

National Implementing Entity (NIE)

Background

The Adaptation Fund (AF) was established to finance concrete adaptation programs in developing countries that are parties to the Kyoto Protocol and are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. The Cook Islands fits into this category. Access to the fund is available through Multi-lateral Implementing Entities (MIE) through agencies like the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) or directly through gaining accreditation as an NIE. Due to the requirements involved, NIE status has been very difficult to attain for Pacific island countries.

In 2011, the Cook Islands had a 5 million USD program (SRIC*) in jeopardy because our MIE partner UNDP had issues around its' own status with the Adaptation Board. Additionally, funding is segmented to MIE and NIE projects and due to difficulties in attaining NIE status, more funds remain accessible through NIE while the MIE fund is almost exhausted. These limitations, along with the Cook Islands firm desire for more ownership and accountability in Development Assistance is why we are applying for NIE status.

With the generous support of EU-GCCA-PSIS*, we have secured six months technical support from the Frankfurt Business School (FBS) to partner with us on the path to AF accreditation. FBS is very experienced in the accreditation process and will guide us through this process.

The joint work between the Frankfurt Business School and Ministry of Finance and Economic Management will also seek to improve the Cook Island Governments level of 'readiness' to directly access other global climate funds such as the pending Green Climate fund and also mobilize and scale up finance in-country.

The Cook Islands Joint National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation and our recent Climate and Disaster Compatible Development Policy all clearly articulate our priorities and plans in Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation, and direct access is important to efficiently fund and deliver these plans.

Terms of Reference

The objective for FBS is to work with MFEM's Development Coordination Division to prepare a full submission for NIE accreditation to the Adaptation Fund Accreditation panel by July 2014. Specifically this will involve:

- Identification, compilation and analysis of all existing resources including relevant documentation as outlined in the AF accreditation toolkit;
- If any gaps are identified in the documentation and/or capacity, then work with the DCD to fill the gaps;
- Collaborate with the DCD to submit a full application to the AF;
- Provide training to MFEM so that they have the capacity to persist with the application to the AF until it is successful and that they are well equipped to deliver to NIE modality over the short and medium term;

**Strengthening the Resilience of our outer island communities to climate change*

**European Union, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Global Climate Change Adaptation, Pacific Small Island States*

2014 Planning

The first step in this process is a stakeholder workshop to be held on Thursday 16 January 2014. The aim of the workshop is to introduce the draft plan and align roles and responsibilities as well as explaining the role of climate finance readiness in accessing international funds such as the Adaptation Fund.

Areas of Focus

The following 4 areas are what accreditation involves and will be explained further at the workshop

A) Financial Integrity and Management:

B) Institutional Capacity:

C) Project/Programme Management Capacity:

D) Transparency and Self-investigative Powers:

It is obvious from the above 4 categories that this requires a team effort and will not rest solely with DCD to manage. Many government agencies will need to be involved in supporting the accreditation process and then further, the delivery process as we are accredited.

Our challenges

Our challenges in achieving this goal are significant, but not unachievable. They include:

- Resource/Capacity constraints
- Capability gaps
- Timing – a lot of processes underway, but not fully implemented or have evidence of “history”
- Complexity of the process
- Difficulty of others in attaining NIE

