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: Republic of Armenia

National Implementing Entity: "Environmental Project Implementation Unit" State Agency

Amount of Financing Requested: 125,100.50 USD

B.   Timeframe of Activity

Expected start date:	01 April 2024
Completion date:	01 January 2026

C.   Proposed learning activities

C1.   Purpose of the learning grant

COLLAGE aims to collect, structure, and disseminate knowledge, transfer practical solutions to **local communities** through strengthened capacity of **EPIU** related to innovative land, water, and forest management strategies in the view of adaptation to climate change in Armenia. Integral to this mission is the assimilation of insights from two pivotal EPIU-implemented projects funded by the Adaptation Fund:

➢ **Artik city closed stone pit waste and flood management pilot project** that exemplifies innovative urban environmental management approaches with the main focus on enhancing the resilience of natural and agricultural landscapes in Artik city against climate change and anthropogenic impacts. Its key objectives include increasing landscape adaptation, preventing and managing floods, restoring degraded natural landscapes, and improving the climate adaptation potential of community producers and stakeholders.

➢ **Strengthening land-based adaptation capacity in communities adjacent to protected areas in Armenia.** This project focused on reducing the climate risk vulnerability of communities near "Khosrov Forest" and "Dilijan" National Park enhances the adaptive capacity of agriculture and strengthens institutional planning for climate change adaptation. It aims to implement climate-smart agricultural practices in degraded areas, strengthen value chains for climate-smart agriculture, and increase awareness and decision-making capacity in climate-smart agriculture methods among target communities.

The knowledge and good practices derived from these projects will significantly contribute to enhancing the adaptive capacity of Armenian agriculture by reducing vulnerabilities of farmers, helping to respond promptly in the aftermath of hazards, and promoting sustainable development. This initiative will build upon existing collaborations between three leading universities and foster new interactions

between researchers, experts, and farmers, bringing climate adaptation knowledge closer to decision-makers.

Following activities will be implemented:

➢ Systematically identifying, collecting, and integrating scientific knowledge of selected universities and lessons learned from these two EPIU projects, along with local knowledge, good practices, and farmers' adaptation strategies from selected Armenian provinces.

➢ Initiating a collaborative learning process to integrate and validate the latest research results and experience-based information. A platform for exchanging knowledge, good practices, and lessons learned will be established.

➢ Developing an **Atlas for adaptation to climate change in Armenian agriculture**, which will include overviews of innovative solutions in water, soil, forest management, and crop production, enriched by insights from the EPIU projects.

➢ Organizing dissemination events and field days to showcase best practices and success stories from these AF-funded projects, alongside workshops to exchange experiences and present information about adaptation to climate change for decision-making actors.

These actions will encourage a culture of learning across Armenian universities and enhance the capacity of EPIU to transfer knowledge generated during implementation of two AF-funded projects to the wider climate adaptation community by developing an **Atlas for adaptation to climate change in Armenian agriculture**. The project will have a special emphasis on supporting most vulnerable communities to adapt to climate change especially in drought affected areas in Armenia. Such areas exist in lowland and foothill zones of the Ararat Valley, where about 15% of arable land is prone to drought under current climate conditions[1]. Armavir and Ararat provinces in Ararat Valley are known for their agricultural practices and have faced significant climate challenges.

The actions will be implemented in collaboration with following "state-owned universities" which are providing education and conducting research relevant to climate adaptation related topics:

➢ Armenian National Agrarian University - ANAU (leading partner)

➢ Armenian State University of Economics - ASUE

➢ National Polytechnic University of Armenia - NPUA.

EPIU will showcase the adaptation measure implementation related knowledge accumulated, lessons learned and successful pilots requiring further replication and scaleup in the frameworks of 2 AF-funded projects successfully implemented by EPIU.

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[1]https://www.droughtmanagement.info/portal/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Armenia-IDMP-Final-Report-June-2022.pdf

ANAU's mission is to prepare agro-technologically oriented professionals capable of developing the country's agro-food system with their professional skills and cooperation with the beneficiaries of that sphere. The university is promoting its scientific potential by offering innovative solutions for progress, investing in modern technologies in agriculture, using and demonstrating results in order to contribute to the knowledge-based economy in Armenia.

ASUE is the only economic university in Armenia, currently offering a wide range of Undergraduate, Graduate, and Postgraduate courses in Management, Finance, Marketing, Accounting, Business Administration, International Economic Relations, IT, Statistics and Data Science.

NPUA is a leading institution in national higher technical education where research is carried out in the spheres of mathematical modelling of complex technical systems, nanotechnology, information technology and informatics, machine learning and material science, power and electrical engineering, radio engineering and microelectronics, chemical technologies and mechanical engineering, automation and management systems as well as in the sphere of applied mathematics.

Sustainability

The COLLAGE project is designed to foster long-lasting impacts in Armenia's approach to climate change adaptation, with a specific focus on sustainable and scalable solutions in line with the Adaptation Fund's guidelines. While each activity within the project contributes to this enduring legacy, Activity 2 - the establishment of a collaborative learning platform - is particularly pivotal.

Overall project sustainability

- **Integration with national policies and plans:** The COLLAGE project will align its objectives and outcomes with national climate change adaptation strategies and policies. This alignment ensures that the project's impacts are sustained through policy implementation and national prioritization.
- **Building local capacities:** A major focus is on building the capacities of local stakeholders, including farmers and local authorities. By empowering these groups with knowledge and skills, the project ensures that climate change adaptation measures are locally owned and sustained.
- **Knowledge dissemination and accessibility:** The development of the Atlas (Activity 3) and the organization of dissemination events (Activity 4) are key to ensuring that knowledge generated by the project is widely accessible and utilized by various stakeholders, thus extending the project's impact.
- **Long-term environmental and social benefits:** The project is designed to deliver long-term environmental benefits by enhancing landscape resilience and promoting sustainable agricultural practices. The social benefits include improved livelihoods and reduced vulnerability of communities to climate change impacts.

Sustainability of the collaborative learning platform (Activity 2)

➢ **Institutional ownership and integration:** The platform will be ingrained within the operational structures of partner universities and EPIU, ensuring its longevity and continuous relevance. This institutionalization guarantees that the platform remains a central hub for climate change adaptation knowledge and practices, even after the project concludes.

➢ **Self-sustaining community of practice:** A core component is the development of a self-driven community of practice. This community will consist of diverse stakeholders, including researchers, practitioners, and policymakers, who are committed to ongoing collaboration and knowledge exchange on climate adaptation.

➢ **Capacity building and continuous learning:** The platform will focus on enhancing skills and competencies, ensuring that stakeholders are well-equipped to sustain and evolve the platform's activities. Continuous learning and development initiatives will be embedded to adapt to emerging challenges and opportunities in climate change adaptation.

➢ **Strategic financial planning:** The platform's financial sustainability will be secured through a detailed plan, identifying diverse funding sources and partnerships. This will include exploring options like government funding, private sector collaborations, and international grants.

In summary, the COLLAGE project, particularly through its collaborative learning platform, is built on a foundation of sustainability. It aims to create lasting change in Armenia's adaptation strategies, with a focus on institutional resilience, community empowerment, policy integration, and strategic financial and operational planning. This approach ensures that the project's impact endures well beyond its formal completion, contributing significantly to Armenia's climate adaptation efforts.

C2. Description of Learning Activities, Beneficiaries, Budget, and Timeline

C2.1. Learning Activities and Expected Outputs

Proposed Learning Activities	Description of activities	Expected output of the activities
A1. Identify, collect and systemize scientific knowledge and lessons learned related to adaptation measures implemented within the framework of 2	**Task A1.1.** Develop comprehensive matrix to include specific sections for knowledge and innovative solutions derived from the Artik City project and the project focusing on communities adjacent to "Khosrov Forest" and "Dilijan" National Park. This matrix will continue to cover climate change	**A1. D1.** A comprehensive matrix incorporating specific learnings from the Artik City project and the project focused on communities near "Khosrov Forest" and

implemented AF-funded projects, as well as local knowledge, good practices and farmers adaptation strategies form selected Armenian provinces.	adaptation in water, soil, forest management, and crop production in a systematic manner. **Task A1.2.** Extend the identification process to include units within the selected universities and other relevant institutions that have directly or indirectly contributed to or learned from the two AF-funded projects, alongside their ongoing climate change adaptation measures. **Task A1.3.** Establish communication channels between the identified universities units in order to collect scientific studies, reports, publications, or any relevant documentation. **Task A1.4.** Design the guideline for gathering information to specifically focus on insights, practices, and strategies inspired by the learnings from the AF-funded projects, while also maintaining the collection of local knowledge from selected provinces. **Task A1.5.** Conduct interviews and field visits, with a particular emphasis on extracting insights and practical knowledge from stakeholders, practitioners, and beneficiaries who have been part of or influenced by the two AF-funded projects. **Task A1.6.** Populate the matrix with all gathered knowledge, ensuring that insights from the AF-funded projects are distinctly highlighted alongside other best practices	"Dilijan" National Park. **A1.D2.** A comprehensive list of identified university units and other stakeholders with direct involvement or influence from the AF-funded projects. **A1.D3.** Expanded contact information and communication channels encompassing stakeholders from the AF-funded projects. **A1.D4.** A guideline and the list of identified actors in the selected provinces. **A1.D5.** Well-rounded compilation of documentation, case studies, reports, and research results, emphasizing learnings from the Artik City project and the project near "Khosrov Forest" and "Dilijan" National Park, alongside other relevant materials.
A2. Initiate a collaborative learning process to specifically include steps and timelines for integrating key insights from the AF-funded 2 projects. Establish a platform for the	**Task A2.1.** Develop a collaborative learning plan and outline the steps and timeline for integrating and validating lessons learned from the implementation of 2 AF-funded projects and experience-based information into a synergic content package. **Task A2.2.** Mapping of actors by	**A2.D1.** A detailed learning plan, incorporating integration strategies for lessons from the AF-funded projects. **A2. D2.** An extended actors' map, now including participants

exchange of knowledge, good practices and lessons learned.	having gender consideration and concerns of the most vulnerable groups and communities to design the knowledge/content atlas. **Task A2.3.** Engage identified actors and establish a multidisciplinary facilitated platform for the systematic exchange and collaborative learning between the actors representing project beneficiaries, universities and experts. **Task A2.4.** Collaboratively analyse the gathered research results and experience-based information to identify suitable solutions as well as key findings and trends. Identify knowledge gaps and determine areas where additional research or information is needed to enhance the collective understanding.	and stakeholders from the AF-funded projects.
A3. Develop an **Atlas for adaptation to climate change in Armenia agriculture** which provides an overview of innovative solutions, successfully piloted within the framework of 2 AF-funded projects, related to the climate change adaptation in the fields of water, soil, forest management and crop production.	**Task A3.1.** While developing the Atlas, incorporate tailored-made factsheets that not only address farmers, researchers, and decision-makers but also specifically highlight the innovative solutions and best practices derived from the 2 AF-funded projects. These factsheets aim to boost the impact and implementation of the gathered knowledge, with a strong emphasis on applicability in rural areas. **Task A3.2.** In strengthening the capacity of EPIU, develop a specific Communication Strategy as part of the Atlas. This strategy should not only deliver knowledge and innovative solutions to farmers in selected rural areas but also emphasize how the learnings from the AF-funded projects can be applied to enhance climate adaptation in Armenia. The strategy should facilitate EPIU's endorsement and dissemination of these insights to	**A3.D1.** The Atlas, which now includes a comprehensive Communication Strategy for EPIU, enriched with dedicated sections on the learnings and best practices from the 2 AF-funded projects.

	key stakeholders.	
A4. Organize dissemination events and field days to showcase 2 AF-funded projects' best practices and success stories to practitioners and workshops to exchange experiences and present the information about adaptation to climate change for researchers and decision-making actors.	**Task A4.1.** Utilize the enriched Atlas, which includes dedicated sections on learnings and best practices from the 2 AF-funded projects, to organize two dissemination events/field days in each province (four in total). These events are aimed at farmers, municipality experts, and other practitioners, focusing on practical applications of the knowledge and solutions highlighted in the Atlas.

Task A4.2. Organize a scientific interdisciplinary workshop for researchers and experts from partner universities, as well as the broader academic community. This workshop will specifically emphasize the integration of insights from the 2 AF-funded projects into current academic and research endeavours.

Task A4.3. Conduct a round-table discussion for relevant decision-makers. This session will present and discuss the information from the Atlas, with a special focus on the policy implications of the adaptation strategies and lessons learned from the 2 AF-funded projects in the context of climate change in Armenia. | **A4.D1.** Detailed lists of participants and comprehensive event agendas for each dissemination event, workshop, and round-table discussion, ensuring that each session is tailored to effectively convey the integrated knowledge from the Atlas, including the insights from the 2 AF-funded projects. |

In the ambit of this Learning Grant, a carefully curated selection of key topics has been identified for our awareness-raising initiatives. These topics are intricately chosen to reflect the profound insights and successful outcomes derived from the two projects funded by the Adaptation Fund. Each theme is a testament to the impactful strategies and transformative practices realized in these projects, serving as a cornerstone for our educational and outreach efforts.

1. **Climate-smart agricultural practices:**
   ➢ Implementing and benefits of climate-smart agriculture.
   ➢ Water-efficient irrigation systems and their impact.
2. **Sustainable land and water management:**
   ➢ Restoration and protection of soil cover in affected areas.
   ➢ Techniques for reducing rangeland degradation and increasing crop yield and quality.

3. **Flood management and prevention:**
   - Strategies for flood risk reduction and management.
   - Importance of maintaining storm canals and preventing clogging.
4. **Environmental health and safety:**
   - Mitigating adverse health effects from environmental degradation.
   - Reducing epidemic risks through improved environmental conditions.
5. **Community engagement and knowledge sharing:**
   - Enhancing community knowledge on landscape recovery and flood prevention.
   - Importance of sustainable thinking and adaptation strategies in community development.
6. **Technology and innovation in agriculture:**
   - Use of solar dryers and non-heated greenhouses in climate-smart agriculture.
   - Smart agricultural practices and their role in sustainable farming.
7. **Natural landscape restoration:**
   - Techniques for restoring degraded landscapes and increasing forested areas.
   - Benefits of perennial plant sowing in environmental restoration.
8. **Awareness and capacity building:**
   - Raising awareness on climate change adaptation and landscape recovery.
   - Role of local media and NGOs in mitigating climate change effects.
9. **Community and economic development:**
   - Creating favorable conditions for community recreation and economic growth.
   - Strengthening value chains for climate-smart agriculture.

C2.2. Project Beneficiaries

Proposed Learning Activities	Country/Institution to share/transfer knowledge with/to or to develop guidelines for, including NIE(s)
A1. Identify, collect and systemize scientific knowledge and lessons learned related to adaptation measures implemented within the framework of 2 implemented AF-funded projects, as well as local knowledge, good practices and farmers adaptation strategies form selected Armenian provinces.	- Researchers and academics from partner universities. - Local authorities and agricultural experts in selected Armenian provinces. - Farmers, particularly those implementing or affected by adaptation strategies, as well as women, youth and representatives of other vulnerable strata.

	➢ Practitioners and stakeholders involved in the 2 AF-funded projects.
A2. Initiate a collaborative learning process to specifically include steps and timelines for integrating key insights from the AF-funded 2 projects. Establish a platform for the exchange of knowledge, good practices and lessons learned.	➢ Multi-disciplinary experts and academics from various fields. ➢ Representatives and decision-makers from local authorities. ➢ Farmers and community leaders, especially from regions impacted by climate change, as well as women, youth and representatives of other vulnerable strata. ➢ Stakeholders and implementers from the AF-funded projects.
A3. Develop an **Atlas for adaptation to climate change in Armenia agriculture** which provides an overview of innovative solutions, successfully piloted within the framework of 2 AF-funded projects, related to the climate change adaptation in the fields of water, soil, forest management and crop production.	➢ EPIU, for enhancing their capacity and knowledge dissemination. ➢ Farmers across Armenia, with a focus on rural and vulnerable areas, as well as women, youth and representatives of other vulnerable strata. ➢ Decision-makers and policy developers in the agricultural and environmental sectors. ➢ General public, with free access to the Atlas for educational and practical purposes.
A4. Organize dissemination events and field days to showcase 2 AF-funded projects' best practices and success stories to practitioners and workshops to exchange experiences and present the information about adaptation to climate change for researchers and decision-making actors.	➢ Farmers and practitioners attending the dissemination events/field days, with specific focus on women, youth and representatives of other vulnerable strata. ➢ Researchers and experts participating in the interdisciplinary workshop. ➢ Decision-makers and policy influencers, involved in the round-table discussions. ➢ Broader communities and stakeholders who will benefit

		from the shared knowledge and strategies presented at these events.

C2.3. Requested Budget

Proposed Learning Activities and Tasks		Requested budget (USD)*
A1. Identify, collect and systemize scientific knowledge and lessons learned related to adaptation measures implemented within the framework of 2 implemented AF-funded projects, as well as local knowledge, good practices and farmers adaptation strategies form selected Armenian provinces.	Task A1.1.	**5.000,00 USD** *(20 Expert/day, 10 x 250,00 USD)*
	Task A1.2.	**2.500,00 USD** *(10 Expert/day, 10 x 250,00 USD)*
	Task A1.3.	**6.250,00 USD** *(25 Expert/day, 25 x 250,00 USD)*
	Task A1.4.	**6.250,00 USD** *(25 Expert/day, 25 x 250,00 USD)*
	Task A1.5.	**6.250,00 USD** *(25 Expert/day, 25 x 250,00 USD)*
	Task A1.6.	**3.500,00 USD** *(14 Expert/day, 14 x 250,00 USD)*
A2. Initiate a collaborative learning process to specifically include steps and timelines for integrating key insights from the AF-funded 2 projects. Establish a platform for the exchange of knowledge, good practices and lessons learned.	Task A2.1.	**2.500,00 USD** *(10 Expert/day, 10 x 250,00 USD)*
	Task A2.2.	**2.000,00 USD** *(8 Expert/day, 8 x 250,00 USD)*
	Task A2.3.	**7.500,00 USD** *(15 exchange meetings/ app. 25 participants, 15 x 25x 20,00 USD)*
	Task A2.4.	**6.250,00 USD** *(25 Expert/day, 25 x 250,00 USD)*
A3. Develop an **Atlas for adaptation to climate change in Armenia agriculture** which provides an overview of innovative solutions, successfully piloted within the framework of 2 AF-funded projects, related to the climate change adaptation in the fields of water, soil, forest management and crop production.	Task A3.1.	
	Task A3.2.	**24.000,00 USD** *(60 Expert/day, 60 x 400,00 USD)*

A4. Organize dissemination events and field days to showcase 2 AF-funded projects' best practices and success stories to practitioners and workshops to exchange experiences and present the information about adaptation to climate change for researchers and decision-making actors.	**Task A4.1.**	**40.000,00 USD** *4 dissemination events/ app. 100 participants during each, 100 x 4x 100,00 USD), incl. printing and layout of dissemination materials*
	Task A4.2.	**2.400,00 USD** *(1-day workshop with facilitation, app. 30 participants, 30 x 60 USD + 1-day facilitation 2 pers. 2x 300,00 USD)*
	Task A4.3.	**900,00 USD** *(Round-table/ app. 30 participants, 30 x 20,00 USD + facilitation 1 x 300,00 USD)*
Total project costs		**115.300,00**
Implementing entity management fee requested *(8.5 per cent of the total project/programme budget)*		**9.800,50**
Total Grant Requested (USD)		**125.100,50**

C2.4. Tentative timeline*

Proposed Learning Activities and Tasks		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7
A1. Identify, collect and systemize scientific knowledge and lessons learned related to adaptation measures implemented by selected universities as well as local knowledge, good practices and farmers adaptation strategies form selected Armenian provinces.	Task A1.1.	■						
	Task A1.2.	■						
	Task A1.3.	■	■	■				
	Task A1.4.	■	■	■				
	Task A1.5.		■	■				
	Task A1.6.			■	■			
A2. Initiate a collaborative learning process for integrating and validating the latest research results and experience-based information. Establish a platform for the exchange of knowledge, good practices and lessons learned.	Task A2.1.		■	■				
	Task A2.2.		■	■				
	Task A2.3.			■	■	■	■	
	Task A2.4.			■	■	■	■	
A3. Develop an Atlas for Adaptation to Climate Change in Armenia Agriculture which provides an overview of innovative solutions to climate change adaptation in the fields of water, soil, forest management and crop production.	Task A3.1.			■	■	■	■	
	Task A3.2.			■	■	■	■	
A4. Organize dissemination events and field days to showcase project best practices and success stories to practitioners and workshops to exchange experiences and present the information about adaptation to climate change for researchers and decision-making actors.	Task A4.1.					■	■	■
	Task A4.2.					■	■	■
	Task A4.3.					■	■	■

*The timeline is presented per quarter. Desired starting date is April 1st, 2023. Project duration is 21 months.

**The project team will submit two Project Performance Reports. First report to be submitted in month 10 and second final report - in month 21.

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
Armen Khojoyan, Acting Director a.i. of "EPIU" SA of MoE RA		18 October 2023	Armen Yesoyan, Acting Director of "EPIU" SA of MoE RA, Margarita Gasparyan, Acting Head of Cooperation with Donors Department of "EPIU" SA of MoE RA	+37410651631	info@cep.am, margarita.gasparyan@epiu.am

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.

Hakob Simidyan *Minister of Environment*	Date*: 16.10.2023*