

# 1. STUDY SUMMARY

Type of study:	Applied Study
Name of the Study:	The Impact of Climate Hazards on Access to Education in the Pacific
Period of Engagement:	February 2026 – July 2026
Study locations:	Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu
Thematic areas	Education, Climate Change
Donor	Australian-NGO Cooperation Program/DFAT

## 2. BACKGROUND

Save the Children is a global organisation working in 120 countries, guided by a vision of a world where every child attains the right to survival, protection, development and participation. In the Pacific, Save the Children Australia operates in Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Tonga. These programs engage communities and government across a range of thematic areas including health and nutrition, education, child protection, disaster preparedness and response, risk reduction, recovery, and climate change adaptation.

Climate change is arguably the greatest threat to the realisation of children's rights globally. It exacerbates existing inequalities and makes achieving the Sustainable Development Goals even more difficult. The climate crisis heightens the risks of disasters, conflict, and forced migration, threatening children's health, safety, and survival, while disrupting their education and access to essential services. Despite the disproportionate impact on children, only 2.4% of climate finance from major multilateral climate funds supports projects that include child-responsive activities.

Climate change affects children's education both directly and indirectly, in the short and long term. These impacts range from disruptions to schooling caused by climate-induced disasters, local hazards, and climate-related displacement, to more indirect effects through compromised WASH facilities, nutrition, disease burdens, food security, livelihoods, and heatwaves<sup>1</sup>. These events disrupt children's learning, damage educational infrastructure, and deepen inequalities. Girls, children with disabilities, adolescents, and children living in remote islands face disproportionate risks due to existing social norms, structural discrimination, safety concerns,

<sup>1</sup> [UNICEF EAPRO. \(2025\). Under pressure: The impacts of climate change on education in the East Asia and Pacific Region. UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office.](#)

caregiving expectations, accessibility barriers, and unequal access to resources. However, evidence on the linkages between climate change and children's access to education in the Pacific remains limited.

To strengthen this evidence base and inform future programming in Pacific/Melanesian countries, Save the Children is commissioning an applied study on the impact of climate hazards on children's access to education in the region. It is anticipated that this study will employ a mixed-methods approach, including a desk review and secondary data analysis, complemented by primary quantitative and qualitative data collection with key stakeholders, including children and school communities.

## 3. SCOPE OF STUDY

### 3.1 Purpose, Objectives and Scope

The main objective of this study is to strengthen the evidence base on how climate hazards affect children's access to education in the Pacific, with a focus on Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu.

The study is expected to include primary data collection in these three countries, examining access to education across early childhood, primary and secondary levels. Where feasible within the available timeframe and budget, the study aims to include at least four communities per country. Community selection will be guided by secondary data on climate-related risks to education and alignment with Save the Children program locations. Final selection will be made in consultation with Save the Children, considering both practical constraints and research objectives.

### 3.2 Intended Audience and Use of the Study

The findings and recommendations from the study are expected to contribute to a broader evidence base for actors working in the education and climate change sectors in the Pacific, and to directly inform Save the Children's education and climate change programming. The target audience of the study are:

- Policymakers, government authorities and technical officials in relevant sectoral areas in each Pacific country and, where applicable, at regional level.
- Regional bodies, including the Pacific Community and the Pacific Islands Forum, as well as international and community-based agencies with existing or planned programs in education, climate change adaptation and response and related areas of intervention in each Pacific country and the broader Pacific region.
- Save the Children technical advisors and country office program teams currently providing, and planning further support in, education, climate crisis and related interventions in PNG, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu.
- Children and communities who can use the study findings to strengthen local understanding, dialogue, and decision-making on education and climate resilience.

The study team will be required to propose how study findings will be shared with each of the different stakeholders listed above, with particular attention to how reporting back to children and communities will be conducted in an accessible and child friendly manner.

### 3.3 Key Study Questions

The primary question this study seeks to answer is:

- How do climate hazards affect children's access to education across early childhood, primary and secondary levels in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu?

The indicative sub-questions, which will be further developed and finalised between the consultant and Save the Children, are:

- What climate hazards, including localised climate-related hazards, are affecting children's access to education in the target countries?
- What is the estimated number of school days lost by children in the target countries due to climate hazards in the last year?
- What policies, programs, mechanisms or support exist to recover lost school days or ensure continuity of learning in the target countries?
- What are the recommendations for civil society actors, governments and key donors at regional and country levels to improve their response to climate-related impacts on children's access to education?

It is expected that analysis across these key questions will also examine how climate hazards disproportionately affect children's access to education, considering factors such as gender, age, disability, remoteness, ethnicity, and socio-economic status. It will explore how gender norms, disability-related barriers, youth experiences, household labour expectations, and protection risks influence educational access in the context of climate hazards. It is expected that the study will also contextualise the results on retrospective impacts of climate hazards on education access within broader literature and evidence on climate change impacts on education.

## 4. STUDY METHODOLOGY

The study will use a mixed-methods approach, combining a desk review/ secondary data analysis with primary data collection in (ideally) at least four communities per country in Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu. It will examine access to education across early childhood, primary, and secondary levels. Community selection will be informed by secondary data on climate-related risks to education and aligned with Save the Children program locations.

The desk review/ secondary data analysis should examine relevant climate change and education policies, reports, data and programs to address the study questions where possible and identify gaps requiring primary data collection.

Consultants are expected to be propositional in outlining how they will address the indicative study questions within the available timeframe and budget. This includes specifying the methods they propose to use (e.g., surveys, focus group discussions, key informant interviews,

school/community mapping), identifying target respondents (e.g., children/students, teachers, schools, communities, government stakeholders), and detailing the sampling strategy. This includes disaggregating each research question into strategy of enquire, data types suggested and data collection methods. The approach should demonstrate feasibility and alignment with the study objectives while allowing for meaningful participation and robust data collection. All primary data must enable disaggregation by gender, age, disability, location, and other vulnerability criteria. The consultants will be expected to develop data collection tools and propose a data analysis plan as part of the inception report, which will be reviewed by Save the Children.

## 4.1 Known Limitations

It is acknowledged that:

- The proposed study is retrospective in nature and therefore does not aim to predict how climate change may affect access to education in the future.
- The findings will not be generalizable to all target countries or the wider Pacific region; rather, they reflect the experiences of the specific participants involved in the study.
- Due to gaps in existing data, the desk review will likely only provide limited insights in answering the key study questions, consultants are expected to fully acknowledge and address such limitations in the methodology and interpretation of results.
- The study may rely on respondent's ability to accurately recall events and experiences over the past year, which introduces potential recall bias. Consultants are expected to propose bias mitigation strategies to improve the reliability of the data.

## 4.2 Ethical Considerations

It is expected that this study will be:

**Child participatory.** Where appropriate and safe, children should be supported to participate in the evaluation process beyond simply being respondents. Opportunities for collaborative participation could include involving children in determining success criteria against which the project could be evaluated, supporting children to collect some of the data required for the evaluation themselves, or involving children in the validation of findings. Any child participation, whether consultative, collaborative or child-led, must abide by the [9 Basic Requirements for meaningful and ethical child participation](#).

**Inclusive.** Ensure that children from different ethnic, social and religious backgrounds have the chance to participate, as well as children with disabilities and children who may be excluded or discriminated against in their community.

**Ethical:** The study must be guided by the following ethical considerations:

- Safeguarding – demonstrating the highest standards of behaviour towards children and adults.
- Sensitive – to child rights, gender, inclusion and cultural contexts.
- Openness - of information given, to the highest possible degree to all involved parties.

- Confidentiality and data protection - measures will be put in place to protect the identity of all participants and any other information that may put them or others at risk.<sup>2</sup>
- Public access - to the results when there are not special considerations against this
- Broad participation - the relevant parties should be involved where possible.
- Reliability and independence - the study should be conducted so that findings and conclusions are correct and trustworthy.

#### It is expected that:

- Data collection methods will be age and gender appropriate.
- Study activities will provide a safe, creative space where children feel that their thoughts and ideas are important.
- A risk assessment will be conducted that includes any risks related to children, young people's, or adult's participation.
- A referral mechanism will be in place in case any child safeguarding or protection issues arise.
- Informed consent processes are used with children (and their guardians) and adults for all data collection activities.
- Save the Children policies, including on Child Safeguarding, Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, and Data Protection and Privacy, are adhered to at all times.

The study team will be required to obtain approval from a Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). Save the Children can provide assistance with this process if its own HREC is used for this approval, however experience from previous studies has required HREC approval be completed through Government mechanisms in individual study countries.

## 5. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

The study deliverables and tentative timeline (subject to the commencement date of the study) are outlined below. The consultants and Save the Children will agree on final milestones and deadlines at the inception phase, although the **deliverables must be completed by July 31<sup>st</sup> 2026.**

#### Deliverables and Tentative Timeline

Deliverable / Milestones	Deadline (2026)
The study team is contracted and commences work	16 <sup>th</sup> Feb
The study Team will submit an <b>inception report*</b> in line with the <b>provided template</b> , including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b><i>literature review/ secondary data analysis</i></b></li> <li>▪ study objectives, scope and key study questions</li> </ul>	13 <sup>th</sup> March

<sup>2</sup> If any Consultancy Service Provider, Freelancer or Contingent worker will have direct contact with children and/or vulnerable adults and/or beneficiaries and/or have access to any sensitive data on safeguarding and/or children and/or beneficiaries, it is the responsibility of the person receiving the consulting service to contact the local HR team and child safeguarding focal point to ensure vetting checks and on-boarding are conducted in line with statutory requirements, local policies and best practices guidance.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ description of the methodology, including design, data collection methods, sampling strategy, data sources, and study matrix against the key study questions</li> <li>▪ data analysis and reporting plan</li> <li>▪ caveats and limitations of study</li> <li>▪ risks and mitigation plan</li> <li>▪ ethical considerations including details on consent</li> <li>▪ stakeholder and children communication and engagement plan</li> <li>▪ key deliverables, responsibilities, and timelines</li> <li>▪ resource requirements</li> <li>▪ data collection tools (in line with the study matrix)</li> </ul> <p>Once the report is finalised and accepted, the evaluator/researcher study team must submit a request for any change in strategy or approach to the study manager or the steering committee.</p>	
<i>Save the Children review of inception report and data collection tools.</i>	27 <sup>th</sup> March
Study team finalisation of inception report	10 <sup>th</sup> April
<b>Ethics submission approval:</b> Submission should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ study protocols (participant recruitment, data security and storage, consent and confidentiality etc.)</li> <li>▪ considerations for consulting with children and other vulnerable groups (if applicable)</li> <li>▪ participant information statement and consent forms</li> </ul>	1 <sup>st</sup> May
Piloting of tools and enumerator training	15 <sup>th</sup> May
Data collection	12 <sup>th</sup> June
Validation/ presentation of study findings with key Save the Children Staff and other stakeholders	26 <sup>th</sup> June
<b>A Draft Study Report</b> including below elements:  All reports are to use the Save the Children <a href="#">Final Study Report template</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Executive summary</li> <li>▪ Background description of the Program and context relevant to the Study</li> <li>▪ Scope and focus of the study</li> <li>▪ Overview of the study methodology and data collection methods, including a Study matrix</li> <li>▪ Findings aligned to each of the key Study questions</li> <li>▪ Specific caveats or methodological limitations of the evaluation</li> <li>▪ Conclusions outlining implications of the findings or learnings</li> <li>▪ Recommendations</li> <li>▪ Annexes (Project logframe, study ToR, Inception Report, Study schedule, List of people involved)</li> </ul>	3 <sup>rd</sup> July
<i>Save the Children technical and quality review of report</i>	17 <sup>th</sup> July
<b>A Final Study Report</b> incorporating feedback from consultation on the draft study report.	31 <sup>st</sup> July
<b>Knowledge translation materials:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ PowerPoint presentation of Study findings</li> <li>▪ Study Briefs (2–4-page summary of the full report) + a study brief specific to each country (3 x country-level study briefs).</li> </ul>	31 <sup>st</sup> July



## 6. BUDGET

The indicative budget range for this study is AUD\$ 80,000-\$100,000. This is inclusive of all Consultancy fees, travel and associated activity costs for completing the deliverables set out in Section 5 above.

## 7. STUDY TEAM AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Interested consultants should submit an Expression of Interest including:

- Technical proposal with proposed methodology and approach.
- Project plan with key activities, timeline and LoE/ days needed to carry out activities.
- Experience and track record of conducting similar studies. This should also include key personnel and their role(s), how the team will be managed, and the team's ability to commit the skills and resources to the study over the period.
- A financial proposal in AUD that should include personnel allocation (role / number of days / daily rates / taxes), as well as all other applicable costs to undertake the study (i.e. travel, support costs).
- Sample report/study authored by the consultant(s).
- Contact details for at least two references.

### Understanding of Requirements and Experience

To be considered, the study team must collectively demonstrate:

- Advanced research expertise in education, climate change, or other related fields.
- Experience in conducting quantitative and qualitative research, ideally on education and/or climate change.
- Experience conducting studies within the Pacific region, preferably in Melanesia, with evidence of networks/ previous engagement of local study partners.
- Experience conducting ethical and inclusive studies involving children, marginalised, deprived and/or vulnerable groups in culturally appropriate and sensitive ways.
- Ability for critical thinking, analysis and problem solving.
- Strong written and verbal skills in communicating technical and/ or complex findings to non-specialist audiences (especially report writing and presentation skills).
- A track record of open, collaborative and timely communication working with clients.

There is a high expectation that:

- Members (or a proportion) of the study team have a track record of previously working together.
- A team leader will be appointed who has the seniority and experience in leading complex study projects, and who has the ability and standing to lead a team toward a common goal.
- The team has the ability to commit to the terms of the project and have adequate and available skilled resources to dedicate to this study over the period.
- The team has a strong track record of working flexibly to accommodate changes as the project is implemented.

## 8. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENT

The following payments will be made to the consultant on successful and timely submission of the following milestones:

- Upon approval of inception report and tools: 30%
- Upon submission of First Draft study Report: 30%
- Upon approval of final study report: 40%

The Consultant is responsible for providing professional liability and medical/emergency evacuation insurance. The consultant is responsible for paying any taxes required by their domicile country. The budget should specify any VAT requirements additional to the consulting fee.

## 9. HOW TO APPLY

If interested in applying for this study, please submit an Expression of Interest covering the requirements listed in section 7. Applications that do not cover these requirements will not be considered.

If you have questions or need further information, please send an email to Georgina O'Hare, Pacific Regional Deputy Director Program Development & Quality

[georgina.ohare1@savethechildren.org.au](mailto:georgina.ohare1@savethechildren.org.au)

Application close date: January 18<sup>th</sup> 2026.