

Terms of Reference
Climate Finance Consultancy for the
Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative (CSESI) in the Pacific

1. Background

The Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative (CSESI) Pacific is an 18-month regional project (May 2025–November 2026) funded by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) to enhance the climate resilience of education systems across the Pacific. CSESI Pacific part of a wider, [global initiative](#), is led jointly by Save the Children (SC), UNESCO and UNESCO-IIEP, and is implemented in close coordination with national Ministries of Education and regional bodies. CSESI seeks to enhance countries’ capacities to mainstream climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability into education sector plans, budgets, and strategies as well as to enhance education ministry capacity for cross-sectoral coordination on climate and environment-related policy and programming. CSESI Pacific will also build the capability and readiness of ministries of education to access climate finance.

CSESI Pacific officially covers ten priority Pacific Island Countries (PICs) (Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu), with possible support to five additional non-GPE-prioritized countries (Cook Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, and Tokelau). CSESI’s activities and priorities are structured around seven key, interrelated components:

CSESI Component	Lead
1. Evidence-Based Policy & Planning	UNESCO IIEP
2. Cross-Sectoral & Internal Coordination	SC
3. Access to Climate Finance	SC
4. Climate Data & Evidence for Educational Planning	UNESCO IIEP
5. Safer and Greener Infrastructure	SC
6. School Safety and Educational Continuity	SC
7. Greener Curricula, Pedagogy, and Teacher Training	UNESCO

This consultancy focuses on component #3: Access to Climate Finance. The three activities under this component that have already been completed, or are currently under development, are:

- **Activity 3.1** – develop a briefing document and associated webinars on what climate finance opportunities exist for ministries of education (completed, March).
- **Activity 3.2** – conduct a workshop to discuss and agree what countries might like to access which opportunities through which mechanisms (completed, April).
- **Activity 3.3** – develop a roadmap for accessing climate finance opportunities identified as priorities under activity 3.2 (under development, expected mid-May).

The fourth activity under component #3: Access to Climate Finance, which forms the basis for this ToR, is as follows:

Activity 3.4 - Develop concept note(s) and design funding applications to access climate finance. The CSESI will support the development of a maximum of two concept notes and design funding applications (including approaches to gender inclusion and transformation) to enable the identified project leads to reach the first major milestone for accessing

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climate finance. This will involve a consultancy to undertake national and regional level consultations, design workshops – including a regional concept note planning and prioritisation workshop (expected in late July) followed by 1-2 smaller concept-note development workshops (expected August to early September) and the drafting of concept notes including indicative budgeting. The design of climate finance project requires significant financial resources, however some funds have mechanisms to access the funding needed to do the designs. This activity will also identify funding opportunities to support the design of full proposals.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this consultancy is to support CSESI Pacific to implement the final stage of the “access to climate finance” component, by supporting Ministries of Education and regional partners to translate the priorities identified through the CSESI climate finance roadmap into well defined, funder relevant investment concepts. Building on the outcomes of the regional climate finance consultations, workshops and roadmap developed under Activities 3.1–3.3, the consultant will support the design and development of up to two (2) climate finance concept notes including the facilitation of design workshops and the preparation of draft concept notes that can be used to engage climate finance funds, development partners and relevant government counterparts. This consultancy will initiate design and readiness pathways that open access routes to climate finance for resilience education systems in the Pacific.

3. Scope of Work and Key Responsibilities

Under the supervision of Save the Children in the Pacific, and working in close collaboration with the CSESI project team and relevant national and regional stakeholders, the consultant will carry out the following activities.

3.1 Plan and prepare climate finance concept development processes

The consultant will plan and coordinate the preparatory work required to ensure that concept development activities are well-sequenced, feasible and informed by relevant country and regional context. This activity is intended to support effective implementation of the regional concept note planning and prioritization workshop, and subsequent concept note development activities and will include:

- Identifying, in collaboration with the CSESI team, the intended country participants, institutional focal points and partner representative for each concept development process.
- Clarifying with the CSESI team the objectives, scope and expected outputs of the regional workshop – including which decisions need to be reached regarding concept selection,

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funder pathways and country partnerships – and agreeing on the approach for post-workshop concept note development activities;

- Developing with the support of the CSESI team a preparatory inputs package ahead of the regional workshop, including:
 - Reviewing and refining the draft priority donor matrix, which lists potential funders identified through the roadmap process, for each country's priority investment areas. The matrix summarizes key information for each funder, including eligibility, access requirements indicative funding size, co-financing expectations and timeframes. The matrix will be shared with countries for validation and endorsement and will guide the final direction of the roadmap.
 - Collating examples and case studies of climate finance application processes in similar contexts (e.g other sectors in the Pacific or education in other SIDS);
 - Identifying what processes may be new for education systems and what would be required to deliver these, including how expected gaps might be addressed;
 - Identifying the specific information, data, and inputs required from countries to support concept note development before the workshop;
 - Developing an initial set of potential concept ideas to be tested and refined during the workshop, based on the proposal tracks already identified in the climate finance roadmap;
- Supporting the CSESI team to communicate clearly with participating countries regarding expectations, preparation and participation in concept development activities.

Key output: workshop preparation package (funder mapping, initial concept options, readiness considerations) and clear and agreed plan for the regional workshop and subsequent concept development activities.

3.2 Facilitate climate finance concept development workshops

The consultant will lead the design and facilitation of a regional concept note planning and prioritization workshop (anticipated late July), working closely with the CSESI team and participating countries. The workshop will aim to move from high-level, prioritised ideas identified through the roadmap to agreed concept notes for development, with clarity on funder pathways, country partnerships and next steps. The workshop will be designed to:

- Present the range of funding opportunities and partners available to Pacific Ministries of Education;
- Build understanding of what is required to progress a concept note with different funders, including assessments required, data needed, timeframes and government commitments;
- Work through assessments of country readiness to meet the requirements of different funders, and agree on feasible funder pathways for participating countries;

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- Support participants to generate ideas for concepts at country-level based on potential funders, and help group these into relevant clusters based on technical alignment, common approaches, and contextual or environmental similarities;
- Analyse potential concepts for feasibility and identify potential country partnerships to progress concepts (based on national priorities, readiness and alignment)
- Begin to frame up each potential concept and agree on next steps, timelines, roles and responsibilities for concept note development; and
- Agree, in coordination with Ministries of Education, which concepts notes will be progressed under CSESI.

Save the Children and the CSESI project team will support the consultant by facilitating access to stakeholders, providing contextual inputs, and participating in workshop facilitation where appropriate.

Key outputs: delivery of up the regional concept note planning and prioritisation workshop; and a workshop summary documenting agreed funder pathways, prioritised and selected concept notes (up to two) and agreed next steps, roles, responsibilities and indicative timeline for concept note development.

3.3 Post-workshop concept-note development

Following the regional workshop, the consultant will support and undertake work required to progress the two selected concept notes from initial outlines to draft concept notes. This will include:

- Finalising the priority donor shortlist for each concept, confirming access requirements, funding windows and co-finance expectations, in line with the climate finance roadmap;
- Supporting CSESI to define partnership and access pathways for each concept, including identifying preferred accredited entities and initiating engagement, briefing NDAs, DAs and operational focal points on the project proposals, and planning NDA/DA endorsement steps and indicative timelines;
- Facilitating targeted concept note development sessions (which may take the form of smaller sub-regional workshops, one per concept, anticipated in September) with the country partnerships and stakeholders identified at the regional workshop. These sessions will develop substantive content for the concept notes, and may include:
 - Refining and validating the theory of change and intervention logic to align with targeted funder requirements;
 - Confirming and specifying beneficiaries and geographic scope based on participating country commitment;
 - Working through indicative budget and co-financing assumptions; and
 - Confirming implementing arrangements and roles across MoE, NDA/DA and AE/IEs.

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These sessions will be informed by the partnership and funder groundwork completed in the period following the regional workshop, and will be designed to ensure that the right stakeholders are involved in shaping each concept note ahead of drafting.

Key outputs: preferred Accredited Entities identified and engaged for each concept; NDA/DA endorsement steps mapped; delivery of up to two targeted concept note development sessions and summaries documenting agreed concept note content and outstanding inputs for drafting.

3.4 Draft concept notes and support CSESI to screen with funders

Based on the outcomes of the concept note development sessions, the consultant will lead the drafting of up to two concept notes for the primary funders identified through the process. Concept notes will be structured to the requirements and templates of the respective funding windows where possible, and should include, at a minimum:

- A concise problem statement and climate rationale;
- Alignment with national and regional strategies and policies;
- Theory of change and intervention logic;
- Thematic components and activities;
- Key beneficiaries and geographic focus;
- Expected results including adaptation/mitigation benefits;
- Indicative budget range and co-financing assumptions; and
- Institutional arrangements and project implementation structure including roles and responsibilities across MoE, NDA/DA and AE/IE;
- Gender equality, social inclusion and environmental risk and safeguards;
- Risk assessment and intended risk treatment measures; and
- Project sustainability rationale.

The consultant will adapt the format and level of detail based on the guidance from the CSESI team and the anticipated funding pathways, noting that these concepts may need to be refined or developed further beyond the lifetime of the CSESI project.

Key outputs: draft concept notes for up to two priority climate finance interventions; and documented funder feedback and follow-up actions.

3.5 Validation, revision and handover

The consultant will support validation and refinement of the draft concept notes through consultation with the CSESI team and participating stakeholders, as appropriate. This will include:

- Incorporating feedback from Save the Children, participating countries and funders;

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- Documenting key considerations for taking each concept forward beyond CSESI, including potential pathways for further design, project preparation support or proposal development; and
- Preparing a short handover note summarising the status of each concept including: accredited entity engagement status, NDA/DA endorsement progress, outstanding inputs or steps required, and recommended next steps.

Key outputs: final revised concept materials (up to two); and handover note outlining the status of each concept, outstanding steps and pathways for further development.

Summary of Outputs

1. Agreed implementation approach for Activity 3.4, aligned with climate finance roadmap.
2. Preparatory inputs package and regional workshop plan
3. Regional concept note planning and prioritization workshop and workshop summary
4. Confirmed partnership and access pathway groundwork; targeted concept note development sessions (up to two) and session summaries
5. Draft concept notes (up to two) and documented funder feedback
6. Final revised concept notes and handover note.

7. Collaboration and feedback

The consultant will work directly with CSESI Regional Coordinator and Technical Specialist, however, additional support and collaboration will be required from SC’s climate change and climate finance specialists, climate and education specialists, etc. Outputs will be reviewed by this team, and identified implementing partners, with potential for review from SPC’s Climate Finance Unit (CFU), NAP Global Network, or other relevant technical agencies in the Pacific.

8. Outputs and Time Frame

The following table outlines the specific deliverable outputs and estimated time frame:

Output	Deadline	Days
3.1 Preparatory workshop package and plan	10-Jul-26	10
3.2 Regional concept note planning and prioritization workshop & summary	mid-July to end August (TBC)	8
3.3 Confirmed refinement and access pathway finalization	5-Sep	16
3.4 Draft concept notes (two) and documented funder feedback	17-Oct-26	20
3.5 Final revised concepts and handover note	7-Nov-26	6
Total		60

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9. Candidate Profile

The candidate must be from or have extensive experience working in the Pacific Region. In addition, to undertake the role successfully, the candidate should possess the following attributes:

SKILLS/ABILITIES

- Strong interpersonal and written communication skills, including experience facilitating workshops and presenting to senior government and donor audiences
- Ability to work independently and in multi-cultural settings
- Ability to advocate, influence & negotiate with a range of diverse stakeholders.
- Rapport building, networking & relationship building abilities.
- Fluency in written and spoken English
- Strong multisectoral coordination and multistakeholder engagement skills

KNOWLEDGE/EXPERIENCE

- Over 10 years of experience in climate finance, climate change, DRR, and resilience programs, ideally with 5 years of experience specifically in climate financed programs.
- Knowledge and experience in working with governments and ministries on climate change and climate financing.
- Experience in program design
- Representation experience with national governments, UN / international bodies, and donors
- Experience with climate fund access processes, including engagement with accredited entities, NDAs/DAs and funding window requirements (e.g. GCF, AF, GEF etc).
- Experience developing or supporting the development of climate finance concept notes or project proposals
- Familiarity with Pacific Island Country contexts, including government and regional coordination structures (e.g. PacREF, SPC etc)
- Experience in working with regional coordination bodies or multicounty projects

QUALIFICATIONS/ACCREDITATIONS

- Master's degree in international development, Climate, Climate Finance, Economics, Education, Social/Political Science or relevant and/or related discipline or equivalent work experience

Reporting to:	Pacific Programs Operations Advisor	Direct Reports:	None
Work Location:	Home-based (near or in Pacific Region)	Travel:	Yes
Classification Level:	TBC	Assets:	Laptop
Driver's Licence Required:	No	Working with Children Check:	No