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Adaptation Fund Board  
Forty-Sixth Meeting  
Bonn, Germany

## Report on the Activities of the Secretariat

### Strategic Issues

- a) The Report of the Secretariat provides a retrospective view of the Secretariat's key activities since the last meeting of the Adaptation Fund Board, in alignment with the report of the Adaptation Fund Board to the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP) and Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA), as well as the Secretariat's Annual Performance Report.
- b) As well, the Report also provides a forward-looking view on issues and challenges facing the Adaptation Fund to support the Board's mandate and deliberations at its 46<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### Purpose

1. This board paper presents to the Board a report on the activities of the Secretariat from October 2025 to March 2026.

### Recommended Decision

2. The Adaption Fund Board, having considered document AFB/B.46/4, takes note of the Report of the Secretariat for the period of October 2025 to March 2026.

### Background

3. This report lists the key activities of the Secretariat, according to the Secretariat's teams in accord with its structure, during the period since the Board's 45<sup>th</sup> meeting in October 2026. This report also provides a forward-looking view on the issues and challenges facing the Adaptation Fund.

### Front Office (including Communications)

4. The Front Office directly supports the Manager of the Secretariat, who provides overall strategic direction and policy leadership for the Secretariat, strengthens the Secretariat's management culture, and positions the Adaptation Fund (AF or the Fund) in external engagements.

#### *Key Activities of the Manager*

- Led the Secretariat's support for the 46<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board in April 2026.
- Led the Fund delegation at COP 30 in Belem, Brazil, where the delegation spoke on numerous panels, met with a high number of Fund partners, and responded to media requests.

- Undertook a mission to Canada in February 2026 to engage in bilateral dialogues with contributor governments to showcase the Fund’s impact and results to date and share updates on relevant priority topics. As well, the mission strengthened partnerships and synergies with relevant organizations to support advocacy and awareness raising for the Adaptation Fund.
- Joined a project monitoring mission to Eastern Indian Oceans small island developing states , to assess the progress, challenges, and effectiveness of an Adaptation Fund regional project in Seychelles and Mauritius implemented by UNDP. During the mission, led exchanges with key partners.

#### *Key Activities of the Communications Function*

- Undertook a phased project to modernize the Fund website and make it more engaging and user-friendly, finishing phase 1 in November 2025 to beautify and enhance the visual look. Also implemented work in March 2026 as part of a phase 2 reorganization, including migrating the website to a new modern server to improve security, speed and functionality, as well as adding a new country pages and updated map section that pulls in relevant projects, IE and DA information per country page to serve as a one-stop shop for AF work occurring in each country.
- Continued to be very active on social media, with an increased focus on engaging audiences on Instagram, LinkedIn, and Facebook, posting regularly about the Fund’s tangible projects and programmes, innovative thought leadership, and the importance of adaptation finance. This resulted in the Fund reaching 23,323 followers on LinkedIn, 19,478 followers on Facebook, and 751 followers on Instagram. It has also reached over 25,500 followers on X. All social platforms saw significant growth since the COP30 campaign began in October.
- Consistently developed engaging, visually compelling, and high-quality content utilising professional design tools such as Canva, thereby maintaining a cohesive and professional visual identity across all social media channels.
- Increased the creation of short-form video content to enhance visibility on platforms that prioritise video. For every long-form video produced, three additional short-form versions were created, allowing for staggered and sustained promotion of each project.
- Produced written and video stories highlighting impacts in action from the field from diverse project visits, as well as videos promoting AF’s work in forests and Brazil to promote its work at COP30. Website performance and digital reach strengthened significantly year-over-year, driven by sustained content production, improved discoverability, and ongoing digital enhancements. During the reporting period, the Fund recorded 369,946 website views (+28.1 percent increase), 132,527 new users (+91.2 percent), and 136,848 total users (+89.9 percent). Traffic sources also diversified, with referrals from AI-powered discovery tools (e.g. ChatGPT) increasing by 94 percent and Facebook-driven traffic rising by over 1,600 percent, demonstrating growing visibility across both emerging and established digital channels and expanding the reach of the Fund’s communications and knowledge products.
- Media visibility increased substantially, reflecting sustained outreach efforts, strategic media partnerships, and timely engagement around key events and milestones. During the reporting period, the Fund recorded a total of 2,993 media mentions, compared to 948 mentions in the previous year, representing a more than threefold increase. This growth demonstrates heightened interest in, and recognition of, the Fund’s work on adaptation finance and results on the ground.

- During COP30, communications performance surged with 169,000 page views (up 22.9% from COP29) driven by a 72% increase in first-time visitors (59,346), alongside expanded media visibility reaching 1,020 global mentions (vs. 657 at COP29) and 2,514 total press-release visits, nearly doubling from 1,381 at COP29.
- Editorial and narrative content production remained strong during the reporting period, supporting external visibility and transparency. The Secretariat produced five press releases, five project stories (including one in collaboration with Climate Home News), nine long- and short-form videos, and three photo albums, highlighting the Fund's activities, results, and impact.
- The Secretariat continued to grow its LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram/Reels and YouTube channels, and innovated by creating two new AF accounts on BlueSky and Threads to extend audience reach in emerging platforms.
- Supported the Fund's activities at COP 30 by co-designing and organizing a highly visible joint pavilion and outreach campaigns with the other multilateral climate funds, including a significant design improvement over past pavilions that was very well-received. AF communications also designed and organized a separate AF office space to host bilateral meetings and media interviews. The pavilion served as a venue to enhance partnerships and host several Fund and joint events on key topics that received overflow attendance and additional online viewership. AF communications delivered timely social media promotions and coverage at both pavilion and other AF events that led to high attendance and received excellent digital engagements throughout COP. Also produced a COP30 website on the Fund's activities plus several key handouts summarizing its work – and jointly branded MCF bags. Lastly, produced timely news releases on the progress of the Fund's resource mobilization efforts and coordinated several media interviews with influential global and national climate news media, including organizing a media roundtable with 14 international journalists based in key AF project countries.
- Media and social monitoring tools were further expanded by leveraging new platforms such as Cision, Meltwater and others to monitor AF listening trends and adjust performance of AF communications products as needed. Continued our relationship with Climate Home News to extend our story and audience reach and began exploring other media organizations to potentially augment that and extend our reach further.

### **Programming and Innovation Team**

5. The Programming and Innovation Team coordinates and undertakes technical reviews of proposals, supports the development of policies and processes for the pre-approval stage of projects, and ensures the efficiency of the proposal submission process. It also leads the implementation of the innovation pillar of the Fund's Medium-term Strategy and provides direct support to Implementing Entities (IEs) in the preparation of grant proposals. The team also provides support to collaborative partnerships.

#### *Key Activities of the Programming and Innovation Team*

- Processed over US \$1.2 billion in proposals received during the reporting period; proposals included fully-developed single-country proposals, single-country concepts, fully-developed regional proposals, regional concepts and pre-concepts, fully-developed locally-led adaptation (LLA) single-country, LLA single-country concepts, fully-developed LLA regional, LLA regional concepts, LLA global aggregator, fully-developed and concepts single-country large innovation

projects, Adaptation Fund Climate Innovation Accelerator (AFCIA) global programme, and project formulation grants.

- Successfully delivered Adaptation Fund’s Innovation Spotlight (5 separate events with nearly 70 speakers and facilitators) for the Adaptation Futures 2025 conference in October 2025, including an AFCIA exhibition and virtual showcase, as well as a post-conference summary playbook.
- Supported the Fund’s preparations for and participated in COP 30.
- Engaged in dialogue with various Implementing Entities on the Adaptation Fund’s processes for accessing funding.
- Actively supported design, organization and representation at various events, including the following:
  - Represented the Fund at the World Adaptation Science Programme (WASP) events, including in-person members’ meeting on the sidelines of the 2025 Adaptation Futures Conference in New Zealand (15 October 2025); WASP member meeting with the WASP Task Force (virtual, February 11 and March 4, 2026).
  - Attended virtually the SOFF Advisory Board meeting on October 15, 2025 and on February 3, 2026.
  - Presented virtually at the Bonn Technical Forum 2025 on December 3, 2025.
  - Provided opening remarks virtually, on behalf of the Fund, at the Adaptation Fund Climate Innovation Accelerator (AFCIA) Pitch Event hosted by WFP. Represented the Fund at the ICIMOD regional consultation in the HKH, Paro, Bhutan, December 3-4, 2025
  - Presented virtually, to CARICOM UNFCCC focal points virtually on the Adaptation Fund windows and access modalities December 4, 2025.
  - Joined the Fund’s delegation to COP 30 in Belém, Brazil, speaking at 21 events and organizing/co-organizing four and providing significant support to the organization of additional four events.
  - Delivered remarks on behalf of the Fund and moderated the webinar “Launch of the UNDP and UNEP-CTCN AFCIA Impact Reports” on February 3, 2026.
  - Represented the Fund at the AFCIA Coordination Services First Programme Steering Committee Meeting, in Vienna, Austria, February 16-17, 2026.
  - Represented the Fund at the CARICOM’s Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Finance Webinar, to provide experiences on the establishment and operationalization of the Adaptation Fund February 20, 2026.
  - Represented the Fund at the UNIDO Conference in Vienna, Austria from February 18-19, 2026.
  - Delivered remarks virtually on behalf of the Fund at the ReCATH event “Webinar on costing of adaptation measures and exchange on related countries' experience” on February 25, 2026.

#### **Country Partnerships Team – Resource Mobilization, Accreditation, and Readiness**

6. The Country and Partnerships Team is comprised of resource mobilization and strategic partnerships, accreditation, and readiness. The resource mobilization function seeks to mobilize resources from various sources, including public government contributions, private sector

donations and alternative sources such as international levies. The accreditation and readiness functions support IEs and DAs to better engage with Fund policies, access and grant processes. As well, the Team seeks to enhance complementarity, coherence and synergies with other climate finance providers and initiatives.

#### *Key Activities in Support of Resource Mobilization*

7. In the reporting period, the Secretariat continued activities related to the implementation of the Resource Mobilization Strategy for the Fund for the period 2022 to 2025, including outreach and communication on the resource mobilization target for 2025 from a floor of US\$ 300 million approved in Decision B.44/45 and including the revision of draft resource mobilization strategy for the period 2026 to 2029 and intersessional Board consultation to support the revision in line with Decision B.45/2. Activities included:
  - Engagement with UNFCCC Executive Secretary and Brazil's COP30 Presidency for their support in advocating for the AF's resource mobilization to reach the Board's target.
  - Outreach to existing and potential contributor governments before and during COP30.
  - Organization of the Fund's annual high-level Contributor Dialogue during COP30 on November 17 2025, co-hosted by the Government of Brazil's COP30 Presidency: the Contributor Dialogue was moderated by the Board's Vice-Chair with high-level speakers from the UNFCCC Secretariat, COP30 Presidency, contributor and recipient governments, as well as civil society.
  - Organization of a visit by the Head of the Fund to subnational and national contributor governments in Quebec and Ottawa, Canada in February 2025.
  - Extension of the framework agreement with the United Nations Foundation (UNF) to continue the partnership on the "Donate button"/ donation form on the AF website and channelled via UNF.
  - Exploration of options with relevant carbon market stakeholders for receiving contributions under Article 6.2 bilateral agreements and transactions.
  - Representation of the AF in the Third Meeting of the GEF-9 Replenishment in January 2026 in Bonn, Germany.
  - Organization of two virtual Board consultation sessions on February 2 and 3, 2026 to invite Board inputs and guidance on the revision of the draft resource mobilization strategy for 2026 to 2029.
  - Preparation of a revised draft resource mobilization strategy for 2026 to 2029, taking into account Board comments during the 45<sup>th</sup> meeting and intersessionally during consultations with the Board.

#### *Key Activities in Support of Accreditation*

- Coordinated a steadily increasing portfolio of (re)accreditation applications, with a total of 95 applications out of which 42 are under review, 14 are under screening, and the remaining with the applicant entities for (re)submissions. The activity included coordinating the Accreditation Workflow, assigning Panel reviewers to applications, facilitating calls between Panel and applicant entities, providing technical and administrative support to the Panel and applicants,

updating accreditation data, triangulating information from different units for application assessments, and communications, among others.

- Coordinated and participated in the NIE seminar in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on September 8-10, 2025 to raise awareness about the re-accreditation process and the important milestones for the entities pursuing re-accreditation. The seminar was also an opportunity to touch base with various entities undergoing re-accreditation to clarify any of the procedural and technical bottlenecks and speed up the application process.
- Facilitated participation of a Panel member during the NIE seminar to organize a dedicated session on 'What the Panel is looking for during review stage' which allowed the participants to step into the shoes of the expert Panel members. It also provided an opportunity for entities to ask specific questions on the technical areas such as AML/CFT, Environmental and Social and Gender policies, and financial misconduct, among others, which directly clarified some of the pending areas in their application.
- Engaged with potential, ongoing applicant, and accredited entities on the sidelines of COP30 in Belem, Brazil to provide bilateral support and direct guidance on the (re)accreditation process. Several meetings were held with the Designated Authorities of the countries interested in their NIE accredited in a timely manner.
- Facilitated the accreditation of one (1) National Implementing Entity (NIE) and re-accreditation of five (5) NIEs, which brings the total accredited entities to 63 out of which 42 have been successfully re-accredited.
- Organized 45<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Accreditation Panel on February 4-5, 2026 where, apart from the portfolio of applications, the Secretariat actively engaged with the Panel to provide information on the upcoming administrative changes and to seek inputs on the proposed amendment of the re-accreditation process.

#### *Key Activities in Support of Readiness*

- Processed US \$49,569 in readiness grant proposals during the reporting period. Proposals included two technical assistance grants to support NIE compliance with the Fund's Environmental and Social Policy and Gender Policy.
- Hosted a webinar on October 20, 2025 titled: Future-Proofing Adaptation - A Look at the Updated Strategic Results Framework and Guidance. The webinar was attended by over 90 participants representing the Fund's accredited IEs and stakeholders.
- Facilitated a country exchange in Panama from February 22-27, 2026, held under the theme: Integrated Water Management (IWM). The country exchange was hosted by Panama's accredited NIE, Fundación Natura and attended by 14 countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America representing 12 of the Fund's accredited NIEs and 2 RIEs from the region.
- Participated in the UN4NAPs meeting on February 9, 2026 which discussed how to best respond to developing countries' requests for capacity building support. UN4NAPs is a UN-wide rapid technical backstopping initiative for NAPs, launched in 2021 that offers a platform for countries to communicate their needs for technical assistance on an on-going basis, which the UNFCCC Secretariat immediately channels to relevant partners to provide capacity building for climate change adaptation.

## **Results Impact and Knowledge Team**

8. The Results Impact and Knowledge Management Team is responsible for managing project performance during implementation and sharing knowledge to maximize learning and impact.

### *Key Activities in Support of Results and Impact*

- Led the development of a guidance document for the revised Strategic Results Framework and updated the project performance report (PPR) template in line with Board decision B.45/3.
- Led a joint Multilateral Climate Funds (MCF) in-person workshop to harmonize indicators across funds, starting with the indicator on Number of Beneficiaries from adaptation projects.
- Supported the organization of the 2026 Country Exchange in Panama, facilitating practical, peer-to-peer learning among National Implementing Entities.
- Advanced portfolio level monitoring and learning, including review of PPRs, mid-term reviews and final evaluations, and conducted a Portfolio Monitoring Mission in March 2026 in Seychelles and Mauritius.
- Led the Secretariat input and review of multiple evaluative outputs and implemented pending Evaluation Policy implementation recommendations.
- Presented the Annual Performance Report 2025, Post-Approval Changes to Projects report, lessons from Portfolio Monitoring Missions (PMMs), and a study on project alignment with National Adaptation Plans and Nationally Determined during the 45th Board meetings in October 2025.
- Provided substantive inputs to the UNFCCC Secretariat 's second annual synthesis report for SBSTA 64 and SBI 64 under the Sharm el-Sheikh Joint Work on the implementation of climate action on agriculture and food security. The report is titled '*Work undertaken by constituted bodies and financial and other entities under the Convention, as well as by relevant international organizations, on activities related to the Sharm el-Sheikh Joint Work on implementation of climate action on agriculture and food security.*'
- Joined the Fund's delegation to COP 30 in Belém, Brazil, to share impact and results from the Fund's portfolio through multiple engagements, with a focus on scaling and alignment with the GGA.

## **Governance and Operations Team**

9. The Governance and Operations Team brings together the governance, legal, policy, gender, and internal operations functions of the Secretariat , such as supporting the Fund's governance (both Board/ Committee meetings and reporting to the CMA and CMP), development of Fund policies, implementation of the legal agreement, advancing the Fund's gender work, and developing internal operations (such as work plan and budget preparation and standard operating procedures for administrative processes).

### *Key Activities of the Governance and Operations Team*

#### Governance

- Supported the Chair in finalizing the report of the 45<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board.
- Supported the Chair in preparing the report of the Board to the CMP/CMA, as well as the addendum to that report.

- Organized the 46<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board and 37<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Ethics and Finance Committee.
- Led the engagement of the Fund's delegation at COP 30, including the organization of side events, participation on panels, briefings to negotiators, engagement with media, bilateral meetings with partners, and mission logistics.
- Implemented the Board's decisions requesting the Secretariat to (i) support the Board's efforts to continue considering the matter of the transition the Fund to exclusively serve the Paris Agreement (Decision B.43/32), (ii) update the Environmental and Social Policy (Decision B.42/56), (iii) update the draft Adaptation Fund Vision and Guidelines on Enhanced Civil Society Engagement and the draft Guidelines for Participation of Active Civil Society Observers (Decision B.40/75), (iv) develop a draft of a policy for the protection against sexual abuse, exploitation, and harassment (SEAH) (Decision 4/CMP.17, paragraph 13 and Decision 18/CMA.4, paragraph 12), and (v) update a report on the carbon footprint of the Fund (Decision B.42/55).

#### Gender

- Published the report on the Adaptation Fund's Gender Scorecard Implementation for FY25 (Document AFB/B.45/Inf.1) and continued implementation of the Fund's gender scorecard (2026), collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative related data from project concept notes, full project proposals, and annual Project/Programme Performance Reports (PPRs) submitted by IEs.
- The Gender Team organized an internal session for the Secretariat focused on gender reporting sections of the annual PPR to share insights from the Fund's Gender Scorecard implementation. This provided an opportunity to discuss ways to further streamline gender reporting section of the annual PPR template and to align it with the updated Fund's Strategic Results Framework. An additional session was held to support the Secretariat in gathering both quantitative and qualitative gender data from project concept and full proposals. The Team developed a guidance document to apply the Gender Scorecard quality at entry and during implementation.
- Continued collaboration on gender mainstreaming with other climate funds and partner organizations. The Team has contributed to the development of the Belem Gender Action Plan by providing input on the activities thereunder and participating in the workshops organized by the UNFCCC Secretariat.

#### Operations - Finance

- Led the implementation of the Secretariat's FY26 workplan and budget implementation, including preparation of team level budget expenditure reports and quarterly budget management meetings led by the Manager.
- Led the preparation of the Secretariat's FY27 workplan and budget.
- Implemented FIF platform enhancement projects for the Adaptation Fund, which include the online project proposal submission portal for IEs to be launched in the first quarter of 2026.
- Organized several training/testing sessions for the online project proposal submission portal for Secretariat staff.

#### Personnel

10. Young Hee Lee, Governance Officer, ended her duty on March 16, 2026.

## **A Forward Look at Issues and Challenges Facing the Fund and Secretariat**

11. The Secretariat continues to implement the Medium-Term Strategy 2023-2027 (MTS II), guided by the Board through the MTS II Implementation Plan and annual work plans. The trends mentioned in the last two reports to the Board on the activities of the Secretariat (AFB.B/45/3 and AFB.B.44/4) continued in the current reporting period: growth in country demand for adaptation finance, growth in the approvals of high volumes of new projects and programmes, and growth in demand for accreditation review from new prospective national and regional implementing entities continues, along with continued demand for capacity building through the Fund's readiness programme. Demand for the Fund's participation in external events also continues to grow, in keeping with a growing visibility of the Fund and its work.
12. In addition, the decision to triple annual outflows by 2030 made at COP29 (1/CMA.6) and reaffirmed at COP 30 (-/CMA.7) and requests by the CMA for the Board to take into account, as appropriate, relevant paragraphs in the new collective quantified goal on climate finance in its upcoming and future related work, continues to present a major opportunity to scale up support for vulnerable countries. Along with the work to complete the transition of the Fund to exclusively serve the Paris Agreement, these decisions from the Parties come in the context of a growing need for adaptation support to countries facing the effects of climate change and yet large gaps in financing for adaptation support and shrinking financing for development and climate. As well, there is a felt perception from some stakeholders that multilateralism is in crisis. The stability of the Adaptation Fund as a relatively uncomplicated source of funding is an asset, but this evolving landscape will require strategic agility and proactive planning to ensure the Fund remains responsive, impactful, and aligned with global climate finance goals, and ready to deliver climate financing at the scale required to meet country demand.
13. Amid increased demand and a challenging external context, the Secretariat has also faced some changes within its institutional hosting environment that affect the Secretariat's operations. As a hosted trust fund, the Secretariat relies on the World Bank's human resources (HR) policies and procedures to manage its personnel to meet the Secretariat's business needs to fulfil the mandate of the Fund. Since the start of the current fiscal year (July 1, 2025), the World Bank has made a number of changes to its HR policies and practices that affect the Secretariat. The elaboration and rolling out of the changes has created delays in ongoing recruitment. The changes include greater scrutiny of the creation of new positions, requiring additional justification for any new position, requiring all new administrative assistant positions to be local contracts that do not require a US employment visa instead of international contracts, and the discontinuation of the use of short-term consultants and the move towards use of independent contractors (which will take effect January 1, 2027) that will not be eligible for a US employment visa. These changes have operational and financial implications for the Secretariat, including contributing to a longer time frame for the recruitment of staff and extended-term consultant positions approved by the Board, limiting the ability of the Secretariat to source qualified short-term expertise, and limiting the ability of the Secretariat to predict its variable costs for short-term expertise using an as-yet untested contracting modality whose actual costs are not fully known. Regarding the latter, this will affect the ability of the Board to source experts for the Accreditation Panel and AF-TERG, who as of December 31, 2026, will be required to become independent contractors if they wish to support the Board. The Secretariat is bringing these issues to the awareness of the Board as they have a material impact on the Secretariat's operations and budget.

14. More broadly, agenda of the 46<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board responds to decisions by the Parties, the Board's decisions made at its previous meetings, and the evolving landscape described above. The agenda includes consideration of the Fund's transition to exclusively serve the Paris Agreement, providing an update on the work. As well, the agenda includes consideration of an updated strategy for resource mobilization and an updated strategy for the readiness program. The Board will also be invited to consider papers concerning an update to the Fund's Environmental Social Policy and a policy on protection against sexual abuse, exploitation, and harassment, along with a paper on enhancing civil society engagement.
15. The Secretariat would propose discussions on the Fund's next strategic plan begin at future board meetings, subject to the decision of the Board.