Background

1. This document presents to the Project and Programme Review Committee (PPRC) of the Adaptation Fund Board (the Board) an overview of the learning grant proposals submitted by National Implementing Entities (NIEs) to the Board to the current meeting

2. The analysis of the proposals mentioned above is contained in a separate addendum to this document.

Funding window for learning grants

3. At its thirtieth meeting, the Board adopted the medium-term strategy (MTS) for the Fund through decision B.30/42, and subsequently approved the implementation plan for the strategy at its thirty-first meeting. At this meeting, the Board decided:

> *(a) To approve the implementation plan for the medium-term strategy for the Fund for 2018–2022 contained in the Annex I to document AFB/B.31/5/Rev.1 (the plan);*
>
> *(b) To request the secretariat:*
>
> *(i) To facilitate the implementation of the plan during the period 2018–2022;*
>
> *[…]*
>
> *(iii) To prepare, for each proposed new type of grant and funding window, a specific document containing objectives, review criteria, expected grant sizes, implementation modalities, review process and other relevant features and submit it to the Board for its consideration in accordance with the tentative timeline contained in Annex I to document AFB/B.31/5/Rev.1, with input from the Board's committees;*
>
> *[…]*
>
> *(Decision B.31/32)*

4. At the thirtieth-second meeting of the Board, the secretariat had presented document AFB/B.32/9 which outlines the objectives, review criteria, expected grant sizes, implementation modalities, review process and eligibility criteria for learning grants. Having considered the proposed approach, application process, review criteria and features of the learning grants as set out in document AFB/B.32/9, the Board decided:

> *(a) To make learning grants available for national implementing entities between financial year 2019 and financial year 2023 up to a maximum of US$ 400,000 per year as direct transfers from the resources of the Adaptation Fund Trust Fund;*
>
> *(b) That the learning grants would not count against the country cap approved by the Board in decision B.13/23;*

(c) To approve:

(i) The features and implementation arrangements of the learning grants as set out in document AFB/B.32/9; and

(ii) The application form, review criteria and review template for the learning grants as set out in annexes II, III and IV of document AFB/B.32/9;

(d) To request the secretariat to issue a call for proposals for learning grants in accordance with the tentative timeline set out in the annex to document AFB/B.31/5/Rev.1 and the budget pursuant to (a) above;

(e) To request the secretariat to develop and present to the Board at its thirty-third meeting:

(i) A standard legal agreement for learning grants;

(ii) Notification templates for project start and project completion for learning grants;

(iii) Monitoring and evaluation templates for learning grants; and

(iv) A results framework for learning grants;

(f) To request the Project and Programme Review Committee (PPRC) of the Board to review learning grant proposals and make recommendations to the Board in line with other grant approval procedures approved by the Board; and

(g) To request the secretariat to report to the Board annually on the implementation progress for learning grants through the annual performance report; and

(h) To request the secretariat to present to the PPRC at its twenty-fifth meeting an analysis of the project review cycle for learning grants, with potential options, for its consideration.

(Decision B.32/38)

5. In accordance with decision B.32/39, Subparagraph (e), the call for learning grant proposals was issued in July 2019 and eligible national implementing entities (NIEs) were given the opportunity to submit proposals.

7. At its thirty-third meeting the Board had expressed that it would like to consider proposals for small grants under the medium-term strategy (MTS) at its regular meetings. The proposals submitted therefore followed the regular review cycle for concrete adaptation projects and programmes.

8. The secretariat received proposals for learning grants and reviewed them as explained below.

Learning grants submitted by national implementing entities

9. One proposal was submitted to the secretariat by an accredited NIE with the total requested funding amounting to US$ 125,100. The proposal was submitted by the Environmental Project Implementation Unit State Agency (EPIU) of Armenia.

10. The proposal was deemed eligible to be considered and the details of this proposal are contained in the following PPRC document:

AFB/PPRC. 33/35 Proposal for learning grant for Armenia

11. The proposal submitted by the Environmental Project Implementation Unit State Agency of Armenia (EPIU) included US$ 9,800 or 8.5%[1] in Implementing Entity (IE) management fees.

12. The total funding requested is within the funding limit per project outlined in document AFB/B.32/9 and approved by the Board through decision B.32/38.

Table 1: Project learning grant proposals submitted to the 42nd Adaptation Fund Board meeting

Country	NIE	Financing Requested (USD)	IE Fee (USD)	IE Fee, %
Armenia	EPIU	$**125,100**	$9,800	8.5%
Total		**$125,100**	**$**9,800	**8.5%**

The review process

13. In accordance with Decision B.32/38 by the Board, the secretariat issued a call for proposals for learning grants and screened and prepared technical reviews of the submitted proposal in line with other small grant approval procedures approved by the Board. The proposal was submitted to the current review cycle in response to the call for proposals.

14. In line with the Board request at its tenth meeting, the secretariat shared the initial technical review findings with the IE that had submitted the proposals and solicited its response to specific items requiring clarification. Responses were requested by e-mail, and the time allowed for the IEs to respond was one week. The IE was also offered the opportunity to discuss the initial review findings with the secretariat by telephone.

15. The secretariat subsequently reviewed the resubmission by the IE and its responses to the clarification requests, and compiled comments and recommendations that are presented in the addendum to this document (AFB/PPRC. 33/34/Add.1).

[1] The implementing entity management fee percentage is calculated compared to the project budget including the project activities, before the management fee.