



## ADAPTATION FUND

### **Submission by the Adaptation Fund to the Adaptation Committee Call for submissions on ‘*how to mainstream gender consideration into national adaptation planning and implementation*’**

The Adaptation Committee (AC), in its 2019-2021 workplan, agreed to include the objective of incorporating gender as a cross-cutting consideration into all its activities. Upon the invitation from the AC, the Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat presents this submission which focuses on the Fund’s efforts to help developing countries incorporate gender consideration in its financed adaptation projects, which are expected to be in line with national adaptation planning and goals. The questions asked by the AC were:

- *What are good examples of lessons learned and best practices in prioritizing/incorporating gender in the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans in your country or constituency?*
- *How can gender best be incorporated into adaptation action?*
- *In your experience, what are remaining gaps related to incorporating gender considerations into adaptation planning and implementation?*
- *What are useful sources relevant to this topic?*

#### **[Adaptation Fund and its efforts in incorporating gender consideration into its operations]**

Adaptation Fund finances concrete projects and programmes that are based on country needs, views and priorities and that help vulnerable communities in developing countries adapt to climate change. As of 6 June 2019, the Fund has financed adaptation projects in 85 countries: among them, 18 from Small Island Developing Countries and 29 from least developed countries.

The Adaptation Fund Board adopted the **Adaptation Fund’s Gender Policy (GP) and Gender Action Plan (GAP)** (2017-2019; Document AFB/EFC.18/5/Rev.1) in March 2016. In addition, the **Fund’s five-year Medium-Term Strategy (MTS)** (2018-2022) and its implementation plan were adopted in March 2018. Consisting of 3 pillars- Action, Innovation and Knowledge and Sharing, the MTS is to enhance the Fund’s experience in supporting concrete projects that directly reach, engage, empower and benefit the most vulnerable communities and social groups. It is notable that “**advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls**” is cross-cutting themes of the Medium-Term Strategy, which affirms that gender is integral part of Adaptation Fund’s work and programme. Under the Medium-term strategy, new funding windows including innovation grants and learning grants are available, which could support efforts of gender consideration in adaptation projects.

The Fund’s Gender Policy was designed and approved in following established international good practice in climate finance mechanisms and systematically integrated and further defined key principles elaborated in the Fund’s own environmental and social policy, especially the principles of access and equity, on consideration of marginalized and vulnerable groups and of human rights. The GP starts out

with its key objective to uphold women's rights as universal human rights and to attain the goal of gender equality by applying a gender mainstreaming approach with a focus on the equal treatment of women and men and providing them with equal opportunities for access to Fund's resources and services.

It is noteworthy that even before the adoption of the Fund's GP and GAP in March 2016, with early recognition of the importance of incorporating gender consideration in the projects, 'gender equity and women's empowerment' was already included as a stand-alone principle (Principle 5) in the Fund's Environmental and Social Safeguards adopted in 2013.

Accordingly, since 2013, gender consideration was incorporated into the **accreditation, readiness programme and project development** of the Fund. At accreditation stage, the implementing entities are expected to demonstrate its commitment and capacity to comply with and implement the gender policy, and complaint handling mechanism to deal with gender-related risk caused by the project. In addition, ***the implementing entities need to justify their gender considerations in their project proposal which is also required to be in line with the country's national adaptation plans and national adaptation goals.***

Recognizing possibly limited capacities related to gender work, the Adaptation Fund has tried to help **its implementing entities' capacities building on gender**, inter alia, by issuing **gender guidance document**, provided the IEs with **technical assistance grants for capacity building on gender policy and/or environmental and social safeguards** as part of the Fund's readiness programme, and launched webinars on gender capacity building, and including gender session in the readiness workshops. The Fund will hold dedicated two and half days of **gender training/gender day session for national implementing entities at the annual national implementing entity seminar** in August 2019, with a focus on **incorporation of gender consideration into the Fund's adaptation projects.**

In complement to the efforts the Fund has made in advancing gender in policy, planning and implementation of projects and programmes, the Fund has also developed over the **years multiple knowledge products to support continued learning and sharing of these experiences related to advancing a gender-responsive approach. Efforts to increase outreach and dissemination of learning at the Fund on gender**, have resulted in a diverse array of resources to facilitate collaborative learning and sharing on gender across adaptation communities of practice. This outreach and dissemination have included developing: knowledge briefs and infographics with concise data on gender integration in projects linked with and driving the Gender Policy and ESP,<sup>1</sup> as well as videos<sup>2</sup> sharing implementation approaches and impact of mainstreaming gender elements. As part of implementing the Learning and Sharing pillar of the MTS, **an online knowledge platform** was also developed. The Fund's newly implemented online microsite on knowledge aims to include information and diverse resources on specific themes with **gender chosen as one of the priority themes** where all the aforementioned resources have

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<sup>1</sup> Adaptation Fund. 2018. Advancing Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls; & Protecting the Environment and Engaging the Most Vulnerable Communities and Social Groups. <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/pdfs/web/viewer.html?file=https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/AF-Gender-Environment-06.2018-WEB.pdf>. For Adaptation Fund Environmental and Social Policy, see [https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Amended-March-2016\\_-OPG-ANNEX-3-Environmental-social-policy-March-2016.pdf](https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Amended-March-2016_-OPG-ANNEX-3-Environmental-social-policy-March-2016.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Adaptation Fund. 2016. Gender: A Pivotal Difference Maker in Adaptation Fund Projects. <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/gender-pivotal-difference-maker-adaptation-fund-projects/>

been populated and are openly accessible to users.<sup>3</sup> **Webinars for readiness support** held by the Fund have also included elements to enhance gender capacity.<sup>4</sup> As part of the Fund's knowledge management, the Fund's first case study which looks into gender mainstreaming efforts, gender considerations/perspectives in AF projects, will be soon published. As one of the Fund's knowledge products, the publication of the '*lessons learned, and successful approaches captured from (the Adaptation Fund's) portfolio monitoring missions*' includes "gender responsive interventions" as one of its eight overarching themes.<sup>5</sup>

Gender-related knowledge, lessons and experiences can be also found in the annual performance report, mid-term report and a final evaluation of the project/program that the implementing entity is required to submit. Currently, as part of the project lessons learned in the implementation and adaptive management, Implementing Entity are requested to share in their APR, any updates on, inter alia,: i) how have gender considerations been taken into consideration during the reporting period; ii) what have been the lessons learned as a consequence of inclusion of such considerations on project performance or impacts. The mid-term report and a final evaluation of the project to be conducted by an independent evaluation includes the independent evaluation of the processes influencing the achievement of project/programme results, and assessment of gender balance perspectives of those affected and involved in the project/programme. In addition to these, the Fund has observed that the implementing entities have voluntarily included gender-related knowledge and lessons in the report beyond what are required.

The Fund also updated project performance report template (approved in February 2019) by further refining the project performance monitoring and evaluation system related to gender as well as environmental and social risk management. To help to help its IEs comply with the amended PPR template, the Fund also issued guidance document on the compliance with the updated PPR template.

**[Some Challenges Reported by the Fund's implementing entities in their incorporation of gender consideration into adaptation projects financed by the Adaptation Fund]**

Some challenges that the implementing entities have reported on in their implementation of Adaptation Fund projects, have been related to, for instance:

- Consistent and systematic women's participation in decision-making process in the project lifecycle
- Initial and continuing gender assessments throughout the project lifecycle to support acceleration of tactful gender-responsive activities tailored to the needs and priorities for groups to access benefits
- Difficulties in accessing local gender experts available for capacity building related to community-based project implementation
- Consistent and systematic engagement of national, sub-national women's groups, gender experts from planning to implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of projects

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<sup>3</sup> Adaptation Fund. Knowledge Themes: Gender. <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/knowledge-learning/knowledge-themes/gender/>

<sup>4</sup> Adaptation Fund. 2018. Adaptation Fund Webinar to Share Country Experiences in Environmental, Social and Gender Approaches to Projects. <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/adaptation-fund-webinar-share-country-experiences-environmental-social-gender-approaches-projects/>

<sup>5</sup> See <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Lessons-Learned-from-PMM.pdf>