



**ADAPTATION FUND**  
Readiness Programme  
for Climate Finance

## **Webinar: Transitioning the Role of Designated Authority to Institutional Leadership**

6 August 2025

Summary Report



## Introduction

The Adaptation Fund recently hosted a webinar titled "*Transitioning the Designated Authority from Individual to Institutional Leadership*," aimed at supporting country focal points in understanding the revised Designated Authority (DA) framework and the updated nomination process. This initiative is part of the Fund's broader efforts to enhance support mechanisms for developing countries and to improve access to adaptation finance.

Ishani Debnath, Climate Finance and Readiness Specialist opened the webinar by providing a background on the recent UN Gap Report released in November 2024, that underscores a critical shortfall in adaptation finance, reaffirming the urgent need for increased and more effective financial support. She highlighted that countries have committed to doubling adaptation finance, with an ambitious collective goal set at COP in Baku to raise climate finance from USD 100 billion to USD 300 billion annually by 2030. The Adaptation Fund (AF), like the other climate funds has been given a clear mandate to triple its disbursements by the same timeline. She reiterated that the fund is enhancing its support mechanisms to better serve developing countries. A key step in this process is the revision of the Fund's engagement with national focal points. At its 43rd meeting, the adaptation fund Board agreed to transition the role of Designated Authority from an individual government officer to an institutional entity. This shift is designed to preserve institutional knowledge and promote teamwork, that increases country capacity and enhances access to adaptation fund resources.

As the first climate fund to directly channel resources to developing countries, the adaptation fund continues to prioritize a country-driven approach. The updated designated authority system reinforces alignment with national priorities and strengthens engagement with the most vulnerable communities. A significant milestone in this process was the decision taken at the Fund's 43rd Board meeting to shift the DA role from being held by an individual government official to an institutional entity. This transition is intended to strengthen institutional memory, promote inter-agency collaboration, and build national capacity—ultimately improving countries' ability to access and manage Adaptation Fund resources. The webinar provided clarity on the revised DA framework and nomination procedures and facilitated dialogue on related topics, such as signatory requirements for project submissions and broader institutional responsibilities.

### **Technical Summary and Key Highlights:**

- **Transition to Institutional Designated Authorities:** The Adaptation Fund has officially begun transitioning the role of DA from individuals to institutional entities. This change is expected to foster resilience in institutional knowledge and improve coordination across government sectors.
- **Commitment to Scaling Up Climate Finance:** Participating countries reiterated their commitment to increasing adaptation finance, with a collective goal of raising total climate finance from \$100 billion to \$300 billion annually by 2030.
- **Clarification of Nomination and Signatory Processes:** The webinar addressed critical aspects of the nomination and signatory process for project submissions, ensuring alignment with the new institutional DA framework.

- Community of Practice for Direct Access Entities:** The Community of Practice continues to serve as a valuable platform for capacity building and knowledge exchange among accredited national implementing entities (NIEs) of the Adaptation Fund and the Green Climate Fund. The current chair is Claudia Godfrey (Peru), with Aissata Sall (Senegal) serving as vice chair. The community has successfully mobilized resources for technical assistance and provides member countries access to consultants to support project development.

This shift toward institutional leadership reflects the Fund’s commitment to strengthening country ownership, enhancing national capacities, and streamlining access to climate adaptation resources.

### Designated Authority Webinar – Q&A Summary

Question	Response
Q1: Nomination and contact points for Designated Authority	The Secretariat clarified that if the Minister is appointed as the primary contact point of the Designated Authority, the nomination letter should be signed by a higher authority than the Minister. In addition, a secondary contact point responsible for facilitating communication and coordination with the Fund may be a representative of the NIE that is a subordinate entity under the Ministry serving as the DA.
Q2: Does the Adaptation Fund provide capacity building for Designated Authorities?	Yes. Through its readiness programme, the Adaptation Fund provides capacity-building support to Designated Authorities through webinars, seminars, and regional workshops. These activities aim to strengthen understanding of Adaptation Fund processes, including accreditation and project funding.
Q3: Can a Minister nominate their own institution as Designated Authority if a different person is appointed as the main contact point?	This question was addressed during the webinar. The response clarified the applicable nomination requirements in line with the Adaptation Fund’s guidance, as explained by the Secretariat during the session.
Q4: Do Designated Authorities need to endorse Regional Implementing Entities again during reaccreditation?	No. For reaccreditation, only an Expression of Interest from the management of the Regional Implementing Entity is required.
Q5: Can the Designated Authority intervene in monitoring and evaluation, such as approving or rejecting project progress reports?	This question was addressed during the webinar by the Secretariat, clarifying the role of the Designated Authority in relation to project oversight and reporting.
Q6: What is the deadline for submitting	The deadline for submitting the NDE letter

the NDE letter?	is before 11 October 2025.
Q7: Can the No-Objection Letter be submitted without naming an Executing Entity?	This question was raised during the webinar. Guidance on completing the No-Objection Letter template, including treatment of Executing Entities, is provided by the Secretariat.
Q8: What is the role of the Designated Authority throughout the project cycle under the new AF approach?	The Designated Authority is responsible for endorsing the project proposal to the Secretariat and for endorsing any subsequent changes to project design, implementation arrangements, or budget reallocations. The Secretariat referred participants to the official guidance document outlining the roles of Designated Authorities.
Q9: Use of DA nomination letter template	The Secretariat advised participants to use the official template provided to nominate an entity as Designated Authority, including designation of the primary (signatory authority) and up to two secondary contact points.
Q10: What to do if government bureaucracy delays project execution by the Designated Authority	This was identified as an in-country issue. While the Adaptation Fund is not directly involved, any delays in project implementation should be reported to the Fund.
Q11: Can a Minister of Environment sign the DA nomination letter themselves?	If the Minister is appointed as the primary contact point of the Designated Authority, the nomination letter should be signed by a higher authority than the Minister.
Q12: Can Implementing Entities also act as Executing Entities?	Yes. Implementing Entities may act as Executing Entities, subject to caps on execution costs. The Secretariat noted that Implementing Entities may request up to 1.5% of the total activities, outputs, or components they plan to execute, in line with existing guidance.
Q13: Does a Letter of Endorsement need to be revised if a Designated Authority ministry changes name?	Yes. The Letter of Endorsement should be updated to reflect the new name of the ministry. However, if the primary contact person remains unchanged, the Secretariat may continue reviewing the proposal while the updated letter is submitted as soon as possible.

### Closing Remarks

The webinar closed with concluding remarks from Ishani Debnath, who thanked everyone for their participation and their engagement in the webinar.