



ADAPTATION FUND

AFB/PPRC.34/10
16 September 2024

Adaptation Fund Board
Project and Programme Review Committee
Thirty-fourth Meeting
Bonn, Germany, 8-9 October 2024

Agenda item 15

**GUIDANCE TO IMPLEMENTING ENTITIES FOR APPLICATION
OF UPDATED OPERATIONAL POLICIES FOR LEARNING
GRANTS**

Background

1. At the forty-second meeting of the Adaptation Fund Board (the Board) in April 2024, with the recommendation of the Project and Programme Review Committee, the Board decided:

- (a) To approve the increase of learning grants from US\$ 150,000 to US\$ 500,000 per project to provide support for national implementing entities in capturing and disseminating practical lessons from adaptation interventions, and to request the secretariat:
 - i. To prepare operational policies for the learning grant window, reflecting the change in project scale;
 - ii. To prepare, through a consultative process, a proposal for a framework approach for bundling small grants; and
 - iii. To present the outputs of the work described under subparagraphs (b) (i) and (b) (ii) above to the Project and Programme Review Committee at its thirty-fourth meeting.

(Decision B.42/34)

2. The background of the learning grants and the rationale for the increase of the amount is fully explained in the document AFB/PPRC.33/37.

Objective of the document

3. The current document therefore aims to:
- a. revise the project proposal template and the updated instructions for preparing a request for learning grant funding which will be included as annexes of the operational policy and guidance of the Fund;
 - b. present further guidance to implementing entities on the updated operational policy for the learning grant reflecting the change in amount, and
 - c. present a proposed results framework for learning grants, with clear outcomes and indicators for learning grants.

Updated guidance on learning grants

4. This guidance document is relevant for National Implementing Entities (NIEs) submitting learning grant proposals. The guidance is applicable for Section D of the application template (see Annex I.) which focuses on Implementation Arrangements, specifically for **part D2** (“*Include a simple results framework for the project proposal, including milestones, targets and indicators*”) and **part D3** (“*Demonstrate how the project/programme aligns with Results Framework of the Adaptation Fund*”).

Overview of Learning Grants

4. The main objectives of learning grants are: (a) Transferring knowledge from one NIE to another; (b) Transferring knowledge from NIEs to the wider climate finance adaptation community and (c) Developing knowledge and guidelines through partnerships.

5. The goal of learning grants is to help encourage a culture of learning across institutions and help build NIE capacities in knowledge management. They represent a window of opportunity to capture, study and disseminate practical lessons from adaptation interventions that are additional to KM activities already financed under Adaptation Fund-approved projects/programmes.

7. Learning grants represent an opportunity for implementing entities to develop knowledge products as well as setting up a knowledge management system for effective management and dissemination of learning material. Additionally, they aim to complement collaborative knowledge and sharing efforts with respect to partnerships with diverse stakeholders on the ground.

8. Given the size and objectives of the learning grants, the duration of projects should not exceed three (3) years.

Eligibility criteria

9. To be eligible to receive learning grants to share or transfer knowledge to other NIEs or the wider climate adaptation community or to develop knowledge or guidelines through partnerships, the organization applying must meet the following conditions:

- a) Be a national implementing entity (NIE) to the Adaptation Fund and have an accreditation status of “Accredited”;
- b) Have an Adaptation Fund funded project that has reached the mid-point in implementation or where a Mid-Term Review or Evaluation (MTR/MTE) has been submitted;
- c) Submit together with the application form, a letter endorsed by the Designated Authority to the Adaptation Fund in support of the learning grant application.

Eligible activities

10. It is expected that the entity’s commitment to capturing and sharing knowledge and learning with other implementing entities and the wider climate adaptation community would be clearly articulated in the submitted application for learning grants and that tangible benefits to the intended users are also clearly outlined.

11. The types of activities to be funded by the learning grants should fall under the following categories of activities stated in the implementation plan of the MTS2: (i) transferring knowledge between NIEs or from NIEs to the wider climate adaptation community or (ii) developing knowledge and guidelines through partnerships. However, the activities can be diverse and based on the specific learning needs of the countries/implementing entities proposing them. Below is a non-exhaustive list of activities that could be funded by the learning grants.

- i. Lessons learnt
- ii. Studies and publications

- iii. Technical guidance briefs
- iv. Policy briefs
- v. Partnerships
- vi. Knowledge platforms
- vii. Adaptation financing workshops
- viii. Resource centers
- ix. Knowledge sharing events
- x. Country exchanges
- xi. Learning courses

12. Given the increased scope of learning grants, additional activities from the ones stated above may be considered, such as ones helping to support the monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) process to better support the implementation of the evaluation policy and support measurability and evaluability of project results. Additionally, learning activities related to encouraging innovation in adaptation and ones related to catalyzing the locally often under-utilized actors in research and academia the academic sector in taking a more active and action-oriented role in providing solutions for innovative adaptation may also be considered.

Guiding principles

13. When completing the grant application, NIEs should follow the proposed guiding principles mentioned below for the activities proposed. All potential learning activities will be assessed against these principles, which should be met to a satisfactory extent. While it will not be feasible or necessary for a learning activity to meet all these principles, they serve as a useful guidance for strategic alignment and screening for quality assurance.

- a. Evidence based: Activities planned reflect the knowledge gaps identified by the users, addressing issues with strong potential for evidence-based learning.
- b. Country-owned: Learning methods and approaches are driven by users and respond to learning needs identified in-country.
- c. Learning-oriented: Learning activities proposed built on established best practices for project/programme learning.
- d. Collaborative: Collaborative partnerships should be pursued to facilitate relevant learning using shared resources and knowledge.
- e. Inclusive and gender-responsive: Learning activities should address gender considerations and include concerns of the most vulnerable groups and communities.
- f. Innovative: Learning activities should emphasize innovative, effective solutions and practices to adaptation that have demonstrated viability on the ground.
- g. Supports local or traditional knowledge: Learning activities to include expertise and knowledge of local stakeholders, whenever possible.

Indicators for learning grants and alignment with the Strategic Results Framework of the Fund

14. The Adaptation Fund Strategic Results Framework (SRF) includes long-term goal, outcomes, outputs, and a small set of indicators for the Fund as a whole. The AF works toward the achievement of the overall goal and outcomes. Consequently, any project or programme funded through the AF must align with the Fund's results framework and directly contribute to the overall objective and outcomes outlined.

15. To enable the process of measuring performance of learning grants annually and evaluate results mid-way and at the end of the MTS2 implementation period (2023-2027) and *considering the increased scope of learning grants*, the proposed results framework is developed for learning grants, providing clear outcomes and indicators of measurement (Table 1). This approach would be aligned with the Adaptation Fund approach to implementing results-based management (RBM) and signifies an extension of the Fund RBM system to encompass the impact of the learning grants on the MTS-2 and consequently, Fund level goal and objectives.

16. A key consideration is to ensure that these additional indicators proposed for measuring the impact of learning grants would complement those already available under the Strategic Results Framework (SRF) of the Fund and that will be incorporated into the revised SRF.

17. It is worth noting that the new learning indicators may also be applicable to the knowledge management components of the regular AF funded projects/programmes.

Table 1. Indicators for learning grants

OUTCOME	OUTCOME INDICATOR	OUTPUT	OUTPUT INDICATOR
Outcome 1: Increased capacity of national entities to capture and disseminate knowledge among other national implementing entities	1. Percentage of NIEs with improved capacity to capture and disseminate knowledge to other implementing entities	1.1 Workshops, knowledge platforms, toolkits, trainings, and other knowledge events aimed at sharing knowledge and enhancing knowledge management systems of NIEs	1.1.1 Number of relevant knowledge events and workshops per year targeting NIEs 1.1.2 Number of modalities of sharing knowledge between NIEs and wider climate adaptation community 1.1.3 Number of evaluation surveys used to collect information on the uptake of disseminated knowledge

		1.2 Collaboration with relevant technical experts, universities providing knowledge on specific topics is enhanced	1.2.1 Number of collaborations formed for generation of knowledge products to be shared (e.g toolkits, training material)
Outcome 2: Increased capacity of national implementing entities to capture and disseminate knowledge to the wider climate adaptation community	2. Number of subnational stakeholders and local entities with improve/d capacity to integrate knowledge in their work programs	2.1 Workshops, training events, technical seminars aimed at sharing knowledge and expertise 2.2 Cooperation with multilateral, bilateral and regional organizations and civil society organizations providing knowledge expertise is increased	2.1.1 Number of relevant technical events per year targeting subnational stakeholders and local entities 2.1.2 Number of technical committees/associations formed to ensure transfer of knowledge 2.1.3 Number of evaluation surveys used to collect information on the uptake of disseminated knowledge 2.2.1 Number of knowledge sharing partnerships formed 2.2.2 Number of knowledge sharing events attended by partnering organizations
Outcome 3: Improved national implementing entities' knowledge	3. Number of partnerships/collaborations to facilitate learning within and across institutions	3.1 Tools and guidelines developed (thematic, sectoral, institutional) and	3.1.1 Number of tools, guidelines translated and shared 3.1.2 Number of modalities of sharing

through partnerships and collaborations		shared with partner organizations	knowledge products and tools
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18. Specifically, for learning grants, project outcomes should be aligned with the Fund level outcome for strengthening awareness and ownership of adaptation climate risk reduction (Outcome 3). Its associated outcome indicators in the current SRF cover some of the ground with respect to measuring the results under the learning and sharing pillar.

Proposed next steps

19. The above guidance document will be made available and communicated to implementing entities and other relevant stakeholders via the AF website, its Knowledge and Learning microsite and through readiness webinars/ knowledge sharing events hosted by the secretariat.

20. Once a learning grant project is approved and the first funds are transferred to the project, the implementing entity is required to submit a project/programme performance report (PPR) on an annual basis using the PPR template approved by the Board through decision B.16/21. In order to enhance reporting consistency in the PPRs some sections will be partially revised to reflect the proposed learning indicators for learning grants.

21. Following the pilot phase for application of learning indicators, the secretariat may propose revisions to the SRF and other relevant documents that require consideration of the project and Programme Review Committee and a decision by the Board.

22. Implementing entities should continue to submit proposals with detailed information on the proposed activities to the secretariat for review. The updated grant application template is included in Annex I of the current document and updated instructions for preparing a request for learning grants are included in Annex II.

23. Given the increase in scale for learning grants, the funding will be disbursed in annual trenches upon submission and clearance of Project Performance Reports outlined in line with the Fund's performance-based disbursement policy.

Recommendation

24. Having considered the analysis and the information contained in document AFB/PPRC.34/10 on the updated operational policies for learning grants, the Board may wish to decide:

- (a) To adopt the revised project proposal template and the updated instructions for preparing a request for learning grant funding and request the secretariat to include them as updates of the operational policy of the Fund;

- (b) To request the secretariat to inform NIEs of the above-mentioned updated policy and the updated project template and guidance contained in Annexes I and II of document AFB/PPRC.34/10;
- (c) To request the secretariat to communicate the proposed indicators contained in Table 1 of document AFB/PPRC.34/10 to the NIEs for application during a pilot phase;
- (d) To request the secretariat to consider feedback from the pilot phase of application of learning indicators when revising the strategic results framework, Project Performance Reports and other relevant documents.

Annexes

Annex I: Project proposal template

Annex II: Updated instructions for preparing a request for learning grant funding

Annexes

Annex I: Project proposal template



ADAPTATION FUND

APPLICATION FOR A GRANT TO FACILITATE LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

The application template should be completed and transmitted to the Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat by email or fax.

The overall goal of learning grants is to help encourage a culture of learning across institutions and help build the capacities of national implementing entities (NIEs).

Please type in the responses using the template provided. The instructions in the annex to the template provide guidance to filling out the template.

Complete documentation should be sent to:

The Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat
1818 H Street NW
MSN N7-700
Washington, D.C., 20433
U.S.A
Fax: +1 (202) 522-3240/5
Email: afbsec@adaptation-fund.org

A. PROJECT INFORMATION

Date of receipt:
 Adaptation Fund Grant ID:
 Country/ies:
 National Implementing Entity:
 Amount of Financing Requested (in U.S Dollars Equivalent):

B. Timeframe of Activity

Expected start date	
Completion date	

C. Proposed learning activities

C1. Describe the purpose of the learning grant (Maximum 100 words)

C2. Using the table below, describe the activities to be undertaken to share knowledge with other NIEs or the wider climate adaptation community or to develop knowledge/guidelines through partnerships (Maximum 100 words for each activity)

Proposed Learning Activities	Description of activities (please provide short description)	Expected output of the activities	Country/Institution to share/transfer knowledge with/to or to develop guidelines for, including NIE(s)	Requested budget (USD)*	Tentative timeline (Completion date)
Total project costs					
Implementing entity management fee requested**					
Total Grant Requested (USD)					

*Please also provide a detailed budget with budget notes, indicating the break-down of costs at the output level. Where an Implementing Entity (IE) management fee has been requested, the budget must include a budget with budget notes of the IE management fee

**The Implementing Entity Management Fee requested should be at or below 8.5 per cent of the total project/programme budget before the fee.

D. Implementation Arrangements

D1. Describe the arrangements for project implementation

D2. Include a simple results framework for the project proposal, including milestones, targets and indicators.

D3. Describe how the project/program aligns with the Results Framework of the Adaptation Fund

Project Objective(s)	Project Objective Indicator(s)	Fund Outcome	Fund Outcome Indicator	Grant Amount (USD)
Project Outcome(s)	Project Outcome Indicator(s)	Fund Output	Fund Output Indicator	Grant Amount (USD)

D4. Include a disbursement schedule with time-bound milestones.

E. Implementing Entity

This request has been prepared in accordance with the Adaptation Fund Board's procedures

Head of Implementing Entity	Signature	Date (Month, day, year)	Implementing Entity Contact Person	Telephone	Email Address

F. Record of endorsement on behalf of the government

Provide the name and position of the government official, Designated Authority (DA) of the Adaptation Fund, and indicate date of endorsement. The DA endorsement letter must be attached as an annex to the request.

<i>(Enter Name, Position, Ministry)</i>	<i>Date: (Month, day, year)</i>
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Annex II: Updated instructions for preparing a request for learning grant funding



ADAPTATION FUND

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING A REQUEST FOR LEARNING GRANT FUNDING FROM THE ADAPTATION FUND

The objective of the Learning Grants is to transfer knowledge from one NIE to another, transfer knowledge from NIEs to the wider climate finance adaptation community or to develop knowledge and guidelines through partnerships.

Learning grant proposals must be clear on the expected output from use of the grant, the goal for learning and the rationale for the proposed learning activities.

PART A: PROJECT INFORMATION

DATE OF RECEIPT. Please leave this space blank. The Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat (the Secretariat) will fill in the date on which the proposal is received at the Secretariat.

ADAPTATION FUND GRANT ID. Please leave this space blank. The Secretariat will assign a number to your project internally.

COUNTRY. Please insert the name of the country requesting the grant.

NATIONAL IMPLEMENTING ENTITY. Please specify the name of the National Implementing Entity

AMOUNT OF FINANCING REQUESTED. Please fill the grant amount (in US Dollars equivalent) requested from the Adaptation Fund for this proposal.

PART B: TIMEFRAME OF ACTIVITY

Project start and completion dates help with monitoring of progress towards the target. Enter the expected project start date and completion dates in month and year format (DD/MM/YYYY). For learning grants, the date of first disbursement by the National Implementing Entity towards an activity related to the grant is considered the start date of the project.

PART C: PROPOSED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

C1: PURPOSE OF THE LEARNING GRANT. In 100 words or less, briefly explain the main objective of the learning grant. The project should be able to provide a clear description of the benefits of the proposed learning activities to the most vulnerable communities.

C2: LEARNING GRANT ACTIVITY BREAKDOWN. Using the provided table, provide a breakdown of activities. The table should present a logic flow of activities that will be implemented.

Include a detailed budget with budget notes, a budget on the Implementing Entity management fee use.

The proposal should include a detailed budget with budget notes indicating the break-down of costs at the activity level. In accordance with the Gender Policy of the Fund, the proposal should ensure that adequate resources are allocated in the project/programme budget for gender-responsive implementation. Examples of gender responsive budgets include provision for the involvement and capacity-building of women stakeholders as important actors in implementation. Where an Implementing Entity management fee has been requested, the budget must include a simple budget breakdown of the Implementing Entity management fee.

The Implementing Entity Management Fee requested should be at or below 8.5 per cent of the total project/programme budget before the fee.

The total grant requested should not exceed US\$500,000 per project/programme. As per the features and implementation arrangements for learning grants outlined in document AFB/B. 33/37 approved by the Adaptation Fund Board through decision B.42/34, national implementing entities may request learning grants up to a maximum of US\$ 500,000 per project/programme. The grants do not count against the country cap.

PART D: IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENTS

The implementation arrangements should include a clear description of the roles and responsibilities of the implementing entity. If needed, please include an organogram indicating clearly roles of project team.

D1: PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION DETAILS: Describe the arrangements for project implementation aligning with the guidance provided in document AFB/PPRC.34/10.

D2: RESULTS FRAMEWORK: Include a simple results framework for the project proposal, including milestones, targets and indicators. Whenever possible, the indicators and targets should be disaggregated by sex. Please refer to the AF learning results indicators presented in document AFB/PPRC.34/10 /Table 1.

D3. ALIGNEMENT WITH AF RESULTS FRAMEWORK: Any project or programme funded through the AF must align with the Fund's results framework and directly contribute to the Fund's overall objective and outcomes outlined. Describe how the project/program aligns with the Results Framework of the Adaptation Fund.

D4. DISBURSMENT SCHEDULE: The proposal should include a disbursement schedule that includes time-bound milestones relative to project inception and the reporting requirements.

PART E: IMPLEMENTING ENTITY CERTIFICATION.

Provide the name and signature of the National Implementing Entity Coordinator and the date of signature. Provide also add the project contact person's name, telephone number.

PART F: LETTER OF ENDORSEMENT



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Letter of Endorsement by Government

[Government Letter Head]

[Date of Endorsement Letter]

To: The Adaptation Fund Board
c/o Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat
Email: afbsec@adaptation-fund.org
Fax: 202 522 3240/5

Subject: Endorsement for Learning Grant

In my capacity as designated authority for the Adaptation Fund in [country], I confirm that the above project proposal is in accordance with the government's national priorities in implementing adaptation activities to reduce adverse impacts of, and risks, posed by climate change in (select country).

Accordingly, I am pleased to endorse the above Learning Grant proposal with support from the Adaptation Fund. If approved, the project will be implemented by [national implementing entity].

Sincerely,

[Name of Designated Government Official]
[Position/Title in Government]