



ADAPTATION FUND
Readiness Programme
for Climate Finance

2025 AF Recife Write shop Report

6-9 May 2025

Recife, Brazil



Acronyms and Abbreviations

AF	Adaptation Fund
CBA	Community Based Adaptation
AFCIA	Adaptation Fund Climate Innovation Accelerator
DA	Designated Authority
ESP	Environmental and Social Policy
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GGA	Global Goal on Adaptation
IE	Implementing Entity
ISGAP	Innovation Small Grant Aggregator Platform
LLA	Locally Led Adaptation
MTS	Medium term Strategy
NIE	National Implementing Entity
PFG	Project Formulation Grant
PPR	Project Performance Report
RIE	Regional Implementing Entity
RBM	Results-Based Management
SRF	Strategic Results Framework
TA	Technical Assistance
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

DAY 1

Introduction

The Adaptation Fund hosted a write shop in Recife, Brazil, from 6-9 May 2025, designed to facilitate access to four key funding windows: Locally Led Adaptation (LLA), Bundled Grants (Learning & Innovation), Innovation, and Regular Projects. This event, held alongside the 19th International Conference on Community-Based Adaptation to Climate Change (CBA19), aimed to strengthen the capacity of national and regional implementing entities (NIEs and RIEs) to develop high-quality, fundable project and programme proposals. The workshop adopted a participatory, hands-on approach, integrating knowledge sharing, technical guidance, and one-on-one clinics with Adaptation Fund (AF) staff. A total of 59 participants from 27 countries engaged in this intensive capacity-building exercise.

Welcome Remarks

Mr. Mikko Ollikainen, Manager of the Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat, inaugurated the write shop by emphasizing the Fund's commitment to fostering collaboration and innovation in climate adaptation. He highlighted the Second Medium-Term Strategy (2023–2027), which prioritizes locally led adaptation, innovation, and expanded readiness support to build long-term institutional capacity and enhance access to climate finance. Mr. Ollikainen noted recent milestones, including a doubling of the country cap and a record US\$137 million in approved projects, and called for continued support to meet unprecedented demand and ensure sustained impact, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean. He underscored that the projects being developed are not solely about financial support, but about building resilience, dignity, and opportunity for the most climate-vulnerable communities through inclusive and transformative solutions.



Write shop Day 1 highlights (Laying the Foundation for Effective Proposal Development):

The welcome remarks were followed by an overview of the write shop's structure and objectives, delivered by Mr. Farayi Madziwa, Readiness Programme Team Lead. The sessions combined group discussions with practical, hands-on exercises in concept and proposal development, organized around the Fund's four funding windows. Participants explored the essential elements of constructing a robust adaptation rationale, emphasizing alignment with national or sub-national strategies. Technical writing sessions focused on identifying both challenges and opportunities in defining effective

rationales, with participants beginning to develop their respective concepts or proposals. Tailored guidance from AF staff facilitated the creation of equitable and contextually grounded adaptation rationales. The day concluded with structured brainstorming and guided writing activities, setting the stage for deeper technical engagement in subsequent sessions.

DAY 2

Write shop Day 2 highlights (Integrating Environmental, Social, and Gender Safeguards): Day two commenced with a recap of the previous day by Ms. Ishani Debnath, Readiness Analyst, and an introduction to the day's focus on compliance with the Fund's Environmental and Social Policy (ESP) and Gender Policy (GP). Led by Ms. Alyssa Gomes and Ms. Estefania Jimenez, Climate Change Specialists at the secretariat, the sessions addressed the technical challenges of data collection, reporting on triggered ESP principles, and designing effective risk



mitigation measures. Participants received detailed guidance on completing the ESP identification table at the concept stage, including project categorization and further assessment at the fully developed proposal stage. The day's activities included group discussions, guided writing sessions and feedback on ESP and national standards, such as building codes and environmental impact assessments. The day concluded with an interactive role-play exercise on Gender Policy compliance. This exercise required participants to conduct a gender assessment and collaboratively develop a gender action plan, reinforcing the importance of integrating gender considerations into project design from the outset.

DAY 3

Write shop Day 3 highlights (Strengthening Monitoring, Evaluation, and Sustainability):

The third day focused on enhancing the coherence, structure, and technical clarity of project concepts and proposals. Moderated by Ms. Martina Dorigo, climate change specialist and Ms. Ishani Debnath, sessions centered on integrating monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks, budgeting, and indicator selection in alignment with the AF Strategic Results Framework (SRF). Participants worked in groups to refine their proposals, ensuring clear budget justifications and adherence to Fund requirements on cost-effectiveness at both the concept and fully developed proposal stages. Focused writing sessions addressed the incorporation of sustainability measures and the avoidance of duplication with existing initiatives. This preparatory session emphasized the importance of practical, context-specific learning and the application of technical standards in real-world settings. The day concluded with proposal consolidation activities and a briefing by Mr. Carlos Magno, UNDP-AFCIA focal point, on the upcoming field visit to the Centro Sabiá project site.



DAY 4



FIELD TRIP – Bridging Theory and Practice: On the fourth day, participants visited an AF supported project under the UNDP Innovation Small Grant Aggregator Platform (ISGAP), implemented by AFCIA grantee, Centro de Desenvolvimento Agroecológico Sabiá. The field visit provided a practical demonstration of innovative approaches to climate adaptation, specifically the integration of greywater reuse systems with agroforestry techniques to mitigate drought and food insecurity in semiarid regions. The project exemplified the combination of capacity building and innovative technologies to enhance water availability and establish irrigated agroforestry plots, significantly improving food

security for local farming families. The knowledge exchange session facilitated by Centro Sabiá encouraged discussion on locally led innovation, community engagement, and lessons learned from project implementation. The visit bridged the gap between theory and practice, providing participants with practical, context-specific learning opportunities.

DAY 5



Write shop Day 5 highlights (Consolidation and Forward Planning):

The final day commenced with a debriefing session, where participants shared insights and observations from the field visit. This was followed by a panel discussion on project design with scale-up considerations, featuring staff from both the AF and the Green Climate Fund (GCF). The intensive writing exercise that followed enabled participants to consolidate their learning and refine their project concepts and proposals. Group presentations in the plenary session fostered cross-learning and collaboration, reinforcing the value of peer review and collective problem-solving.

Some key highlights from the focused writing sessions are noted below:

Questions	Responses
Accreditation and Readiness	
If an entity has already used funds for a previous accreditation, can it ask for these funds again to update its policies? Is there any support, financial or technical, toward earlier accreditation?	Technical assistance grants for both ESP and GP are once-off grants only. If you accessed the TA ESGP first, you cannot later access the gender policy grant, as ESGP already covers gender policy. However, if you access the gender policy grant first, you can later access the TA ESGP. The enhanced readiness strategy is expected to be submitted to the board in October, which may change available support
Country Cap and Funding Structure	
For regional projects, is the money extracted from the country budget, or is it unlimited?	Regional projects are outside of the country cap. The maximum size of Regional projects is 30 million dollars.
For single country projects, what is the maximum size?	The cap is now 40 million per country, and a single project can be up to 25 million dollars.
Is there a limit for any country to submit a project for the small innovation funding window if they already have an approved project?	There is no limit. You can submit as many proposals as you would like. This applies to the LLA window as well.
If a project was submitted before the change in the caps, can the amount be revised?	The amount can be revised if it's well justified. If you increase the amount, there may be additional review rounds, especially if the project is close to technical clearance.
Project Proposal Development Process	
For the PFG (Project Formulation Grant), what qualifies an entity to access the 20% at the pre-concept stage, and what are some things entities have used this for?	When you submit your pre-concept proposal, you also submit the PFG template and can request up to 20% of the total PFG amount at this stage. The PFG can finance local consultations, workshops, ESP and gender policy compliance activities including risk analysis, travel costs, policy analysis, translation, and capacity assessments of executing entities.

At which stage can regional implementing entities apply for the PFG, and what is the process?	At the pre-concept and concept note stages. The template must be submitted at every stage of review.
What are best practices or tips to avoid back and forth in the project proposal process, and what is the average timeline for approval?	Ensure you have the required LOE, use project formulation support, conduct thorough consultations, and engage with the Secretariat for guidance. Ensure the LOE with DAs in copy along with PFG application (if at concept or pre-concept stag) are included in every submission and resubmission of the proposal.
What is a pre-concept? What is the advantage of the three-step approval process?	The pre-concept is a short document (about six pages) for regional and LLA projects, which allows early feedback and the opportunity to request PFG support before developing a full concept note.
ESP and GP Compliance	
If the mitigation measures required for ESP compliance are not solely under the control of the main IE, how should this be handled? How do you handle mitigation measures for displacement, especially if impacts are not known at proposal stage?	The IE should describe the process and how coordination will occur. If unanticipated impacts arise during implementation, report them and adjust mitigation measures as needed. Budget reallocations up to less than 20% can be made without board approval. For LLA and Innovation projects, if including USPs, the USP justification (concept and Full proposal) and plan for USP management (Fully proposal only) are detailed.
Do you align with individual country policies or have your own?	The fund aligns with country definitions for issues like indigenous peoples but requires compliance with its own 15 ESP principles.
For USPs (Unidentified Sub-Projects), what is required in the proposal? If infrastructure needs to be changed due to ESP alignment, can budget be reallocated?	For partial USPs, include a plan for risk screening management, and monitoring as and when sub-projects are identified. Completely unidentified sub-projects are not accepted. Budget reallocations up to less than 20% are allowed without board approval, as per the recently updated policy for project post-approval changes. Similarly, revisions to the project results framework are accepted and can be cleared by the Secretariat (minor) or approved by the Board (major).
Can mitigation measures be included as a specific budget line in the project budget?	Yes, especially for LLA and innovation windows, budget for ESP risk mitigation and capacity building should be included in project components.
How do you report on ESP principles if some are triggered during implementation but not at proposal stage?	Report any unanticipated risks and triggered principles in the project performance reports (PPR), using the dedicated section for unanticipated risks. If these unanticipated risks require an update of the ESMP, kindly share this with the Secretariat as part of the PPR.
Budgetary alignment and M&E	
What is the required percentage of project budget for evaluation activities?	For projects approved since October 2023, 1–5% of the total project/program budget must be allocated to evaluation activities, as part of the IE's budget.
What evaluation activities are required for projects of different durations?	Projects under 4 years: baseline report, final evaluation. Projects 4 years or longer: baseline report, midterm review, final evaluation.

What costs can be included in the M&E budget?	Personnel, staff time, data collection, travel, base line report, preparation of annual reports, external audit, and capacity building for monitoring ESP and gender risks.
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Closing Remarks

Mr. Farayi Madziwa concluded the write shop by expressing gratitude for the active engagement and collaboration from all participants. He acknowledged the valuable peer learning and support that contributed to a deeper understanding of the AF funding windows and proposal development processes. The formation of new partnerships among IEs and the secretariat was highlighted as a key outcome. Participants were encouraged to continue developing and implementing their ideas, maintaining the momentum generated during the workshop.