in person and remotely, depending on the specific context, logistical feasibility, and stakeholder availability (with most interviews outside of select case studies occurring virtually).

**Table 4: Suggested list of stakeholders for interviews**

Stakeholder category	Number of interviews					Total
	Case Study 1	Case Study 2	Case Study 3	Case Study 4	Case Study 5	
Case study Interviews						
DAs and Focal Points	6 (2 per country)	8 (2 per country)	3	3	3	23
NIE Staff						
Ministry Representatives (Environment, Finance, Planning)						
Successful and Unsuccessful NIE Applicants	2 (1 per country)	2 (1 per country)	2	2	2	10
Regional and Multilateral Implementing Entities						
Private Sector	N/A	N/A	1	1	1	3
Civil Society Organizations and Communities	N/A	N/A	1	1	1	3
Support Partners - Climate Finance Readiness Partners	N/A	N/A	1	1	1	3
Support Partners - South-South Cooperation Participants	N/A	N/A				
Additional interviews	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4	4
Total	8	10	8	8	12	46
Adaptation Fund Level Interviews						
Adaptation Fund Board and Secretariat	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	10
Fund Portfolio Managers/Officers						
Accreditation Panel Members						
Other - Independent Evaluators	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1



Landscape Analysis Interviews						
Green Climate Fund (GCF) Readiness Programme Staff	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5
Global Environment Facility (GEF) Representatives						
UNFCCC Capacity Building Team						
<b>Total</b>						<b>62</b>

### 3.3.5 Revised criteria for case studies

To gain a more nuanced, in-depth, and contextualized understanding of how the Readiness Programme engages with a variety of different countries, including the specifics of implementation, context, opportunities, and challenges, we will conduct five detailed case studies as part of the evaluation. This includes two light-touch, remote case studies (Case Studies 1 and 2) and three in-person case studies focusing on one country each (Cases 3-5). Virtual case studies capture countries with limited or no formal engagement with the Readiness Programme grants to date, while the in-person case studies focus on countries that have experience with several different types of Readiness Programme support as well as general Adaptation Fund support (such as funded projects).

Taken together, the spectrum of case studies captures a range of experiences with the Readiness Programme and holistically respond to the evaluation matrix. This includes the extent to which countries have been able to effectively access Readiness Programme and Adaptation Fund support and any challenges they have faced in doing so. The in-person case studies will provide valuable insights into what has worked well in countries with strong engagement, producing important lessons and good practices that can be emulated in future.

Each case study was selected in collaboration with the AF-TERG and Adaptation Fund's Readiness team following multiple rounds of conversation and feedback. The sampling strategy for selecting these case studies considers the following:

1. **Spectrum of engagement with the Readiness Programme:** Our sampling approach is designed to capture a wide range of experiences across the spectrum of engagement with the Readiness Programme. This includes countries with minimal or no engagement as well as those with long-term or in-depth use of both the Readiness Programme grants and other Adaptation Fund grants. To achieve this, we reviewed the list of all approved Readiness and Adaptation Fund grants accessed to date using information on the Adaptation Fund's website. In doing so, we ensured:
  - a. **a focus on different grants under the Readiness Programme**, including Readiness Package Grants, SSC, Project Scale Up, and TA for Gender and ESP. A diverse focus helps us to understand how these grants help to build capacity for undertaking various climate finance readiness activities and provide opportunities for NIEs to provide peer support to countries seeking accreditation with the Fund.
  - b. **a diversity of levels of engagement for the proposed countries** with the Readiness Programme as well as the Adaptation Fund grants.



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By exploring this spectrum, we aim to uncover the unique circumstances and factors that shape countries' interactions with the programme, providing a foundation for actionable recommendations to enhance its accessibility and impact.

2. **Geographic diversity:** The countries have been selected specifically from each of the four Adaptation Fund defined regions (Africa, Asia-Pacific, Eastern Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean). This ensures geographic diversity and a corresponding diversity of perspectives.
3. **Feasibility:** The countries have also been selected based on the feasibility of conducting the case studies. This includes an assessment of the economic and political context, as well as logistical considerations.

Table 5 below highlights the focus and reasons for each selected country. The detailed analysis of selecting these countries is provided in Annex F. It is important to also note that, in addition to the case studies, we will also include a 'Case Box' on Zimbabwe as another example of successful engagement with the Readiness Programme. Due to access restrictions and limitations on evaluation resources, this Case Box will be light-touch, with one or two interviews with the DA focused on South-South support.

**Table 5: Case study countries**

Case Number	Focus	Mode	Case Study country and Region	Reason for selecting the country in collaboration with Adaptation Fund Readiness team and AF-TERG
<b>Case Study 1</b>	Countries that have not formally engaged with the Adaptation Fund or the Readiness Programme grants to date.	Virtual	<b>Grenada, Kiribati, Trinidad &amp; Tobago (SIDS countries)</b>	This study aims to provide insights into potential barriers facing SIDS, with Kiribati also representing a LDC perspective and the opportunities to enhance the Programme's accessibility and effectiveness. The selection encompasses SIDS that have expressed interest but have not yet accessed the Readiness Programme.
<b>Case Study 2</b>	Countries that have accessed Adaptation Fund grants (via RIE or international entity), but no Readiness Programme grants.	Virtual	<b>Fiji, Ethiopia, Indonesia and Bangladesh</b>	These countries have accessed AF grants but have not utilized the Readiness Programme grants available. The selection encompasses SIDS (Fiji) and Africa (Ethiopia) and Asia-Pacific (Indonesia and Bangladesh), offering critical perspectives from vulnerable nations. Barriers, gaps, or alternative capacity-building mechanisms that may be influencing their decisions will be explored.
<b>Case Study 3</b>	This case study will focus on a country that accessed Readiness Funds prior to 2020 and have accessed a readiness package grant since 2020. It will explore factors affecting those countries that had positive and challenging experiences with the process.	In-person	<b>Antigua and Barbuda (A&amp;B)</b>	Engagement with a range of readiness grants to capture experiences and interactions through the grant package and overall Adaptation Fund. This study aims to identify factors and lessons contributing to their success and/or lack of continuation. Any plans for multiple NIEs, and/or utilization of other readiness funds such as from GCF will be captured. Specific factors to note include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A&amp;B received a TA grant in 2016 and received two SSC grants in 2017 to support NIE accreditation in Dominica and Maldives. Support for Dominica was challenging and not completed.</li> </ul>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A&amp;B had an Adaptation Fund project approved in 2017 and an innovation project approved in 2020.</li> <li>• A&amp;B also has a regional project in the pipeline with Caribbean Development Bank acting as IE.</li> </ul>
<b>Case Study 4</b>	This case study will focus on a country that accessed Readiness Funds prior to 2020 and have accessed a readiness package grant since 2020 but had to drop one of the entities it was supporting. It will explore factors affecting those countries that had positive and challenging experiences with the process.	In-person	<b>Armenia</b>	<p>Engagement with a range of readiness grants to capture experiences and interactions through the grant package and overall Adaptation Fund. This study aims to identify factors and lessons contributing to their success and/or lack of continuation. Any plans for multiple NIEs, and/or utilization of other readiness funds such as from GCF will be captured. Specific factors to note include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Armenia received a TA grant in 2018 and two readiness package grants in 2024 to support NIE accreditation in Tajikistan and Georgia.</li> <li>• In addition, Armenia had two Adaptation Fund projects approved in 2018 and 2019, an innovation grant approved in 2019 and currently has a Locally-led Adaptation project under review.</li> <li>• EPIU has 3 projects in the pipeline (1 innovation small grant and 2 regular projects).</li> </ul>
<b>Case Study 5</b>	These are countries actively using both the Readiness Programme and other Adaptation Fund grants. These countries have not only utilized Readiness Programme and Adaptation Fund grants but have also evolved to provide peer support and guidance for accreditation processes to other emerging national entities. The focus is on NIEs that have not only developed their own organizational capacities but have also proactively evolved to support and guide other emerging national entities	In- person	<b>Senegal (Africa)</b>	<p>Engagement with a range of Readiness Programme grants to capture experiences and interactions through the grant package and overall Adaptation Fund. This study aims to identify factors and lessons contributing to their success and/or lack of continuation. Any plans for multiple NIEs, and/or utilization of other readiness funds such as from GCF will be captured. Specific factors to note include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senegal received s TA grant for ESP in 2016.</li> <li>• In 2016, the <i>Centre de Suivi Ecologique (CSE)</i> of Senegal received a TA grant for the Gender</li> </ul>

	through peer-to-peer knowledge sharing and accreditation support. The focus will be on identifying factors contributing to their success, with special attention to countries that have, or plan to have, multiple NIEs, and have utilized other readiness programme/ funds such as from GCF.			<p>Policy (TA-GP) to enhance the capacity of CSE to assess and manage gender related issues and its compliance with the Adaptation Fund's Gender Policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senegal was also involved in SSC with Kenya.</li> <li>• Senegal also received funding from the Adaptation Fund for Adaptation to Coastal Erosion in Vulnerable Areas in 2010.</li> </ul>
<b>Case Study 5</b>	These are countries actively using both the Readiness Programme and other AF grants. These countries have not only utilized Readiness Programme and Adaptation Fund grants but have also evolved to provide peer support and guidance for accreditation processes to other emerging national entities. The focus is on NIEs that have not only developed their own organizational capacities but have also proactively evolved to support and guide other emerging national entities through peer-to-peer knowledge sharing and accreditation support. The focus will be on identifying factors contributing to their success, with special attention to countries that have, or plan to have, multiple NIEs, and have utilized other readiness programme/ funds such as from GCF.	Virtual (light touch case box, i.e. 2 interviews total)	<b>Zimbabwe (Africa)</b>	<p>Engagement with a range of Readiness Programme grants to capture experiences and interactions through the grant package and overall Adaptation Fund. This study aims to identify factors and lessons contributing to their success and/or lack of continuation. Any plans for multiple NIEs, and/or utilization of other readiness funds such as from GCF will be captured. Specific factors to note include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2016, Zimbabwe received the TA-GP to enhance the capacity of CSE to assess and manage gender related issues and its compliance with the Adaptation Fund's Gender Policy.</li> <li>• Zimbabwe was also involved in SSC with Kenya</li> <li>• Zimbabwe was also involved in supporting Malawi NIE accreditation process</li> <li>• Zimbabwe's three-dimensional perspective on the Readiness Programme having been simultaneously a recipient of support, a beneficiary of peer-support mechanisms, and now potentially a provider of knowledge transfer to other NIEs.</li> <li>• In 2021 and 2024, Zimbabwe also received funding from the Adaptation Fund for enhancing resilience of communities and</li> </ul>

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ecosystems and strengthening local communities' adaptive capacity and resilience to climate change.

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**Case study outputs:** The outputs of these case studies will be a 5–7-page case study brief, which will be included in the Annex of the final report. Each standalone report will present insights from stakeholder interviews, evidence on the country’s experience with the Readiness Programme and Adaptation Fund grants, key successes and challenges, and strategic recommendations for enhancing the programme’s role. A detailed outline of the case study briefs is provided in Annex G. The findings of these case studies will also serve as a key data source to be incorporated throughout the main evaluation report in response to the evaluation matrix.

### 3.4 Evaluation Data Analysis

The evaluation data analysis plan will incorporate the steps below, which ensures a structured and comprehensive evaluation, generating actionable insights to inform the future direction of the Adaptation Fund’s Readiness Programme.

- **Chronological Analysis of Programme Evolution**

Using a review of programme documents (e.g., annual reports and progress updates) from 2014 to the present as well as interviews with key Readiness Programme stakeholders, we will develop a detailed timeline of key events, modifications, and milestones that document strategic shifts and implementation challenges over time. By tracing the programme’s trajectory, we aim to identify patterns of progress, gaps, and adaptive responses to emerging climate resilience needs.

- **Literature Review**

Information from the literature review was systematically organized in an Excel sheet. We created columns for details such as document type, source, publication date, key themes, and insights. The data was then categorized and sorted to identify patterns and trends. Filters helped summarize findings and highlight common themes, gaps, and key insights. This structured approach enabled us to compare documents efficiently and provided a clear basis for developing the ToC.

- **Comparative Landscape Analysis**

We will begin by defining the scope of the landscape analysis, comparing the Readiness Programme with similar initiatives and establishing key criteria for comparison, including programme design, implementation strategies, stakeholder engagement, and monitoring and evaluation frameworks. Next, we will collect data through a thorough review of relevant documents, like independent evaluations of comparable programmes, and by conducting interviews with staff and stakeholders from these initiatives. With this data, we will develop a comparative matrix to systematically organize and compare the various readiness programmes based on the predefined criteria, helping us identify commonalities, differences, good practices, and gaps. Finally, we will synthesize the findings from both the document reviews and interviews to assess the Adaptation Fund’s position within the broader climate finance ecosystem, ultimately providing actionable recommendations to strengthen its readiness efforts.

- **Online Survey**

The analysis plan for the online surveys involves a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to capture a comprehensive view of stakeholder perceptions regarding the Readiness Programme. First, survey data will be cleaned and validated to ensure accuracy. Quantitative responses will be analyzed using descriptive statistics, to identify trends and relationships among key variables. For open-ended questions,

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thematic analysis will be conducted to extract recurring themes and insights based on the evaluation matrix.

- **KIIs**

For the KIIs, detailed notes will be taken, and these notes will undergo a thorough thematic analysis using a pre-defined coding framework based on the evaluation matrix to identify recurring themes as well as emerging insights. We will use an analysis matrix to systematically organize, code, manage and analyze the data collected. This will allow for cross-sectional analysis in a table comprising of key interview questions and themes in columns, while sources of data (such as interviews) in each row. To ensure reliability and consistency, multiple coders will review the interview notes, assess and agree on findings for objectivity and to avoid single researcher bias. Finally, the insights from the KIIs will be triangulated with data from online surveys and document review, ensuring a robust, comprehensive analysis that informs the evaluation of the Readiness Programme.

- **Case Studies**

We will begin by systematically organizing the data from the five case studies by compiling interview notes, observation reports, and other relevant documentation. Next, we will conduct a thematic analysis, coding the data to identify themes and patterns based on the evaluation matrix as well as any emerging insights. Following this, a cross-case comparison will be performed to compare findings across the different contexts, allowing us to uncover commonalities and differences that shed light on how various factors influence programme accessibility and effectiveness. These findings will be captured based on the matrix in the evaluation report.

- **Synthesis and Triangulation**

Data from all sources will be synthesized using a triangulation approach to enhance the credibility of findings. Cross-referencing survey responses, interview insights, and documentary evidence will help validate conclusions and to provide a robust, multi-faceted evaluation. Results will be presented through clear visualizations, summary tables, and narrative discussions, ultimately offering actionable recommendations for programme improvement. The team will also conduct an internal finding workshop to triangulate information and develop insights in real-time.

## **3.5 Ethical Considerations**

We do not anticipate that formal ethical approval would be needed for the evaluation. We are not collecting primary data from any vulnerable populations during the process, and at most, interviews will be with professionals and related to their professional experience. Regardless of a formal ethics review, however, the team will follow ethical principles throughout the work. We will draw from existing literature on the governance of social research (e.g. Economic and Social Research Council (Framework for Research Ethics<sup>16</sup>) in adopting the following principles:

- **Clarifying purpose and ensuring that people understand what is happening:**  
The evaluation team will always clearly introduce themselves and directly explain the purposes of the evaluation and data collection as well as what will be done with the information. This will ensure that stakeholders have accurate information about the evaluation and an opportunity to ask clarifying questions.

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<sup>16</sup> Data Source: [Framework for research ethics – UKRI](#)

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- **Ensuring consent:** While written consent is unlikely to be required, all participants will be asked for clear consent to take part, and for permission to record discussions if needed. Consent will be based on ensuring participants fully understand what is involved, and those participating in the evaluation will be given the opportunity to end their participation at any time.
- **Confidentiality and anonymity:** The names of interviewees will not be used in any outputs from the evaluation. Where information is considered sensitive (for example, in relation to political issues), particular care will be taken to ensure findings are not linked to any organization or individual. Notes from data collection will be stored securely and only available to the immediate OPM evaluation team.
- **Ensuring the safety of participants:** This means that the environment in which discussions are conducted is physically safe. Apart from emergency free dial available numbers for security bodies, our researchers will also have phone numbers for other OPM office-based staff who can be contacted in case of emergencies. Any required precautions in relation to local health conditions will also be followed.

### 3.6 Methodological Limitations

Disadvantages	Mitigation measures
<b>LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS</b>	
<b>Variability in Readiness Programme Definitions:</b> Different climate finance mechanisms define and structure readiness programs in unique ways, making direct comparisons challenging	<b>Establish clear, standardized criteria</b> for comparison using a structured comparative matrix to ensure consistency.
<b>Limited Access to Data from Comparable Programmes:</b> Restricted or unpublished data from comparable programmes or difficulty in accessing stakeholders for interviews may limit analysis	<b>Leverage publicly available reports,</b> engage and conduct interviews with key informants from other programmes, and utilize secondary literature reviews to fill data gaps.
<b>Differences in Institutional and Policy Contexts:</b> Institutional, regulatory, and policy variations influence programme design and effectiveness.	<b>Contextualize findings</b> by highlighting program-specific governance structures, funding mechanisms, and regional challenges.
<b>Resource and Time Constraints:</b> May restrict the scope of the analysis	<b>Prioritize key programs</b> (e.g., GCF, GEF, GIZ) for in-depth comparison and streamline data collection through targeted stakeholder engagement.
<b>ONLINE SURVEY</b>	
<b>Nonresponse bias:</b> Not all invited stakeholders may respond, potentially leading to a biased sample	<b>Maximize response rates:</b> Send reminder emails.
<b>Limited depth:</b> Compared to interviews, surveys may not capture the nuances of individual experiences and perspectives.	<b>Carefully design questions:</b> Ensure questions are clear, concise, and relevant to the evaluation objectives.
<b>Technical challenges:</b> Some stakeholders may face technical difficulties accessing or completing the online survey	<b>Provide technical support:</b> Offer assistance to stakeholders who encounter technical issues.
<b>CASE STUDIES</b>	



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Disadvantages	Mitigation measures
<b>Availability of stakeholders:</b> Considering the high profile of some of the key stakeholders, their availability/response rate may be limited	<b>Demonstrate our flexibility/adaptability:</b> Send reminder emails and offer alternative participation options (e.g., phone interviews) if needed
<b>Subjectivity of stakeholders:</b> Their position may mean they give a biased perspective	<b>Triangulation:</b> Combining multiple data sources, conducting interviews with multiple stakeholders, and including analysis of documents

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## 4 Evaluation Work Plan and Management

### 4.1 Evaluation Timeline, Milestones and Deliverables

OPM is contracted from 27<sup>th</sup> November 2024 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025 to conduct the evaluation to inform the Readiness Programme strategy. The evaluation is carried out in four phases, and this is outlined in more detail including the milestones and deliverables in the work plan below. A detailed timeline is also provided in Annex H.

#### Phase 1: Inception

- Hold initiation consultations with the AF-TERG and Adaptation Fund's Readiness team and key stakeholders to finalize the evaluation design, focus of questions, list of stakeholders for data collection, and case study sites
- Conduct a workshop to develop a draft ToC
- Undertake a literature and document review for the landscape analysis and to inform the finalization of the evaluation approach
- Finalize evaluation questions
- Develop inception report

#### Phase 2: Data Gathering

- A comprehensive synthesis of documentation and the Readiness portfolio
- Data collection with stakeholders via KIs and surveys
- Case study site visits

#### Phase 3: Data Analysis

- Analyzing the obtained data based on the evaluation matrix
- Internal workshop to discuss findings and synthesize lessons
- Discussion of emergent findings with the AF-TERG

#### Phase 4: Reporting

- Develop a draft evaluation report and case study reports in consultation with AF-TERG that will include an executive summary, findings based on the evaluation matrix, conclusions, and recommendations for strengthening the Readiness Programme
- Finalize the reports based on the feedback from AF-TERG, the Adaptation Fund Readiness team and Secretariat<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> As agreed with the AF-TERG, country case studies will not be reviewed by NIEs in advance, although these entities will receive the final report from the AF-TERG.

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**Table 6: Work Plan**

Activity	Months							
	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June
<b>Phase 1: Inception</b>								
Contract signing and team mobilization								
Kick-off meeting with AF-TERG								
Initiation of consultations with the Readiness team and key stakeholders								
Access and review relevant documentation and reports								
Finalization of workplan, schedules, and evaluation methodology								
Selection of stakeholders for data collection and case study sites								
ToC workshop and submission of draft ToC								
<b>Deliverable: Submission and refinement of the Inception Report</b>								
<b>Phase 2: Data Gathering</b>								
Planning for field work logistics								
Data Collection: Stakeholder interviews and documentation (Remote interviews)								
Data Collection: Site visits (In-person)								
Synthesis of documentation and the readiness portfolio								
<b>Deliverable: data files, reports, interview minutes, interviewee details, data, analysis strategy</b>								
<b>Phase 3: Data Analysis</b>								
Data Analysis								
Drafting of the initial findings								
Internal Workshop to discuss and validate initial findings								
<b>Deliverable: Initial findings based on the data analysis</b>								
<b>Phase 4: Reporting</b>								
Detailed analysis based on phase 2 and 3 findings								
Development of a detailed technical report								
<b>Deliverable: Draft Report</b>								
Feedback on the draft report from AF-TERG								
Refinement of the report								
<b>Deliverable: Final Report</b>								

## 4.2 Roles and Responsibilities

The AF-TERG team is responsible for managing the evaluation, ensuring its alignment with the Adaptation Fund's strategic priorities, and upholding high-quality evaluation standards. As outlined in the Adaptation Fund's quality assurance framework, AF-TERG oversees the commissioning, implementation, and management of evaluations at the strategic and fund levels and is the focal point for this evaluation. The AF-TERG is responsible for reviewing key

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deliverables, such as the inception report, ToC, case studies, and final reports, to ensure they meet evaluation standards. The AF-TERG team is also responsible to coordinate with the Adaptation Fund's Readiness team and the Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat to gather their inputs, facilitate discussions, and make final decisions related to the evaluation and consolidate these insights and provide them to OPM to guide the evaluation process. Additionally, it is responsible for facilitating engagement with relevant stakeholders, including NIEs, Board Secretariat, DAs, etc. and addressing any emerging issues or concerns that may arise during the evaluation process.

**Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat:** Since this evaluation is being conducted in a semi-independent manner, members of the Secretariat will have an opportunity to provide inputs into the evaluation process and outputs. These opportunities will be fully coordinated by the AF-TERG, and no additional steps or processes for the Secretariat specifically are envisioned.

**OPM Role:** OPM is contracted by the AF-TERG and is responsible for implementing the evaluation. This includes designing and executing the methodology, conducting data collection through case studies, KIIs, and surveys, and synthesizing findings into actionable recommendations. OPM ensures the quality and accuracy of evaluation outputs through internal peer review and validation processes. The team also engages with AF-TERG and the Secretariat to ensure alignment with the evaluation's objectives and expectations. Additionally, OPM manages logistics, coordinates field visits and stakeholder consultations, and provides regular progress updates while flagging any potential risks or delays.

**Coordination/Liaising with the AF-TERG:** A meeting with representatives of AF-TERG team is scheduled every two weeks to review the evaluation's progress, discuss timelines, risks, and any other issues that need to be flagged. The project manager is responsible for minuting these meetings, which will be shared with the group. Any project delays or risks will be communicated in a timely fashion.

## 4.3 Quality Assurance

Delivery of quality is central to OPM's ethos. Quality is ensured both by our overall approach to evaluation design and implementation, based on many years of our experience in diverse sectoral and national contexts, as well as on specific quality assurance mechanisms which operate to provide formal checks. We utilize the following key points in our quality assurance process:

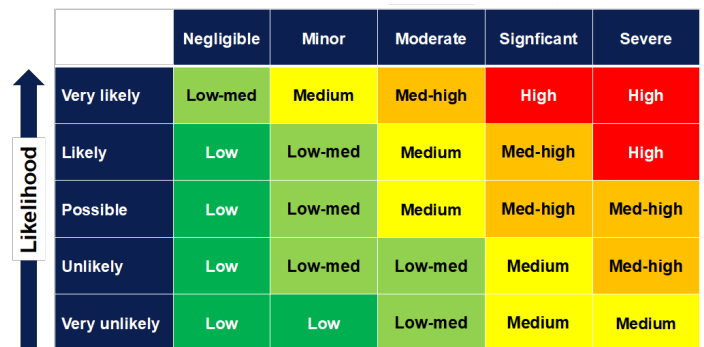
- **OPM applies Quality Assurance (QA) procedures throughout the project cycle.** Our QA procedures cover internal project management processes and cover all aspects of project delivery from project planning to implementation and completion and are applicable to all staff from team leaders to administrative staff. Our approach reflects the need for bespoke QA for each specific assignment.
  - The overall purpose of OPM's QA system is to ensure that consultancy services are provided as required by the Terms of Reference, and at an appropriate professional level. The aim is to ensure that these services, which are often provided by multi-disciplinary teams, come together as a coherent set of activities with consistent outputs.
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## 4.4 Risk Management and Mitigation Measures

Every evaluation project comes with its own set of challenges and limitations. Identifying potential challenges and mitigation strategies, at the evaluation design phase is crucial. Some of the key challenges that are anticipated over the course of this project, and some strategies to mitigate these challenges are summarized in the table below.

**Figure 5 Risk matrix colour codes**



	Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Significant	Severe
Very likely	Low-med	Medium	Med-high	High	High
Likely	Low	Low-med	Medium	Med-high	High
Possible	Low	Low-med	Medium	Med-high	Med-high
Unlikely	Low	Low-med	Low-med	Medium	Med-high
Very unlikely	Low	Low	Low-med	Medium	Medium

**Table 7: Risk matrix**

Category	Risk	Context	Severity	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Timeline Delays</b>	The project has a short timeline and an ambitious scope and could experience possible delays.  Slippage in key deliverables due to scheduling conflicts, unforeseen circumstances, or extended review processes.	Significant	Likely	High	Work with AF-TERG closely to deliver as per timelines and ensure that the project management team is informed of any delays Maintain a clear timeline with buffer periods, conduct regular check-ins with AF-TERG, and prioritize early submission of key deliverables for feedback
<b>Data Management</b>	<b>Documents Confidentiality</b>	Project documents are confidential, and need to be stored securely to avoid data breaches	Moderate	Unlikely	Low-med	AF-TERG has set up a shared folder to facilitate efficient sharing and access. Restrict document access to the team Inform OPM IT department of the confidential nature of all project folders
<b>Research</b>	<b>Collecting data in-person (through workshops and KIIs)</b>	When evaluating programmes retrospectively, recall from participants of programmes involved in the earlier years of the AF may become a challenge for accuracy for the evaluation.	Significant	Likely	Med-High	Use diverse data sources for the same set of evaluation questions that will help triangulate insights such as reports and assessments and interviews with different stakeholders  Incorporate workshops or learning days that allow for collective reflection in the methodology.  Co-produce evaluation outputs with relevant stakeholders
<b>Data Management</b>	<b>Collecting data remotely (through KIIs)</b>	Lack of access to a stable internet connection could cause difficulties in data transmission between devices and other components of a larger system for data collection. Connectivity challenges could also affect the ability to hold online group discussions, effectively during the online stakeholder consultations.	Significant	Likely	Med-High	For remote interviews particularly, we will also provide stakeholders with sufficient notice, so that they can prepare to be a part of these consultations in advance. Consultations will be scheduled, keeping in mind stakeholders' convenience to ensure they have strong internet connections and access to laptops during the meeting.
<b>Data Management</b>	<b>Effective data collections</b>	Non-response bias where types of stakeholders may not be reached or may be unwilling to participate.	Significant	Likely	Med-high	Work with AF-TERG team to identify and facilitate introductions with the relevant stakeholders. Schedule interviews and discussions at times that are convenient to stakeholders.

Evaluation	<b>Key Issues and Themes</b>	A critical part of desk review and data collection is ensuring all themes and key issues are covered. In fast-paced evaluations, it is very easy to miss a few key themes or encounter misinformation.	Moderate	Possible	Medium	OPM recognizes the importance of inclusivity and sensitivity and utilizes its quality assurance processes to ensure that key theme/issues are not missed.
Evaluation	<b>Local and cultural context</b>	Participants may be reluctant to openly discuss certain topics due to cultural norms or taboos or due to language barriers.	Significant	Likely	Med-High	We will ensure that data collectors are culturally competent and aware of local sensitivities. They will build trust by involving community leaders or influential figures in the data collection process. If the data collectors are not aware of the local language, they will employ interpreters if needed, ensuring they are skilled in translating nuanced expressions to capture the true meaning.
Evaluation	<b>Results and Learnings</b>	Disagreement with the findings.	Significant	Likely	Med-high	<p>Employ a collaborative approach with AF-TERG throughout the evaluation will help mitigate this challenge.</p> <p>Mention the source of the data and how conclusions were arrived at</p> <p>In case of any disagreement, have a constructive discussion with the AF-TERG and stakeholders to resolve these.</p>
Evaluation	<b>Ethical &amp; safeguarding concerns</b>	Instances of ethical misconduct or breaches of safeguarding protocols resulting in harm to the target populations, arising from actions by OPM staff or subcontractors.	Unlikely	Moderate	Low-med	<p>OPM places a mandatory obligation on all staff (whether permanent or temporary, Directors, subcontractors, consultants, volunteers or anyone working on behalf of OPM) and contractors to immediately report any concerns, suspicions, allegations and incidents that indicate actual or potential abuse of vulnerable people that they come across during their work with OPM.</p> <p>Anyone can report a Safeguarding concern i.e., staff, supplier or member of the public (including clients and their personnel etc.)</p>

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# Annex A Terms of Reference

## Introduction

This Terms of Reference (ToR) was prepared by the Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Adaptation Fund (AF-TERG) based upon an initial literature review and consultation with the Adaptation Fund Board (AFB) Secretariat (the 'Secretariat') and other stakeholders. The purpose of this ToR is to provide key information to potential bidders and guide the evaluation team through specifying the expectations during the various phases of the evaluation.

The ToR is structured as follows: Section 1 presents the rationale, objectives and main users of the evaluation; Section 2 and 3 presents the context, subject, and the details of the Adaptation Fund Readiness Programme; Section 4 defines the evaluation scope, criteria and questions; Section 5 identifies the methodological approach and ethical considerations; and Section 6 indicates how the evaluation will be organized. The annexes include the list of documentation that the evaluation team can build on.

## Section 1: Background of the evaluation

### Rationale

Thematic evaluations in the Adaptation Fund (AF) are conducted in line with the Adaptation Fund Evaluation Policy<sup>1</sup>. The evaluation offers an opportunity for the AF to benefit from an independent assessment of its readiness programme and generate evidence to inform its future implementation. Additionally, the evaluation has been commissioned at a pivotal moment, coinciding with the implementation of the second Medium -Term Strategy (MTS II) of the Adaptation Fund (2023-2027).<sup>2</sup> The MTS II foresees an expanded and enhanced readiness programme as a cross-cutting area of work to support the three strategic pillars of action, innovation, and learning and sharing, as well as the six crosscutting themes, in particular related to enhancing access to climate finance and long-term institutional capacities.

To inform the development of the enhanced readiness programme, the Implementation Plan (IP) of the MTS II<sup>3</sup> suggests as an activity under the crosscutting theme enhancing access to climate finance and long-term institutional capacity an evaluation of the Readiness Programme by the AF- TERG to identify further gaps and recommendations for enhancing existing capacity-building instruments and grants (see page 36, paragraph 10). The MTSII IP has also identified several activities related to supporting and enhancing the capacity of National Implementation Entities (NIEs) and Designated Authorities (DAs) of the Fund.

In line with the MTS II IP, this evaluation has been commissioned to initiate and provide direction for a comprehensive evaluation of the Readiness Programme under guidance from the AF-TERG. The evaluation will be executed as a semi-independent evaluation. The findings of this evaluation will also inform the Secretariat's development of a revised strategy for an enhanced readiness programme, which is planned to be presented to the Adaptation Fund Board in March 2025. The semi-independent approach allows for quicker integration of evaluative insights into the readiness programme, facilitating faster implementation of findings.

### Main users of the evaluation

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The evaluation will seek the views of, and be useful to, a broad range of internal and external AF stakeholders. The main audience for this evaluation will be the Adaptation Fund Board and its Secretariat. It is to be used as an internal document for self-reflection and to inform the revised Readiness Strategy being developed in parallel. Additionally, since this evaluation will be conducted in a semi-independent manner, the Readiness team of the AF will be fully involved in giving their inputs at various phases/ stages of its execution.

## **Section 2: Context of the evaluation**

### **Capacity-building in Climate Change Adaptation (CCA)**

Climate change is predicted to greatly affect the poorest people in the world, who are often hardest hit by weather catastrophes, desertification, and rising sea levels, but who have contributed the least to the problem of global warming. In some parts of the world, climate change has already contributed to worsening food security, reduced the predictable availability of fresh water, and exacerbated the spread of diseases and other threats to human health. The 2023 report on Adaptation Gaps<sup>4</sup> by the UNEP showed a 15 percent decrease in adaptation specific finance commitments from 2020 to 2021 which further emphasizes the need for quick action.

In 2001, the Conference of Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), through decisions 2/CP.7 and 3/CP.7 adopted two capacity-building frameworks that affirmed that capacity-building is essential to enable developing countries to implement the objective of the Convention. The frameworks provide a set of guiding principles and approaches to capacity-building and set out a way forward for capacity-building activities, such as developing and strengthening skills and knowledge, as well as providing opportunities for stakeholders and organizations to share their experiences and increase their awareness to enable them to participate more fully in the climate change process. Article 11 of the Paris Agreement reaffirms that capacity-building should enhance the ability of developing countries to implement climate action, and should facilitate technology development, dissemination and deployment, access to climate finance, relevant aspects of education, training and public awareness, and the transparent, timely and accurate communication of information. It also asserts that capacity-building should be country-driven, and should be an effective, iterative process that is participatory, cross-cutting and gender-responsive.

### **About the Adaptation Fund**

The Adaptation Fund, established in 2001, was officially operationalized in 2007 to finance concrete adaptation projects and programmes in developing countries that are parties to the Kyoto Protocol and are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change and serves the Paris Agreement. The Adaptation Fund finances projects and programmes that help vulnerable communities in developing countries adapt to climate change. Initiatives are based on country needs, views and priorities. The Fund is financed largely from voluntary contributions by government and private contributors, and also from a two percent share of proceeds of Certified Emission Reductions that is levied to assist developing country parties that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change to meet the costs of adaptation<sup>5</sup>. The AF provides readiness and capacity building support to developing countries, linking this work with the UNFCCC capacity building framework and Article 11 of the Paris Agreement.

### **Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Adaptation Fund (AF-TERG)**

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The Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Adaptation Fund (AF-TERG) is an independent evaluation advisory group accountable to the Adaptation Fund Board, established in 2018 to ensure the independent implementation of the Fund's evaluation framework.

The first AF-TERG strategy and work programme was approved intersessionally in June 2020, between the first and second part of its thirty-fifth meeting.

The second AF-TERG work programme has been drafted and is planned to be presented at B.42 in April 2024. The work programme specifically covers the work on the thematic evaluation of the Readiness Programme for the FY24-25.

### **Section 3: Subject of the evaluation**

At its twenty-first meeting, the Board recognized the need for a programme to support readiness for direct access to climate finance for national and regional implementing entities. Subsequently the readiness programme was formally launched in May 2014 with two overall objectives: (i) increasing the preparedness of applicant national implementing entities (NIEs) seeking accreditation by the Adaptation Fund and (ii) increasing the number of high-quality project/programme proposals submitted to the Board within a reasonable time after accreditation. These would be achieved through a range of capacity enhancement measures from support in the identification of potential NIEs within a country, to strengthening the appraisal, design implementation, and monitoring of adaptation projects and programmes undertaken by NIEs and Regional Implementing Entities (RIEs).

### **Objectives of the Readiness Programme**

In recognition of the early successes of the readiness programme to address readiness and capacity gaps, at its twenty-seventh meeting, the Board decided through Decision B.27/38 to institutionalize the readiness programme and make it a more permanent feature of the Fund. At its thirtieth meeting, the Board approved an updated results framework for the readiness programme and articulated the programme's specific objectives through decision B.30/45 to be:

- to increase the preparedness of applicant national implementing entities seeking accreditation by the Adaptation Fund, and
- to increase the number of high-quality project/programme proposals submitted to the Board after accreditation.

The decision of the Board is supported by Parties to the Kyoto Protocol at the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 10), at which the Parties recognized the Adaptation Fund Readiness Programme and decided to invite further support for the readiness programme of the Adaptation Fund Board for direct access to climate finance in accordance with decision 2/CMP.10, paragraph 5. Further, CMP 18 reinforced the Parties' support for the readiness programme and requested the Adaptation Fund Board to continue to enhance access to the Fund and country ownership by considering strengthening the readiness activities for national implementing entities, considering their long-term capacity- building needs in accordance with draft decision -/CMP.18, paragraph 10(a).

### **Key components of the Readiness Programme**

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The Board identified priority intervention areas for the readiness programme and approved four key components under which readiness support activities would be planned and implemented. By organizing the implementation of activities around four key components, the Readiness Programme can promote lessons learned and exchange of best practices during the full Adaptation Fund financing cycle, from accreditation through project design, implementation and reporting. In addition, the four key components provide a framework for strengthening the promotion of Direct Access. The Readiness Programme's four key components are:

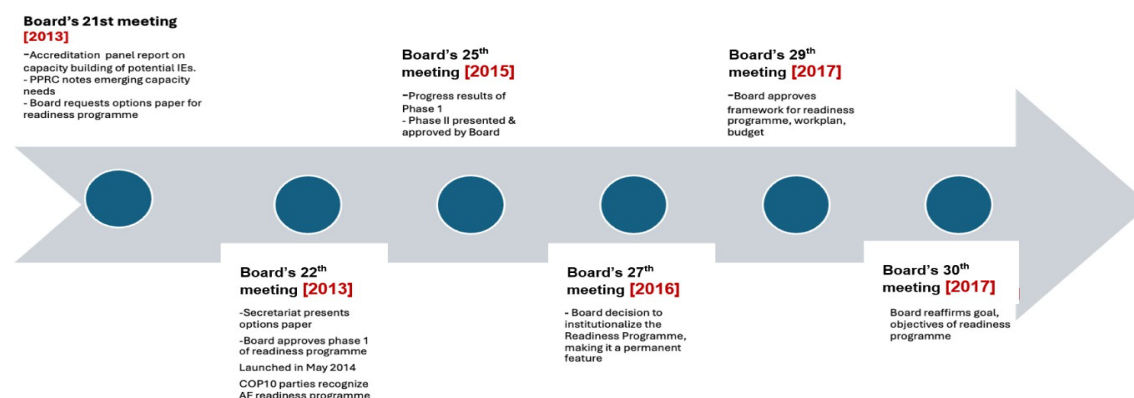
- Support to accredited Implementing Entities.
- Cooperation/Partnership with climate finance readiness providers.
- Support to countries seeking accreditation; and
- Knowledge Management.

A description of the key components is provided in Annex 1. Activities identified and planned under the four key components would be approved by the Board annually and implemented as per the budget also approved by the Board annually.

## Evolution of Adaptation Fund's Readiness Programme

The Programme started off as primarily an awareness-raising instrument (assessed yearly) which has evolved into a permanent feature of the Adaptation Fund, fully integrated into its operational guidelines with a set annual budget. Conducting workshops, organizing events, and supporting capacity-building for countries are some of the main activities undertaken under this programme with the aim to strengthen the capacity of national and regional implementing entities to receive and manage climate financing, particularly through the Fund's Direct Access modality, and to adapt and build resilience to counter changing climate conditions in sectors ranging from agriculture and food security to coastal zones and urban areas. For the first couple of years of the Programme, workshops were conducted in various regions with the aim of guiding the countries on accessing the funds as well as to increase the awareness about the Adaptation Fund and its processes and procedures. Since then, the focus has shifted toward training and capacity building.

The Adaptation Fund Readiness Programme has evolved through several key stages (See Figure 1).



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Figure 1: Evolution of Readiness Program (Source: TERG's interpretation based on literature review)

At its twenty-first meeting<sup>6</sup>, the Adaptation Fund Board discussed the necessity for capacity enhancement measures, including support for potential National Implementing Entities (NIEs) and strengthening project cycle processes. Recommendations from the Accreditation Panel (AP) and the Project and Programme Review Committee (PPRC) underscored the need for capacity building. Responding to these needs, the Board requested the Secretariat to prepare options for a readiness programme supporting direct access to climate finance for national and regional implementing entities, aiming to enhance their preparedness and increase the quality and quantity of project proposals.

In response, the Secretariat developed document AFB/B.22/67, outlining elements and options for a phased Readiness Programme. Phase I was approved at the twenty-second meeting, with a budget of US \$970,000, focusing on performance-based funding principles. The programme was launched in May 2014 and recognized at the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 10) and decided to invite further support for the readiness programme of the Adaptation Fund Board for direct access to climate finance in accordance with decision 2/CMP.10, paragraph 5. Phase I witnessed the successful execution of Climate Finance Readiness Seminars, engaging experts and accredited entities, particularly NIEs. Workshop reports, and some post workshop assessment reports are available here: <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/readiness/news-seminars/>. These efforts proved fruitful, leading to an increase in accredited NIEs and project proposals.

Building on the success of Phase I<sup>8</sup>, the Secretariat proposed Phase II at the twenty-fifth meeting. Phase II was approved with a total funding of US\$ 965,000, aiming to further enhance benefits and expand gains achieved in Phase I. The combined success of Phase I and II was evident in the

increased number of accredited NIEs, project proposals, and the growth of the readiness grant portfolio. Consequently, the Secretariat proposed institutionalizing the Readiness Programme as a permanent feature of the Fund<sup>10</sup>. The Board supported this proposal, institutionalizing the programme through Decision B.27/38 at its twenty-seventh meeting<sup>11</sup>. Subsequent steps were taken to integrate the Readiness Programme into the Fund's operations, policies, and guidelines, culminating in the approval of the results framework for the programme at the twenty-ninth meeting (see results framework in Annex 2).

#### Implementation modalities

To meet the objectives of the Readiness Programme, the following activities are carried out by the Readiness Team to enhance IE capacities to develop high-quality project/programme proposals, increase project/programme implementation capacity and to increase the capacity of entities seeking accreditation with the Fund to navigate the accreditation process<sup>12</sup>.

**Workshops and trainings:** Workshops are conducted to prepare and train organizations to meet the fiduciary standards of the Fund while meeting gender, social and environmental safeguards in accordance with the Fund's ESP and GP. The workshops are developed by the AFB Secretariat and have also been conducted in partnership with other organizations such as those already helping countries in establishing NIEs. Trainings are also provided to

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manage gender considerations, and social and environmental risks in projects as well as familiarizing the IEs with AF's policies and on preparing high quality adaptation projects. In addition the AF's Readiness Team engages the NIEs by organizing webinars, seminars, and country exchange visits, to further support capacity building and knowledge sharing efforts at the country and local levels.

Grants for IEs: Various grants have been made available for accredited implementing entities with tangible achievements with the Fund to apply for, to assist national entities applying for accreditation or existing NIEs requesting additional assistance in pursuit of developing high quality projects. More details on the Grants are reflected in table 1.

Partnerships: A (informal) partnership with the GCF was established to support the Community of Practice for Direct Access Entities (CPDAE). CPDAE is a platform that fosters knowledge exchange, capacity building, and peer support among National Implementing Entities (NIEs) of the Adaptation Fund and Direct Access Entities (DAEs) of the GCF, aiming to strengthen their ability to access and implement climate finance effectively, promote South-South cooperation, and enhance the overall efficiency of direct access mechanisms. Various partnerships have been established with other partners who have initiatives that support readiness and capacity building for adaptation, mostly resulting in co-funding and hosting joint events.

The Adaptation Fund Board has made available several small grants under the Readiness Programme to help National Implementing Entities (NIEs) provide peer support to countries seeking accreditation with the Fund and to build capacity for undertaking various climate finance readiness activities. These are namely, the Readiness Package Grants, which replaced the South-South Cooperation (SSC) Grants as per AFB Decision B.36/2513, the Project Formulation Grants (PFG), the Project Scale-up Grants, and the Technical Assistance (TA) Grants for ESP and Gender Policy. However, out of these, the Readiness Package Grants, the Project Scale-up Grant, and the Technical Assistance Grants are operational while the rest have either been discontinued or merged into the existing Grants. Table 1 below summarizes the current Grant structure.

Table 1: Current Grant structure of the AF Readiness Programme

Grant Type	Description
Readiness Package Grants (replaced the South-South Cooperation (SSC) Grants)	Small grants meant to facilitate the delivery of more enhanced, targeted, and tailored readiness support for accreditation to developing countries. The maximum amount of grant is US\$ 150,000 per NIE to support NIE accreditation to the AF through South-South Cooperation (SSC)
Project Scale-up Grants	Provide readiness funding to National Implementing Entities (NIEs) to support planning, designing, enhancement and overall capacity to develop scale-up pathways for AF funded projects nearing completion or already completed. Project Scale-up Grants are available up to a maximum of US\$ 100,000 per project and programme.

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Technical Assistance (TA) Grants for ESP and Gender Policy	<p>These are small grants to help NIEs build their capacity to address and manage environmental and social as well as gender associated risks within their projects/programmes in accordance with the Fund's Environmental and Social Policy (ESP) and Gender Policy. Through these grants, NIEs have the option to hire external expertise to help them address these issues. There are two types of Technical Assistance grants:</p> <p>Technical Assistance Grant for the Environmental and Social Policy and Gender Policy (TA-ESGP): Aimed at strengthening the capacity of NIEs to identify, screen, address and manage environmental and social risks as well as gender related issues in their projects and programs in line with the Fund's Environmental and Social Policy and Gender Policy. The grant is up to a maximum of US\$25,000 per NIE.</p> <p>Technical Assistance Grant for the Gender Policy (TA-GP): Meant for NIEs that already have robust environmental and social policies to put in place measures to avoid, minimize and/or mitigate adverse gender impacts in accordance with the Adaptation Fund's Gender Policy. The grant is up to a maximum of US\$10,000 per NIE.</p>
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Technical assistance: The readiness programme collaborates with consultants to develop manuals, training materials, and guideline documents. This includes providing assistance in the accreditation or re-accreditation process by developing and disseminating various manuals and guidelines on the Fund's operational policies. These policies cover areas such as social and environmental risk identification and assessment, project delays, gender assessments, and grant application and review processes.

Knowledge Management: This involves facilitating country exchanges and webinars on key topics identified as areas of interest by NIEs, sponsoring adaptation conferences with expert speakers from across the adaptation finance spectrum,; webinars with experts; supporting the community of practice for direct access entities (CPDAE); links to helpful resources; and doing outreach through traditional and digital media to build awareness of the Fund's direct access and capacity building.

#### Budget for the Adaptation Fund's Readiness Programme

The annual budget for the Readiness Programme activities has steadily risen over the years as the programme has evolved along with an evolution in the capacity building initiatives and activities conducted under it. From an approved budget total of USD 670,000 in FY14-FY15 (2 years), the budget has reached USD 920,900 in FY24, with the latest proposed budget for FY25 being approximately USD 1,200,000. See figure 2 below.

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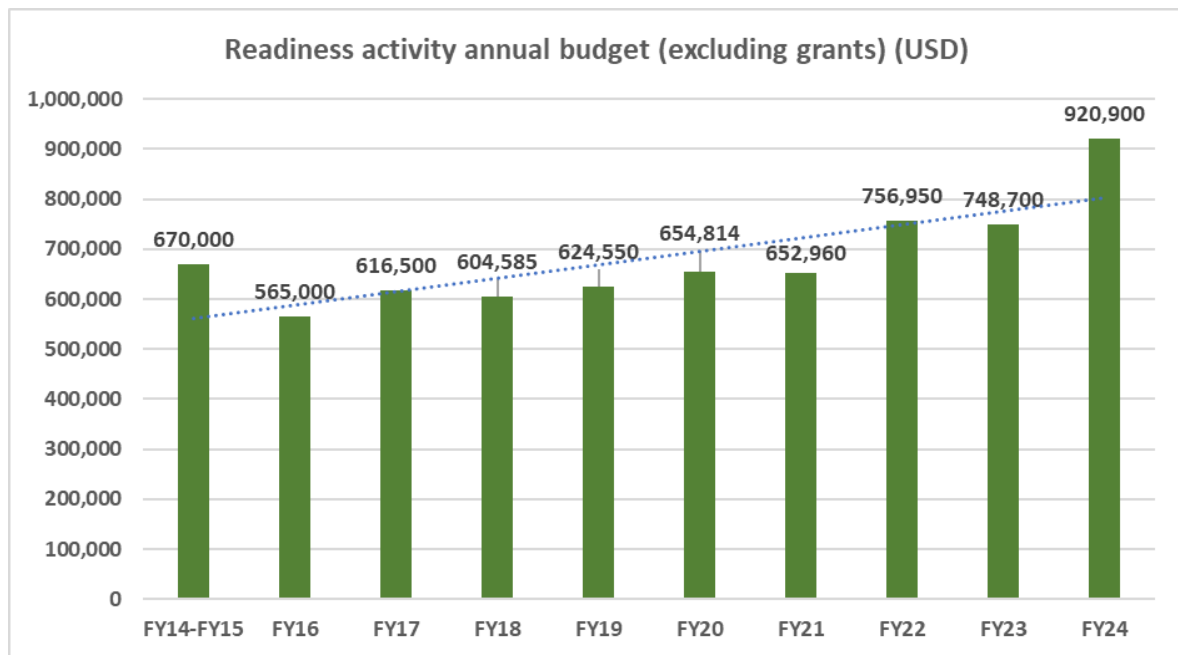
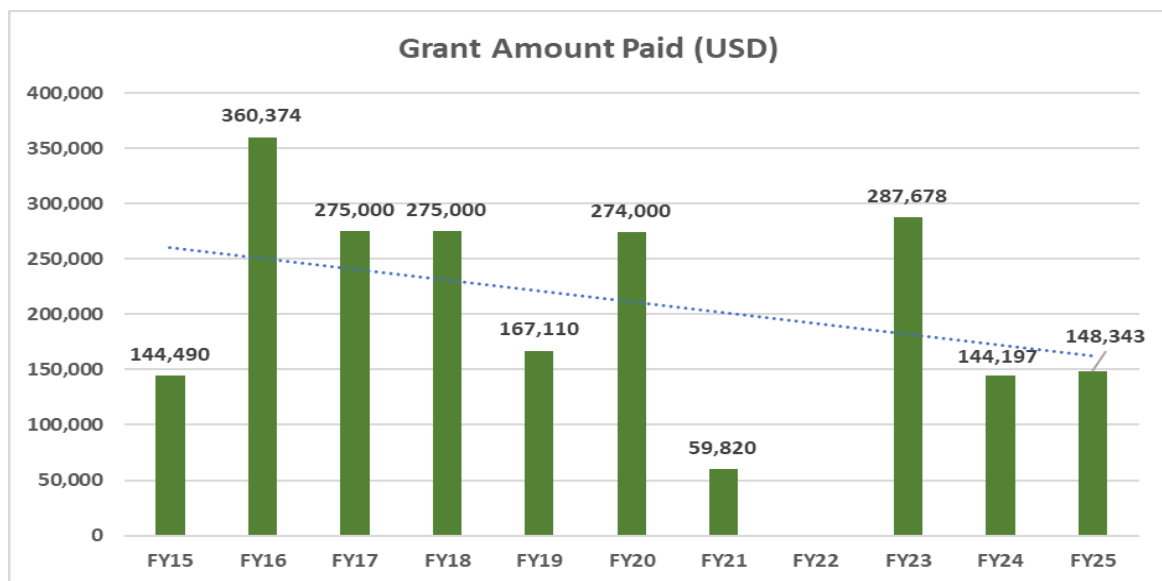


Figure 2: Readiness activities yearly budget (Source: Adaptation Fund Board decisions)

In addition to the approved annual budget are the grant amounts disbursed under the Readiness Programme. These show a varied disbursement trend since FY15 with the highest disbursed amount being USD360,347 in FY16 and the lowest being USD59,820 in FY21. In FY24, the amount has been USD144,197 with a prediction of USD149,340 in FY25. Figure 3 below provides a summary of the variation in disbursement.

Figure 3: Readiness Grants Paid (Source: Adaptation Fund Board decisions)



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The Secretariat monitors the progress of the Grants implementation as part of the overall monitoring of the Readiness Programme. For the monitoring and evaluation process under the Readiness programme, refer to AFB/B.29/8.

## **Section 4: Evaluation purpose, scope, and criteria**

### **Evaluation purpose**

The purpose of the evaluation is to have a comprehensive assessment of AF's readiness programme since its inception and chart a course for its future in supporting the accreditation process effectively and increasing the number of approved project proposals by the Board. The readiness programme evaluation is to be conducted as a thematic evaluation. It will be executed as a semi-independent evaluation<sup>17</sup> as defined in the Adaptation Fund Evaluation Policy and guided by the policy's evaluation principles and criteria. It must also be stressed that this evaluation shall provide, through findings and recommendations, guidance on the future development and evolution of the readiness programme to further enhance its purpose especially considering that the readiness team will be revising the readiness strategy in parallel with this evaluation.

### **Evaluation scope**

The evaluation will consider the entire period, comprehensively covering every aspect of the Readiness programme, as well as in context to the overall performance of the AF.

The unit of analysis of this evaluation is the AF Readiness Programme which is managed by the Readiness Unit of the Secretariat. The readiness programme is understood as the set of components, objectives, outcomes, outputs, activities and inputs that were included in the results framework approved by Board, as well as any subsequent revisions in the results framework to revise indicators and enable performance measuring as outlined in AFB/B.30/818. The evaluation will cover readiness components 1 to 3. Component 4 on knowledge management is excluded as this is managed under a separate knowledge management unit within the Secretariat. However, a brief assessment regarding readiness contribution to knowledge management will be conducted.

The evaluation will assess the focus of the programme at its genesis in 2014, the evolution in its priorities and operations over the years, particularly under the Fund's first Medium-Term Strategy (2018-2022), and provide insights and recommendations for its path forward in accordance with the mission and objectives of the second MTS of the Fund (2023-2027) and its Implementation Plan. The evaluation team should also explore the extent to which the readiness programme sought to learn from other partners/stakeholders in the climate finance through a landscape analysis of the climate finance readiness space encompassing not only climate funds, but also other donors. In line with the MTSII Implementation Plan, the evaluation team should also identify potential gaps and recommendations for enhancing existing capacity-building instruments and grants under the Readiness Programme.

### **Evaluation criteria and questions**

The evaluation will adhere to the AF Evaluation Policy criteria, encompassing Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Impact. During the inception phase, the evaluation team, collaborating with the TERG, will establish a theory of change for the readiness programme and refine these questions accordingly. Furthermore, the Evaluation Team will identify learning themes derived from ten years of implementing the readiness programme to

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be addressed in the inception report, translating them into specific lines of inquiry under the relevant evaluation questions and sub-questions.

Table 2: The Evaluation Questions

EQ 1 – To what extent is the Readiness Programme strategically focused to address the needs and priorities of the national and regional implementing entities? (Relevance)	
1.1	To what extent is the readiness programme aligned to national and regional entity priorities, the AF Medium-Term Strategy and the UNFCCC climate finance priorities, including guidance from the CMP and the CMA?
1.2	To what extent was the design of the readiness programme and its consecutive adjustments informed by credible evidence on the capacity building needs for climate finance access and programming?
1.3	To what extent did the readiness programme adapt and respond to evolving needs and priorities to ensure continued relevance during implementation?
EQ 2 - To what extent has the Readiness Programme achieved or is expected to achieve its objectives and outcomes? (Effectiveness)	
2.1	To what extent did the readiness programme strengthen the capacity of national and regional implementing entities to receive and manage climate financing, particularly through the Fund's Direct Access modality?
2.2	To what extent has the Readiness Programme been successful in supporting countries seeking accreditation and re-accreditation through small grants?
EQ 3 – To what extent is the Readiness Programme of AF compatible with other similar programmes within a country, sector, or institution? (Coherence)	
3.1	How well has the Readiness Programme complimented existing readiness programmes in supporting accredited entities through learnings and grants?
3.2	To what extent has the Readiness Programme successfully collaborated with other climate finance readiness providers?
3.3	To what extent has the readiness programme been effective in fostering cooperation and coordination among climate finance readiness providers?
EQ 4 - To what extent is the Readiness Programme cost effective and timely without consuming unnecessary time and resources? (Efficiency)	
4.3	To what extent was the readiness programme delivered in a cost-efficient and timely manner?
EQ 5 - To what extent is the Readiness Programme generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended, or intended, higher-level effects? (Impact)	
5.1	How impactful has the readiness programme been in making capacity improvements within the implementing entities?

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5.2	How well and in what ways did the readiness programme establish and leverage strategic and operational partnerships to maximize long-lasting change?
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## **Section 5: Evaluation approach and methods**

### **Approach**

The evaluation will employ a hybrid, phased approach to carrying out the expected work which includes desk-based research, data analysis, literature review, semi-structured interviews with the various key stakeholders identified, and field visits, etc. Since this is the first ever evaluation of AF's Readiness Programme, it would be beneficial to have the analysis and the findings sequenced along with the major modifications/ events surrounding the program, especially in the recent years, as the program evolved since 2014. As mentioned earlier, as a semi-independent evaluation, consultations will happen with the Readiness team at every phase to guide and shape the evaluation execution. The approach is further elaborated below.

#### **Phase 1: Evaluation scoping and design (Inception Phase)**

The evaluation team will develop the draft theory of change for the readiness programme and refine the evaluation questions to be answered by the evaluation. The inception report will present the results from initial consultations and retrospective theory of change exercise, fine-tune questions of the overall evaluation and contain clear protocols for field visits and for the focus groups and stakeholder conversations (particularly from the Board, AFB Secretariat, AF-TERG and the IEs), organized by respondent type.

The inception report will identify, in consultation with the AF-TERG, key stakeholders to be interviewed and will lay out the plan for country visits, and in-depth case studies for process tracing, while ensuring representativeness of the sample. It will explicitly discuss the criteria for selecting case study countries, striving for representativeness within the portfolio while considering time and budget constraints. An evaluation matrix linking evaluation questions to verification tools and methods will be compiled. Finally, the inception period will conclude by finalizing the protocol for the portfolio analysis.

#### **Phase 2: Data extraction and interviews phase (Evaluation Phase)**

The second phase will involve data collection from the activities established in Phase 1. Additionally, a comprehensive synthesis of documentation and the readiness portfolio will be performed.

#### **Phase 3: Data analysis and synthesis phase**

The third phase of the evaluation will consist of analyzing the obtained data (Readiness programme components, perceptions, interviews, etc.) and synthesizing the existing evidence to extract emerging lessons. Multiple methods will be employed to triangulate data and ensure the robustness of any inferences.

#### **Phase 4: Reporting phase**

During the last phase of the evaluation period, an initial draft of the evaluation will be prepared in accordance with guidelines established in this ToR as well as consultations with

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the AF-TERG. This will also contain a technical annex consisting of an evidence trail to discuss methods used for the evaluation. It will also provide recommendations for strengthening the Readiness programme going forward based on the findings of the evaluation and the evaluation questions. The draft will be circulated to the AF-TERG team as well as the AFB Secretariat for feedback. Then, a final draft report of the evaluation with the technical annex and the customizations as per the AFB Secretariat's management response will be presented to the Board.

## Methods

The Evaluation will employ a mixed method approach. It will examine key changes during implementation and possible learning by the readiness team.

Literature review of key documents: The evaluation will review decisions from the AF Board that are related to the readiness programme, guidelines, administrative processes, management structures and the results framework for the programme including policy documents, guidance documents, proposals, progress reports, board documents and any in-house or other assessments that may have been undertaken. The initial documents to be consulted are found in Annex 3.

Key informant interviews: Key stakeholders including experts, selected stakeholders at the AF Board, representatives of other entities that are doing similar work, selected country stakeholders including but not restricted to designated authorities, implementing entities and focal points, members of the readiness team and others inside and outside the AF. The questionnaire will be developed in consultation with the AF-TERG. The readiness coordination mechanism will also be assessed.

Focus group discussions: at key events such as scheduled structured dialogues or specific events held for accredited or to be accredited entities. The design of the FGDs will be developed in consultation with the AF-TERG and the AFB Secretariat.

Survey(s) needed: may be conducted to gather perceptions regarding the AF's Readiness Programme from key stakeholders such as Implementing Entities, Designated Authorities, AFB Sec, AF-TERG to inform the evaluation. The language of the survey(s) shall be English, French, and Spanish.

Site visits and specific case studies: Specific countries will be identified, in consultations with AF-TERG, for site visits and for detailed understanding of specific questions that the evaluation team may want to address. Countries/cases will be chosen to ensure that there is adequate representativeness especially for stage of engagement with the Readiness team as well as country groups (SIDS, LDCs, Africa, others) and that each case has specific questions it will address. The method for selecting country case studies and implementing entities will be elaborated in the inception report in consultation with the AF-TERG.

Landscape analysis: To conduct this analysis, the evaluation team will do a literature review of and engage with staff and leads of relevant readiness initiatives in the climate finance space encompassing not only climate funds but other donors to understand key challenges and strengths that can inform the implementation of the AF readiness programme.

Evaluation timeline and deliverables

Table 3: Evaluation timeline overview

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Task	Deliverable	Timeframe
Phase 1: Inception	Inception report prepared and approved following consultation, synthesis, evaluation design.	September 2024
Phase 2: Data Gathering	Data collection activities complete with all elements of design followed. Data recorded, cleaned, arranged, and primed for analysis.  To be delivered: data files, reports, interview minutes, interviewee details, data analysis strategy.	October 2024
Phase 3: Data Analysis	Data analysis completed and emerging finding/lessons recorded, and initial design of final reporting prepared.  To be delivered: Report with initial findings based on the data analysis that was performed in accordance with the established evaluation questions.	November - December 2024
Phase 4: Reporting	Final report submitted as per requirements in the ToR. A draft final report with an initial set of recommendations is to be delivered by mid-December 2024.	December 2024 – January 2025

### **Evaluation management and quality assurance**

The evaluation will be managed by the AF-TERG with inputs from the AFB Secretariat. Quality Assurance of the evaluation will be performed as per the quality assurance framework of the Adaptation Fund (“AF-TERG is responsible for commissioning, conducting, and managing high quality evaluations at the strategic and Fund levels...” – page 17 of EP, 2022)

The contracted firm will report directly to the AF-TERG Secretariat Coordinator/Senior Evaluation Officer. Guidance will also be received from the AF-TERG Focal Point, and all the deliverables shall only be cleared after meeting all the quality standards of the AF-TERG.

The contracted firm shall have a robust data validation process and procedure in place to ensure transparency and accuracy of the data used for the evaluation. Full validation of data shall be achieved for internal peer reviews of deliverables, methods of data collection, sources of data collection, etc. Regular check-ins with the AF-TERF shall further strengthen the validation process.

### **Section 6: Application and selection process**

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The application and selection process will be conducted in line with the World Bank procurement rules and procedures. The bidder must provide a statement of absence of conflict of interest with any other work that it or the involved consultant(s) deliver for the Adaptation Fund.

### **Section 7: Work principles of the AF-TERG**

Based on the AF-TERG's mandate and its two overarching objectives, and in the spirit of guiding its work for the benefit of the Fund, the AF-TERG has developed a set of ten work principles to guide the work of the AF-TERG, including the work that it commissions. The contracted firm will ensure that these principles are followed in the processes and product.

## Annex B Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Question	Evaluation Sub-Questions	Data methods and sources	Stakeholders
Evaluation Criteria: RELEVANCE <sup>18</sup>			
1. To what extent is the Readiness Programme strategically focused to address the needs and priorities of targeted stakeholders, including national implementing entities, and developing countries (LDCs and SIDS)?	1.1. To what extent is the Readiness Programme <b>aligned to</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- national climate adaptation needs</li> <li>- the AF Medium-Term Strategy</li> <li>- the UNFCCC climate finance priorities, including guidance from the CM and the CMA<sup>19</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Case studies (<i>in-depth understanding of in-country stakeholder needs</i>)</li> <li>• Landscape Analysis</li> <li>• Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adaptation Fund (AF) Board and Secretariat</li> <li>• NIEs</li> <li>• Government Representatives</li> <li>• Other Climate Finance Readiness Partners</li> <li>• Accreditation Panel Members</li> <li>• DAs</li> <li>• Fund Portfolio Managers/Officers</li> <li>• Private sector and CSOs</li> <li>• South-South Cooperation Participants</li> </ul>
	1.2. To what extent was the design of the Readiness Programme, its grants, the three components, and consecutive adjustments <b>informed by credible evidence</b> on the capacity building needs of NIEs of developing countries so that they can access climate finance, implement adaptation projects, and build resilience to address climate conditions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Case studies (<i>in-depth understanding of in-country capacity needs and how that evidence has been gathered</i>)</li> <li>• Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AF Board and Secretariat</li> <li>• AF In country partners and stakeholders</li> <li>• NIEs</li> <li>• Fund Portfolio Managers/Officers</li> <li>• Private sector and CSOs</li> <li>• DAs</li> </ul>

<sup>18</sup> As per Evaluation Policy of the Adaptation Fund, 'Relevance' is defined as 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.

<sup>19</sup> Parties to the Paris Agreement

Evaluation Question	Evaluation Sub-Questions	Data methods and sources	Stakeholders
	1.3. To what extent has the Readiness Programme <b>responded to evolving needs and priorities</b> of NIEs to ensure its continued relevance over time?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Case studies (<i>examples of Readiness Programme responsiveness to in-country stakeholders</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AF Board and Secretariat</li> <li>• NIEs</li> <li>• Government Representatives</li> <li>• DAs</li> <li>• Other Climate Finance Readiness Partners</li> <li>• Fund Portfolio Managers/Officers</li> <li>• CSOs</li> <li>• South-South Cooperation Participants</li> </ul>
	1.4. To what extent is the Adaptation Fund Readiness Programme an important pre-requisite for accessing the Adaptation Fund for countries to meet their adaptation needs and build resilience?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Case studies</li> <li>• Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AF Board and secretariat</li> <li>• DAs</li> <li>• NIEs</li> <li>• Government Representatives</li> <li>• Other Climate Finance Readiness Partners</li> <li>• Fund Portfolio Managers/Officers</li> <li>• CSOs</li> <li>• South-South Cooperation Participants</li> </ul>
	1.5. To what extent do the design and implementation of Adaptation Fund's Readiness Programme's projects include inputs of the designated authority (DA) and vulnerable groups as per Adaptation Fund's ESP and gender policy? What challenges exist to reaching a diversity of vulnerable stakeholders?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Case studies</li> <li>• Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accreditation Panel</li> <li>• AF Board and secretariat</li> <li>• DAs</li> <li>• IEs</li> <li>• Government Representatives</li> <li>• Fund Portfolio Managers/Officers</li> <li>• CSOs</li> </ul>
	1.6. <i>What strategies, approaches, and tools can the Readiness Programme use going forward <b>to ensure that it is adaptive and stays relevant</b> to evolving stakeholder needs such as of IEs and developing countries?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Case studies (<i>to gather concrete, in-country recommendations from a variety of stakeholders</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AF Board and secretariat</li> <li>• Accreditation Panel</li> <li>• Private sector and CSOs</li> <li>• DAs</li> <li>• NIEs</li> <li>• Government Representatives</li> <li>• Other Climate Finance Readiness Partners</li> </ul>

Evaluation Question	Evaluation Sub-Questions	Data methods and sources	Stakeholders
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landscape Analysis</li> <li>• Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Similar Organizations (GEF, GCF, UNFCCC Capacity building Team)</li> <li>• Fund Portfolio Managers/Officers</li> </ul>
Evaluation Criteria: COHERENCE <sup>20</sup>			
2. To what extent is the Readiness Programme of AF compatible with other similar programmes within a country, sector, or institution?	2.1. To what extent is the AF Readiness Programme <b>complementary to other existing readiness programmes and successfully cooperated and coordinated with them</b> ? What roles does the Programme play in comparison to other, similar programmes and <i>what is its value add</i> ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Case studies (<i>exploring how these countries have engaged with other programmes</i>)</li> <li>• Landscape Analysis</li> <li>• Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AF Board and secretariat</li> <li>• DAs</li> <li>• NIEs</li> <li>• Government Representatives</li> <li>• Other Climate Finance Readiness Partners</li> <li>• Similar Organizations (GEF, GCF, UNFCCC Capacity building Team)</li> <li>• Fund Portfolio Managers/Officers</li> </ul>
	2.2. To what extent do the small grants under the Readiness Programme and its three components <b>complement each other</b> ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Case studies (<i>looking at countries with multiple components to understand complementarity</i>)</li> <li>• Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AF Board and Accreditation Panel</li> <li>• AF Board</li> <li>• AF In-country partners &amp; stakeholders</li> <li>• NIEs</li> <li>• Government Representatives</li> <li>• Fund Portfolio Managers/Officers</li> <li>• South-South Cooperation Participants</li> </ul>
	2.3. <i>What <b>synergies or partnerships can the Readiness Programme amplify</b> going forward to achieve its objectives and improve its value add?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Case studies (<i>recommendations and learnings from in-country examples</i>)</li> <li>• Landscape Analysis</li> <li>• Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adaptation Fund Board and Secretariat</li> <li>• CSOs</li> <li>• DAs</li> <li>• NIEs</li> <li>• Government Representatives</li> <li>• Other Climate Finance Readiness Partners</li> </ul>

<sup>20</sup> According to the Evaluation Policy of the Adaptation Fund, 'Coherence' is defined as the extent to which the intervention is compatible with other interventions in a country, sector, or institution.



Evaluation Question	Evaluation Sub-Questions	Data methods and sources	Stakeholders
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Similar Organizations (GEF, GCF, UNFCCC Capacity building Team)</li> <li>• Fund Portfolio Managers/Officers</li> <li>• South-South Cooperation participants</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation Criteria: EFFECTIVENESS<sup>21</sup></b>			
3. To what extent has the Readiness Programme achieved its objectives of (a) increase in preparedness of applicant national implementing entities seeking accreditation by the Adaptation Fund and (b) increase the number of high-quality project/programme proposals submitted to the Board after accreditation?	3.1. To what extent has the Readiness Programme through its Component 1 'Support and accreditation to IEs' <b>strengthened IEs capacity</b> to design, develop and implement adaptation projects/programmes and comply with AF's policies, particularly ESP and Gender policies to receive climate financing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Case studies (<i>in-depth understanding of how this process works and results in a specific country</i>)</li> <li>• Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AF Board and Secretariat</li> <li>• Accreditation Panel</li> <li>• DAs</li> <li>• NIEs</li> <li>• Government Representatives</li> <li>• Fund Portfolio Managers/Officers</li> <li>• CSOs</li> <li>• Accreditation Panel</li> </ul>
	3.2. To what extent has the Readiness Programme through its Component 2 'Cooperation/Partnership with Climate Finance Readiness Providers' <b>enhanced capacity building for project development, monitoring and evaluation</b> by accredited entities and entities seeking accreditation with the Fund for climate finance and climate change adaptation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Case studies (<i>in-depth understanding of how this process works and results in a specific country</i>)</li> <li>• Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AF Board and Secretariat</li> <li>• DAs</li> <li>• NIEs</li> <li>• Government Representatives</li> <li>• Fund Portfolio Managers/Officers</li> <li>• CSOs</li> <li>• South-South Cooperation Participants</li> <li>• Accreditation Panel</li> </ul>
	3.3. To what extent has the Readiness Programme through its Component 3 'Support to Countries Seeking Accreditation' <b>encouraged use of Direct Access and increase the capacity of national implementing entities to meet the Fund's fiduciary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Case studies (<i>in-depth understanding of how this process works and results a specific country</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AF Project &amp; Programme Officers</li> <li>• AF Board</li> <li>• AF In-country partners &amp; stakeholders</li> <li>• NIEs</li> <li>• Government Representatives</li> <li>• Fund Portfolio Managers/Officers</li> </ul>

<sup>21</sup> As per Evaluation Policy of the Adaptation Fund, 'Effectiveness' the extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives and results, including any differential results across groups.

Evaluation Question	Evaluation Sub-Questions	Data methods and sources	Stakeholders
	<b>standards</b> and comply with policies of the Fund for e.g. Gender and ESP?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSOs</li> <li>• DAs</li> <li>• Accreditation Panel</li> </ul>
	3.4. <i>What are the important <b>enabling and disabling factors</b> for the Readiness Programme's success, and how can the Adaptation Fund address or build on these in the future?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Case studies (<i>in-depth understanding of factors in specific countries that can be explored more broadly</i>)</li> <li>• Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AF Board and Secretariat</li> <li>• Accreditation Panel</li> <li>• DAs</li> <li>• NIEs</li> <li>• Government Representatives</li> <li>• Fund Portfolio Managers/Officers</li> <li>• Private sector and CSOs</li> </ul>
	3.5. To what extent have the interventions supported by the Readiness Programmes reduced or perpetuated inequalities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Case studies</li> <li>• Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accreditation Panel</li> <li>• AF Board and Secretariat</li> <li>• DAs</li> <li>• NIEs</li> <li>• Government Representatives</li> <li>• CSOs</li> <li>• Fund Portfolio Managers/Officers</li> </ul>
	3.6. <i>What strategies or approaches can the Readiness Programme use going forward to increase the level of equity in its support?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Case studies</li> <li>• Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AF Board and Secretariat</li> <li>• Accreditation Panel</li> <li>• DAs</li> <li>• NIEs</li> <li>• Government Representatives</li> <li>• Fund Portfolio Managers/Officers</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation Criteria: EFFICIENCY<sup>22</sup></b>			
4. To what extent is the Readiness Programme cost effective and timely without	4.1 To what extent has the Readiness Programme been <b>implemented efficiently</b> by the secretariat, both in terms of cost and timeliness?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Case studies</li> <li><i>(exploring efficiencies)</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adaptation Fund Board and Secretariat</li> <li>• Accreditation Panel</li> </ul>

<sup>22</sup> According to the Evaluation Policy of the Adaptation Fund, 'Efficiency' refers to – the extent that the intervention is cost effective and timely and does not consume unnecessary time and resources.

Evaluation Question	Evaluation Sub-Questions	Data methods and sources	Stakeholders
consuming unnecessary time and resources?		<i>within the country context and factors that affect this)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AF In country partners and stakeholders</li> <li>• NIEs</li> <li>• Government Representatives</li> <li>• Fund Portfolio Managers/Officers</li> </ul>
	4.2 To what extent has the Readiness programme's support been timely and cost-efficient <b>for and from the perspective of NIEs?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Case studies (<i>detailed feedback from in-country stakeholders</i>)</li> <li>• Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adaptation Fund Board and Secretariat</li> <li>• DAs</li> <li>• NIEs</li> <li>• Government Representatives</li> <li>• Fund Portfolio Managers/Officers</li> </ul>
	4.3 <i>What are some of the challenges that the Readiness Programme faces in terms of efficiency? In what ways can the Readiness Programme <b>improve its efficiency</b> in support of achieving its objectives?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Case studies (<i>contextually specific recommendations from in-country stakeholders</i>)</li> <li>• Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adaptation Fund Board and Secretariat</li> <li>• DAs</li> <li>• NIEs</li> <li>• Government Representatives</li> <li>• Fund Portfolio Managers/Officers</li> </ul>
Evaluation criteria: IMPACT <sup>23</sup>			
5. To what extent has the Readiness Programme generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended, or unintended, higher-level Impact i.e. of increased capacity of NIEs that leads to positive impact including increased resilience to	5.1 How impactful (intended/unintended) has the Readiness Programme been in <b>making capacity improvements</b> within the implementing entities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Case studies (<i>in-depth exploration of capacity changes in-country</i>)</li> <li>• Landscape Analysis</li> <li>• Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AF Board and Secretariat</li> <li>• NIEs</li> <li>• DAs</li> <li>• Government Representatives</li> <li>• Other Climate Finance Readiness Partners</li> <li>• Similar Organizations (GEF, GCF, UNFCCC Capacity building Team)</li> <li>• Fund Portfolio Managers/Officers</li> <li>• CSOs</li> </ul>

<sup>23</sup> According to the Evaluation Policy of Adaptation Fund, 'Impact' is defined as the extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects.

Evaluation Question	Evaluation Sub-Questions	Data methods and sources	Stakeholders
climate disasters at the community, national and regional level'			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South-South Cooperation Participants</li> </ul>
	5.2. <i>What strategies are likely to be the most effective going forward to increase the scale of the Readiness Programme's support?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Case studies</li> <li>• Landscape Analysis</li> <li>• Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AF Board and secretariat</li> <li>• DAs</li> <li>• CSOs</li> <li>• NIEs</li> <li>• Government Representatives</li> <li>• Other Climate Finance Readiness Partners</li> <li>• Similar Organizations (GEF, GCF, UNFCCC Capacity building Team)</li> <li>• Fund Portfolio Managers/Officers</li> </ul>
	5.3. <i>In what ways could it improve its approach and increase the likelihood of impact related to implementing entity capacity?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Case studies (<i>in-depth exploration of capacity changes in-country</i>)</li> <li>• Landscape Analysis</li> <li>• Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AF Board and Secretariat</li> <li>• NIEs</li> <li>• DAs</li> <li>• Government Representatives</li> <li>• Other Climate Finance Readiness Partners</li> <li>• Similar Organizations (GEF, GCF, UNFCCC Capacity building Team)</li> <li>• Fund Portfolio Managers/Officers</li> <li>• CSOs</li> <li>• South-South Cooperation Participants</li> </ul>

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## Annex C Evaluation Criteria Assessment

This annex provides additional detail on how the evaluation criteria will be used to assess and analyze evidence collected. The evaluation criteria below describe the standards which will form the basis for evaluative judgment of the evidence collected ensuring rigor of the study.

### Relevance

Relevance refers to the extent to which the Readiness Programme is focused on addressing the needs and priorities of targeted stakeholders, including national implementing entities, and developing countries (including LDCs and SIDS). There should be evidence that shows that the Readiness Programme is meeting the needs of the key target stakeholders.

Poor	Acceptable	Good
The Readiness Programme doesn't meet the needs of the targeted stakeholders. There is limited to no evidence indicating that the Programme is aligned to the needs of the stakeholders and is relevant for them.	The Readiness Programme addresses some of the priorities and needs of the targeted stakeholders. There is evidence indicating that the Programme is aligned to the needs of the stakeholders is relevant to them.	The Readiness Programme addresses the priorities and needs of the targeted stakeholders. There is strong evidence indicating that the Programme is aligned to the needs of the stakeholders is relevant to them.

### Coherence

Coherence refers to the extent to which the Readiness Programme is compatible with other similar programmes such as under GCF, UNFCCC and the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ). It also includes the extent to which components of the Readiness Programme are compatible with each other to ensure that the Programme's outcomes are achieved. The evidence should show that the Programme is internally coherent and compatible to other programmes.

Poor	Acceptable	Good
The Readiness Programme isn't compatible with other similar programmes. The components of the Programme are not compatible with each other.	The Readiness Programme has little compatible with other similar programmes. The components of the Programme have little compatible with each other.	The Readiness Programme is strongly compatible with other similar programmes. The components of the Programme are compatible with each other. There is

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Poor	Acceptable	Good
There is limited to no evidence indicating Programme's synergies with other similar programmes and internal compatibility of the Programme.	There is evidence indicating Programme's synergies with other similar programmes and internal compatibility of the Programme.	strong evidence indicating Programme's synergies with other similar programmes and internal compatibility of the Programme.

## Effectiveness

Effectiveness refers to the extent the Readiness Programme has attained its objectives of increase in preparedness of applicant national implementing entities seeking accreditation by the Adaptation Fund and increase in the number of high- quality project/programme proposals submitted to the Board after accreditation. The evidence should show that the Programme is on track to achieve its objectives.

Poor	Acceptable	Good
The Readiness Programme hasn't achieved but is expected to achieve its objectives of increased preparedness of applicant NIEs seeking accreditation by the Adaptation Fund and of increased number of high-quality programme proposals submitted to the Board. There is limited to no evidence indicating Programme's achievement of its objectives.	The Readiness Programme has achieved some of its objectives of increased preparedness of applicant NIEs seeking accreditation by the Adaptation Fund and of increased number of high-quality programme proposals submitted to the Board. There is evidence indicating Programme's achievement of its objectives.	The Readiness Programme has achieved most or all its objectives of increased preparedness of applicant NIEs seeking accreditation by the Adaptation Fund and of increased number of high-quality programme proposals submitted to the Board. There strong evidence indicating Programme's achievement of its objectives.

## Efficiency

Efficiency explores the cost-effectiveness and timeliness of the Readiness Programme without consuming unnecessary time and resources. The evidence should show that the Programme is efficient with regards to timeliness and cost efficiency.

Poor	Acceptable	Good
The Readiness Programme isn't timely and cost effective. There is	The Readiness Programme is timely and cost-effective to some	The Readiness Programme is timely and cost-effective. There is

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Poor	Acceptable	Good
limited to no evidence indicating Programme's cost-effectiveness and timeliness.	extent. There is evidence indicating Programme's cost-effectiveness and timeliness.	strong evidence indicating Programme's cost-effectiveness and timeliness.

## Impact

Impact refers to significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects generated by the Readiness Programme regarding increased capacity of NIEs that leads to positive impact including increased resilience to climate disasters at the community, national and regional level'. The evidence should show that the Readiness Programme is impactful in increasing resilience of the countries.

Poor	Acceptable	Good
The Readiness Programme isn't impactful. There is limited to no evidence indicating any Programme's impact.	The Readiness Programme has shown some impact. There is evidence indicating Programme's impact.	The Readiness Programme is impactful. There is strong evidence indicating Programme's achievement of its impact.

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# Annex D Stakeholder Mapping

Scale	Stakeholder	Justification
National Level	Designated Authorities (DAs) and Focal Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They are the primary interface between countries &amp; the AF</li> <li>• They coordinate all national-level AF activities</li> <li>• Have firsthand experience with how the Readiness Programme supports country needs</li> <li>• Can speak to the effectiveness of capacity building initiatives</li> <li>• Understand barriers and enablers in accessing climate finance</li> </ul>
	National Implementing Entity (NIE) Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct beneficiaries of readiness support</li> <li>• Can evaluate the practical utility of readiness tools &amp; guidance</li> <li>• Provide insights on accreditation challenges and solutions</li> <li>• Can assess the quality &amp; relevance of technical assistance received</li> </ul>
	Ministry Representatives (Environment, Finance, Planning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for integrating adaptation into national planning</li> <li>• Can speak to alignment between readiness support and national priorities</li> <li>• Understand institutional capacity gaps and needs</li> <li>• Provide perspective on inter-ministerial coordination challenges</li> </ul>
Implementing Entity	Successful and Unsuccessful NIE Applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer contrasting perspectives on readiness support effectiveness</li> <li>• Can identify critical success factors and barriers</li> <li>• Provide feedback on application process improvements</li> <li>• Help understand why some entities succeed while others don't</li> </ul>
	Regional and Multilateral Implementing Entities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring cross-country comparative perspectives</li> <li>• Can evaluate regional approaches to readiness</li> <li>• Understand common challenges across multiple contexts</li> <li>• Provide insights on knowledge sharing between countries</li> </ul>
Fund Level	Adaptation Fund Board and Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shape strategic direction of readiness support</li> <li>• Understand resource allocation decisions</li> <li>• Can speak to evolution of readiness approaches</li> <li>• Have overview of programme performance across regions</li> </ul>
	Accreditation Panel Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directly assess implementing entity capacity</li> <li>• Understand common institutional weaknesses</li> <li>• Can evaluate if readiness support addresses key accreditation requirements</li> <li>• Provide technical perspective on capacity building needs</li> </ul>
Support Partners	Climate Finance Readiness Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver technical assistance on the ground</li> <li>• Can assess effectiveness of different support modalities</li> <li>• Understand practical implementation challenges</li> <li>• Provide feedback on coordination between partners</li> </ul>
	South-South Cooperation Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can evaluate effectiveness of peer learning approaches</li> <li>• Understand knowledge transfer between countries</li> <li>• Provide perspective on cultural and contextual factors</li> <li>• Assess sustainability of capacity building</li> </ul>
Civil Society Stakeholders	Civil Society Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Represent ultimate beneficiaries of adaptation projects</li> </ul>



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Scale	Stakeholder	Justification
	and Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assess if readiness support enables better project delivery</li><li>• Provide ground-level perspective on capacity needs</li><li>• Offer independent assessment of programme effectiveness</li></ul>
<b>Fund Level</b>	Fund Portfolio Managers/ Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Direct experience managing readiness grants and support</li><li>• Understand operational challenges in programme delivery</li><li>• Can assess efficiency of administrative processes</li><li>• Provide insights on monitoring and reporting systems</li></ul>
<b>Similar organizations</b>	Green Climate Fund (GCF) Readiness Programme Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Manage similar readiness initiatives</li><li>• Can identify areas for complementarity and coordination</li><li>• Share lessons learned from parallel programmes</li><li>• Provide insights on harmonizing approaches</li></ul>
	Global Environment Facility (GEF) Representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Long experience in capacity building for environmental funds</li><li>• Can share insights from similar initiatives</li><li>• Understand evolution of readiness approaches</li><li>• Provide perspective on institutional capacity development</li></ul>
	UNFCCC Capacity Building Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Oversee broader climate capacity building framework</li><li>• Can assess alignment with international processes</li><li>• Understand systemic capacity challenges</li><li>• Provide insights on coordinated approaches</li></ul>
<b>Other stakeholders</b>	Independent Evaluators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Previously evaluated aspects of the programme</li><li>• Bring professional evaluation expertise</li><li>• Can assess against evaluation best practices</li><li>• Provide independent perspective on programme performance</li></ul>

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# Annex E Data Collection Tools

## High-level Questions for NIEs

### **A. Relevance**

1. What are the key adaptation needs of your country? How are you planning to meet them?
2. How does the Readiness Programme help to meet your needs? What support did you seek from it? If not, then why not?
3. Is the Readiness Programme an important prerequisite for accessing the Adaptation Fund? Why? If not, then why not?
4. Who are the stakeholders involved in the development of programme proposals for the Adaptation Fund? What is the role of vulnerable communities in the development of the programme proposals?
5. What can the Readiness Programme do in the future to ensure that its adaptive and relevant to your needs?

### **B. Coherence:**

1. Have you reached out to other readiness programmes? (If yes) Which ones and why? (If not) Why not?
2. [If they have reached out to other readiness programmes] What did you see were the complementarities? What were the differences between the programmes? What is the value add of the Readiness Programme?
3. How well do the components of the Readiness Programme complement each other? If not, then why not?
4. What should the Readiness Programme do/maintain to improve its synergies and partnerships to achieve its objectives?

### **C. Effectiveness:**

1. What support did you access from the Readiness Programme? What did you do to access the support? What helped you access the support? What were the challenges?
2. What did you do after receiving the support from the Readiness Programme?
3. [Based on the type of support the country has taken] Did the support that you received helped you achieve- (a) strengthened IE capacity or (b) enhanced capacity building for project development, monitoring and evaluation or (c) encouraged use of Direct Access and increase the capacity of national implementing entities to meet the Fund's fiduciary standards? Why/why not? What supported your process to achievement? What were the challenges?
4. How have the programmes supported by the Readiness Programme affected inequalities in your country? Did it reduce or perpetuate inequalities?
5. What can the Programme do to increase the level of equity in its support? Whose inputs should it involve? Why?

### **D. Efficiency**

1. Is the Readiness Programme support timely? Why/why not? What are the challenges?
  2. Is the support from Readiness Programme cost efficient? Why/why not? What are the challenges?
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3. What should the Programme do to improve its efficiency?

**E. Impact:**

1. What has been the impact (positive, negative, unintended, intended) of the support from the Readiness Programme? What were the enablers and what were the challenges?
  2. How has the support contributed to capacity improvements in NIEs? What were the enablers? What were the challenges?
  3. What should the Programme do differently to have impact?
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## Annex F Case Country Selection

### **Case study 1- No engagement** (not accessed AF grants or Readiness Programme grants)

**Focus:** This case study will explore countries that have yet not engaged with the Adaptation Fund (AF) or its Readiness Programme. The aim is to identify and understand the barriers or challenges these countries face that hinder their engagement.

**Mode:** Virtual Case Study

**Case study countries:** Grenada, Kiribati, Trinidad & Tobago

Case study 1 includes multiple countries but is intended to be one case study. These countries would have less engagement with each country to create the one case study. The countries have not formally accessed (i.e. receiving a grant) Adaptation Fund and the Readiness Programme yet. The multiple countries give us different perspectives to understand why the countries have not engaged with the Adaptation Fund and the Readiness Programme. The engagement with each country would be much less detailed (e.g. 2-3 interviews per country) than the in-person case studies 3-5. We recognized that unlike a country that has accessed many Adaptation Fund grants and Readiness Programme grants, these countries have more limited information. As a result, we are trying to get some information for each of the countries identified in case study 1 to produce one case study that focus understanding why these countries have not formally accessed the Adaptation Fund and the Readiness Programme.

Case Study 1 will examine **Grenada, Kiribati, and Trinidad and Tobago** as Small Island Developing States (SIDS) that have not yet engaged with the Adaptation Fund's Readiness Programme, despite expressing interest in accessing Adaptation Fund grants. The selection of these countries provides valuable insights into potential barriers facing SIDS, with Kiribati also representing a Least Developed Country (LDC) perspective. These nations share common vulnerabilities to climate change impacts, including sea-level rise, extreme weather events, and threats to coastal infrastructure, making their adaptation needs particularly pressing. By investigating why these countries have not yet accessed the Readiness Programme despite their clear adaptation needs and interest in Adaptation Fund funding, the evaluation can identify critical gaps, barriers, and opportunities to enhance the Programme's accessibility and effectiveness.

Understanding these countries' perspectives and challenges will be instrumental in helping the Adaptation Fund refine and strengthen its Readiness Programme, particularly in terms of outreach strategies, support mechanisms, and capacity-building approaches. Their experiences can directly inform how the Programme can better address the unique constraints faced by SIDS and LDCs, ultimately improving its ability to support vulnerable nations in accessing climate finance. The findings from these cases will provide actionable insights for the Adaptation Fund to enhance its engagement with similar countries that have yet to benefit from the Readiness Programme.

### **Case Study 2- General AF Engagement (Accessed Adaptation Fund Grants but not accessed Readiness Programme Grants)**

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**Focus:** This case study will explore countries that have utilized Adaptation Fund (AF) grants but have not yet engaged with the Readiness Programme. The focus will be to investigate the factors influencing this limited engagement.

**Mode:** Virtual Case Study

**Case study countries:** Fiji, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Bangladesh

Case study 2 includes multiple countries but is intended to be one case study. These countries would have less engagement (i.e. interviews) with each country to create the one case study. The countries have formally accessed (i.e. receiving a grant) Adaptation Fund grants and have a project financed by the AF but not formally accessed the Readiness Programme yet. The multiple countries give us different perspectives to understand why the countries have not accessed the Readiness Programme grants. The engagement with each country would be much less detailed (e.g. 2-3 interviews per country) than the in-person case studies 3-5. We recognized that unlike a country that has accessed many Adaptation Fund grants and Readiness Programme grants, these countries have more limited information. As a result, we are trying to get some information for each of the countries identified in case study 2 to produce one case study that focus understanding why these countries have not formally accessed the Readiness Programme grants.

Case Study 2 will examine Fiji, Ethiopia, Indonesia, and Bangladesh as countries that have successfully accessed Adaptation Fund financing but have not yet utilized the Readiness Programme. These countries were strategically selected to provide valuable insights into the factors that may influence engagement with the Readiness Programme. The selection encompasses both Small Island Developing States (Fiji) and Least Developed Countries (Ethiopia and Bangladesh), offering critical perspectives from particularly vulnerable nations. Indonesia's inclusion as a large developing country adds further depth to the geographical and contextual diversity.

- Fiji, which received Adaptation Fund funding for urban water supply and wastewater management adaptation)
- Ethiopia, with projects focusing on climate-smart integrated rural development, climate compatible development, and climate finance
- Bangladesh, which secured Adaptation Fund funding for adaptation and enhancing resilience in climate-vulnerable LDC's.
- Indonesia's, with its community adaptation and forest management projects, building resilience in coastal communities, watershed governance and climate adaptation in urban areas

Each of these countries has demonstrated capacity to access climate finance through the Adaptation Fund, yet their non-participation in the Readiness Programme presents an opportunity to understand potential barriers, gaps, or alternative capacity-building mechanisms that may be influencing their decisions.

This analysis will be particularly valuable for understanding how the Readiness Programme could be better tailored to meet the needs of diverse implementing entities and national circumstances, while also identifying any potential systemic factors affecting programme uptake. For the Readiness Programme, these case studies will offer crucial learning opportunities to understand how countries are building adaptation capacity without

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Programme support, identify potential gaps in the Programme's outreach or design, and gather insights to enhance its relevance and accessibility. The findings will help inform recommendations for potential adjustments to the Programme's approach, ensuring it better aligns with the needs and circumstances of countries that have yet to engage with it, ultimately strengthening its role in building climate finance readiness globally.

### **Case study 3- Recently Received Readiness Support**

**Focus:** This case study will focus on a country that accessed Readiness Funds prior to 2020 and have accessed a readiness package grant since 2020 but had to drop one of the entities it was supporting. It will explore factors affecting those countries that had positive and challenging experiences with the process.

**Mode:** In-person Case Study

**Case study Country:** Antigua and Barbuda

Antigua and Barbuda have been strategically selected as the focal point for Case Study 3 to provide critical insights into the dynamics of the Adaptation Fund's Readiness Programme due to its nuanced experience with accessing and implementing readiness support. As a small island developing state that accessed initial readiness support prior to 2020 and subsequently received a readiness package grant, the country presents a unique lens for examining the potential and challenges of the Readiness Programme grant mechanisms. They accessed the Adaptation Fund grant for *an integrated approach to physical adaptation and community resilience in Antigua and Barbuda's northwest McKinnon's watershed* in 2017, the Readiness Programme *Technical Assistance Grant for ESP and Gender Policy (TA-ESGP)* in 2016 and the *Project Formulation Grant for Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines* in 2024.

Farayi Madziwa noted that Antigua and Barbuda accessed a readiness package grant in 2022, but it did not go well and as a result had to drop one of the NIEs they were supporting. The other grant is still under implementation. The case study will specifically explore the circumstances that led to the discontinuation of support for one of its designated entities, offering a nuanced understanding of the institutional, administrative, and contextual factors that can impact national implementation. By delving into Antigua and Barbuda's experience, the evaluation aims to uncover both the positive achievements and the potential barriers in the readiness support process, providing valuable lessons for the Fund's ongoing strategic development and for other vulnerable countries seeking to enhance their climate adaptation capacities.

Likewise, Antigua and Barbuda's experience can illuminate the specific hurdles and opportunities faced by SIDS in developing robust climate resilience mechanisms, providing insights that are not just country-specific but potentially transformative for other vulnerable island nations seeking to enhance their adaptive capacities through international climate finance mechanisms.

### **Case study 4: Countries that accessed Readiness Grants**

**Focus:** This case study will focus on a country that accessed Readiness Funds prior to 2020 but has not received project financing since then. The evaluation will assess the

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country's experience with the initial funding, exploring the sequence of engagement and the reasons for the lack of continued participation.

**Mode:** In-person Case Study

**Countries proposed:** Armenia

Armenia presents a compelling case study for examining the Adaptation Fund's Readiness Programme dynamics, particularly in understanding the trajectory of engagement and potential barriers to project financing. As a country that accessed Readiness Grants prior to 2020 but has not subsequently secured project-level financing, Armenia offers a critical lens into the challenges and opportunities within the Fund's capacity-building ecosystem. The case study will delve into Armenia's initial readiness experience, exploring the institutional, technical, and strategic factors that may have influenced its transition from preparatory funding to full project implementation. These grants include the readiness programmes' *Technical Assistance Grant for ESP and Gender Policy (TA-ESGP)* in 2018, and Adaptation Fund projects, *strengthening land-based adaptation capacity in communities adjacent to protected areas in Armenia* in 2019 and *Artik city closed stonepit wastes and flood management pilot project* in 2018.

Farayi Madziwa noted that between 2019-2024, Armenia has accessed two readiness package grants and have built capacity since their last project in 2018 to provide support for the accreditation of other entities. While Armenia has not yet actively provided accreditation support to other entities, the country represents an important intermediate stage in the Readiness Programme's impact. This case study will provide critical insights into the process of institutional capacity development, examining how countries build and maintain readiness capabilities even in the absence of consecutive project financing. By exploring Armenia's experience, the evaluation can illuminate the longer-term value of readiness grants, the sustainability of institutional strengthening, and the potential pathways for countries to continue engaging with the Adaptation Fund beyond initial project cycles.

By thoroughly investigating Armenia's unique context, the evaluation aims to uncover insights into potential systemic constraints, capacity development outcomes, and the effectiveness of the Readiness Programme in supporting countries' long-term climate adaptation efforts. This examination will not only provide a nuanced understanding of Armenia's specific engagement but also generate broader learnings about the Fund's readiness support mechanism and its role in enabling national-level climate resilience initiatives.

### **Case study 5: Established success stories (capacity to provide support)**

**Focus:** These are countries actively using both the Readiness Programme and other Adaptation Fund grants. These countries have not only utilized Readiness Programme and Adaptation Fund grants but have also evolved to provide peer support and guidance for accreditation processes to other emerging national entities. The focus is on NIEs that have not only developed their own organizational capacities but have also proactively evolved to support and guide other emerging national entities through peer-to-peer knowledge sharing and accreditation support. The focus will be on identifying factors contributing to their success, with special attention to countries that have, or plan to have, multiple NIEs, and have utilized other readiness programme/ funds such as from GCF.

**Mode:** In-person case study

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**Countries proposed: Senegal**

For Case Study 5—Success Stories, we have chosen to focus on Senegal due to its active engagement with both the Adaptation Fund's Readiness Programme and other AF grants. The country's varied geographical landscape sees it facing a multitude of climate vulnerabilities, and so understanding its successful acquisition, and robust utilization of the Readiness Programme, alongside the implementation of other Adaptation Fund -funded projects will allow for knowledge sharing on a large scale, relevant to various developing countries seeking accreditation.

Senegal has accessed multiple Readiness programme funding streams, including the Technical Assistance Grant for ESP and the Technical Assistance Grant for Gender Policy (TA-GP) in 2016, along with Adaptation Fund grants for several projects including the current "*Djigui Niokolo: Developing Agro-Sylvo-Pastoral Models for Sustainable Agriculture and Environmental Preservation*", as well as "*Learning grant for Senegal*" (in 2020), and "*Reducing vulnerability and increasing resilience of coastal communities in the Saloum Islands (Dionewar and Fadial)*" (in 2017) amongst others, make it an ideal case study. Its success has already been recognised, for instance in the collaborative hosting of an NIE country exchange in 2021, between the Adaptation Fund and the Centre de Suivi Ecologique (CSE) in Senegal.

Senegal's experience will provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of the Readiness Programme in a country that is not only utilizing these funds but also strategically positioning itself to maximize its adaptation efforts through a multi-NIE approach. This case study will inform the evaluation by identifying key factors that facilitate successful engagement, offering lessons that can be applied to other countries seeking to optimize their use of the Adaptation Fund's resources. Additionally, Senegal's involvement with other international climate finance mechanisms, such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF), will allow us to explore synergies between different funding programs and the added value of a multi-faceted approach to adaptation. This case study will allow the evaluation to capture the critical factors that facilitate ongoing success, identify best practices, and highlight any challenges encountered, offering practical lessons for other countries looking to optimize their use of the Adaptation Fund's resources.

**Case study 5: Established success stories (capacity to provide support)**

**Focus:** These are countries actively using both the Readiness Programme and other Adaptation Fund grants. These countries have not only utilized Readiness Programme and Adaptation Fund grants but have also evolved to provide peer support and guidance for accreditation processes to other emerging national entities. The focus is on NIEs that have not only developed their own organizational capacities but have also proactively evolved to support and guide other emerging national entities through peer-to-peer knowledge sharing and accreditation support. The focus will be on identifying factors contributing to their success, with special attention to countries that have, or plan to have, multiple NIEs, and have utilized other readiness programme/ funds such as from GCF.

**Mode:** Virtual light-touch case study

**Countries proposed: Zimbabwe**

Zimbabwe represents a compelling case study for the Adaptation Fund's Readiness Programme evaluation. As a National Implementing Entity (NIE), Zimbabwe has not only successfully navigated the accreditation process but has also exhibited a proactive approach

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to leveraging multiple climate finance opportunities beyond the initial *Technical Assistance Readiness Programme grant* (2019) including being a receipt of *South-South Cooperation Grant (SSC)* (2016). Additionally, Zimbabwe received AF grants for *Enhancing Resilience of Communities and Ecosystems in the Face of a Changing Climate in Arid and Semi-arid Areas of Zimbabwe* in 2024 and *Strengthening Local Communities' Adaptive Capacity and Resilience to Climate Change through Sustainable Groundwater Utilization in Zimbabwe* in 2021.

The country's trajectory illustrates the full potential of the Readiness Programme, beginning with an initial readiness package grant that preceded its accreditation process. This early support enabled Zimbabwe to develop the foundational capacities necessary for becoming a National Implementing Entity (NIE). Following successful accreditation, Zimbabwe received a technical assistance grant, further strengthening its institutional capabilities. Notably, the country demonstrated the ultimate success of the Readiness Programme by proactively submitting an application to support another entity's accreditation, thereby transforming from a programme recipient to a knowledge sharer and peer supporter. This evolution showcases the program's core objective of building sustainable institutional capacity, making Zimbabwe a critical example of how the Readiness Programme can successfully develop national entities' capabilities to directly access and manage climate adaptation funding.

The country offers a rare three-dimensional perspective on the Readiness Programme, having been simultaneously a recipient of support, a beneficiary of peer-support mechanisms, and now potentially a provider of knowledge transfer to other National Implementing Entities (NIEs). Zimbabwe's unique positioning allows for a deep, reflective analysis of the programme's impact, with the country able to articulate not just the technical improvements in institutional capacity, but also the intricate dynamics of working relationships with support providers. Their critical lens extends beyond simply receiving support to offering constructive insights into how the Readiness Programme package could be enhanced, including potential additional elements that could improve efficiency and effectiveness of future support mechanisms.

The country has not only developed its NIE but has also demonstrated an ability to access and effectively utilize funds from both the Adaptation Fund and the Green Climate Fund (GCF). This multi-fund approach provides an excellent opportunity to examine how countries can build and leverage institutional capabilities across different climate finance platforms, particularly in developing comprehensive national climate adaptation strategies. By focusing on Zimbabwe, the evaluation can explore critical success factors such as institutional strengthening, strategic fund management, and the ability to translate readiness support into tangible climate adaptation projects, thereby offering valuable lessons for other developing countries seeking to enhance their climate resilience and financial management capacities.

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# Annex G Case Study Template

Case Study Brief Outline (Approx 5-7 pages\*)

*\* This is contingent on the individual cases and number of stakeholders interviewed*

## **1.0 Introduction of Case Study Country (1 page)**

- Explain country context with regard to climate vulnerabilities and priorities for adaptation, any cross-cutting challenges etc.
- Justification for choosing country for specific case study category (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5)
  - ❖ Link to AF Readiness Programme/ AF Grants Funding, and mention if received alternative climate funding e.g. from GCF

## **2.0 Key Findings: (3-4 pages)**

This will be made up from voices from the country context, include quotes from interviews, showing wider scope.

### **Accessibility of AF**

#### ***Relevance/Coherence***

- Alignment with the priorities of the country: Are there other funds which are more prevalent/aligned? Is it adding value to existing programmes?
- Relevance over time? / adapted to changing country context? *List any recommended partnerships/ programmes AF should collaborate with going forward.*
- Has the country accessed AF funding without the readiness program? How difficult was this?
- Key obstacles to accessing the AF Readiness Program?

### **Success of Readiness Programme**

#### ***Effectiveness***

- How successful was the readiness Programme in supporting accreditation-seeking IEs? (Qualitatively and quantitatively *how many projects received funding?*)
- Has the Readiness Programme successfully cooperated with climate finance readiness providers to enhance capacity? (qualitative/ quantitative findings)
- Has the Readiness Programme assisted IEs seeking accreditation with meeting policy requirements/fiduciary standards etc.
- Overall main enabling and disabling factors in the country context? Specific successes/challenges.

### **Efficiency of the Readiness Programme:**

#### ***Efficiency***

- Has the programme been implemented efficiently? **Cost? Timeliness?**
  - How do opinions differ on this between **NIEs/RIEs/MIEs?**
  - **Recommendations** for greater efficiency?
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### **3.0 The Bigger Picture/ Key Takeaways (1-2 pages)**

#### ***Impact***

- Has the Readiness Programme made capacity improvements within the IEs?
  - Recommendation for scaling Readiness Programme projects in the country? Current obstacles?
  - Have projects associated with the Readiness Programme reduced or perpetuated inequalities? Recommendations of how this can be done differently?
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## Annex H Evaluation Timeline

[illegible]