REPORT

Integrating the Education Sector Into the National Adaptation Plan Process

A briefing for NAP teams with a focus on children's education

NAP Global Network

Save the Children

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About the NAP Global Network

The NAP Global Network was created in 2014 to support developing countries in advancing their NAP processes, and help accelerate adaptation efforts around the world. To achieve this, the Network facilitates South-South peer learning and exchange, supports national-level action on NAP formulation and implementation, and generates, synthesizes, and shares knowledge. The Network's members include individual participants from more than 170 countries involved in NAP processes. Financial support for the Network has been provided by Austria, Canada, Germany, Ireland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Additional support has been provided by ClimateWorks Foundation. The Secretariat is hosted by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD). For more information, www.napglobalnetwork.org.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

DRR	disaster risk reduction
EMIS	education management information system
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
IVRA	impact, vulnerability, and risk assessment
LEG	Least Developed Countries Expert Group
MEL	monitoring, evaluation, and learning
MoE	Ministry of Education
NAP	national adaptation plan
SASAP	Sector Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan
TVET	technical and vocational education and training
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WASH	water, sanitation, and hygiene

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Introduction

The education sector is both highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and critical to building the resilience of communities, and thus must adapt. This requires coordination, collaboration, and action amongst education and climate change actors, which are core aspects of the national adaptation plan (NAP) process. Integrating the education sector into the NAP process can also help to meet the objectives of the NAP process, which aim to reduce a country's vulnerability to the impacts of climate change by building adaptive capacity, for which education is a key foundation, and to facilitate the integration of climate change adaptation into sector development planning processes and strategies (Least Developed Countries Expert Group [LEG], 2025).

The education sector is comprised of multiple actors and components that work together to facilitate learning (Global Partnership for Education [GPE], 2025). There are **multiple levels of education**, from formal basic education (early childhood to secondary school) to higher education and technical and vocational education and training (TVET), to non-formal education for children, youth, and adults, extra-curricular activities, and Indigenous learning and teaching. There are **multiple actors** in the sector, including national education ministries and subnational education authorities, schools, universities and TVET centres and their associated leadership and committees, civil society organizations, other private or religious institutions that provide education, teachers and educators, parents/caregivers, communities, and of course, students (which can include children, youth and adults). Finally, the sector has **multiple components**, including curriculum and pedagogy, teacher quality and training, education infrastructure, school safety for students, teachers and other education-related staff, and educational continuity management.[1]

The impacts of climate change on the education sector vary. Climate change impacts destroy and damage education infrastructure, and schools and other educational institutions are often forced to close due to floods, heatwaves, and other climate-related events, all of which disrupt learning at multiple levels (e.g., early learning, primary, secondary, non-formal education, and/or TVET). Climate change threatens the safety, health, and well-being of students, teachers and other education-related staff while they are at school, or on their way to and from school. Rising temperatures and extreme heat also impact concentration and learning outcomes (Vasilakopoulou & Santamouris, 2025). Where learning poverty, teacher shortages, and education infrastructure deficits already exist, climate impacts exacerbate these challenges, placing the most fragile education systems disproportionately at risk.

[1] Throughout this report, the term "education sector" is used to encompass the multiple levels of education, multiple actors involved in the sector, and the multiple components of the education system.

At the same time, communities need climate change adaptation to be integrated into formal and non-formal curricula, to support them in building the skills, knowledge, and understanding they need to adapt to a changing climate. The education sector plays a crucial role in developing the human capital needed to drive climate adaptation and sustainable livelihoods. Education is also key to building public awareness and engagement on climate change adaptation, which can, in turn, increase the ownership of and effectiveness of the NAP process and adaptation action (Ledwell et al., 2023).

Although the education sector works to facilitate learning at multiple levels and for multiple age groups, children[2] are often a key target group for the sector. Children as a group are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change due to their physiological and developmental level, and their dependence on caregivers (United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], 2024a), with girls, children with disabilities, children living in poverty, and displaced children, amongst others, often more at risk (Bogado Duffner et al., 2025). Children thus require specific consideration in the NAP process across all sectors—and this is also the case in the education sector.

Children require specific consideration in the education sector because education is among the services most disrupted by climate change, with children experiencing the brunt of these impacts (UNICEF, 2025). The potential scale of disruption to basic education due to climate change for children is immense: over the past 20 years, schools were closed in at least 75% of climate-related extreme weather events (Sabarwal et al., 2024), and in 2024 alone, 242 million students from pre-primary to upper secondary had their education disrupted due to climate change (UNICEF, 2025). This also worsens a pre-existing learning crisis in many regions. For example, in Africa, where 107 million children are already out of school, climate-related impacts in 2024 placed an additional 20 million at risk of dropping out (UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office, 2025). Gender inequality is also exacerbated, with girls less likely to return to school after climate shocks, as they face increased caregiving responsibilities or increased risk of early and child marriage (Sims, 2021).

However, education also plays a critical role in reducing children's vulnerability to climate change by developing their adaptive capacity and empowering them as agents of change (UNICEF, 2021). Education is a right for children that states have an obligation to uphold and protect, as enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). Children's rights as they relate to the environment and climate change are outlined in General Comment No. 26 (UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2023), which states that children's right to an education is both threatened by climate change and instrumental in safeguarding children's rights in relation to the environment.

As such, this report takes a child-focused lens when it comes to the adaptation needs of the education sector, focusing primarily on the formal and non-formal schooling sector that spans from early childhood to secondary school for children aged 0-18, and including Indigenous knowledge, teaching, and learning. However, this report is also relevant to all levels of the education system and the education sector more broadly.

[2] This report uses the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child definition of child as anyone below the age of 18 (1989).

Box 1. Children and youth as distinct groups

Children are a group distinct from youth.[3] Youth also require specific consideration across all sectors in the NAP process: youth face exclusion due to age, as well as other intersecting factors such as gender, disability, and poverty, which impact their adaptation needs and priorities (NAP Global Network & UNFCCC, 2019). There is crossover in the definition of children and youth, specifically in the period of 15–17, which is often captured in both the definition of "children" and of "youth." Although this report takes a child-focused lens when it comes to the adaptation needs of the education sector, this is not to discount or deprioritize the importance of education for youth: much of this report is also relevant to education as it relates to youth.

Principles of the NAP process relating to children and their education

The NAP Technical Guidelines reiterate that adaptation planning should follow a gender-sensitive and participatory approach, and consider vulnerable groups, including children and youth (LEG, 2025). They also note that NAP processes should respect, promote, and consider parties' obligations on the rights of children (amongst other groups) (LEG, 2025).

Children can participate in the NAP process through age-appropriate mechanisms, and their voices and priorities can be considered through engagement with organizations or networks that represent their needs and priorities. Noting that youth councils and/or networks can also include children (for example, youth in the 15–17 age range), these mechanisms can also be used to engage some children in the NAP process, depending on their representative makeup.

Purpose and Structure of This Report

This report aims to support NAP teams[4] to consider the education sector in the NAP process by

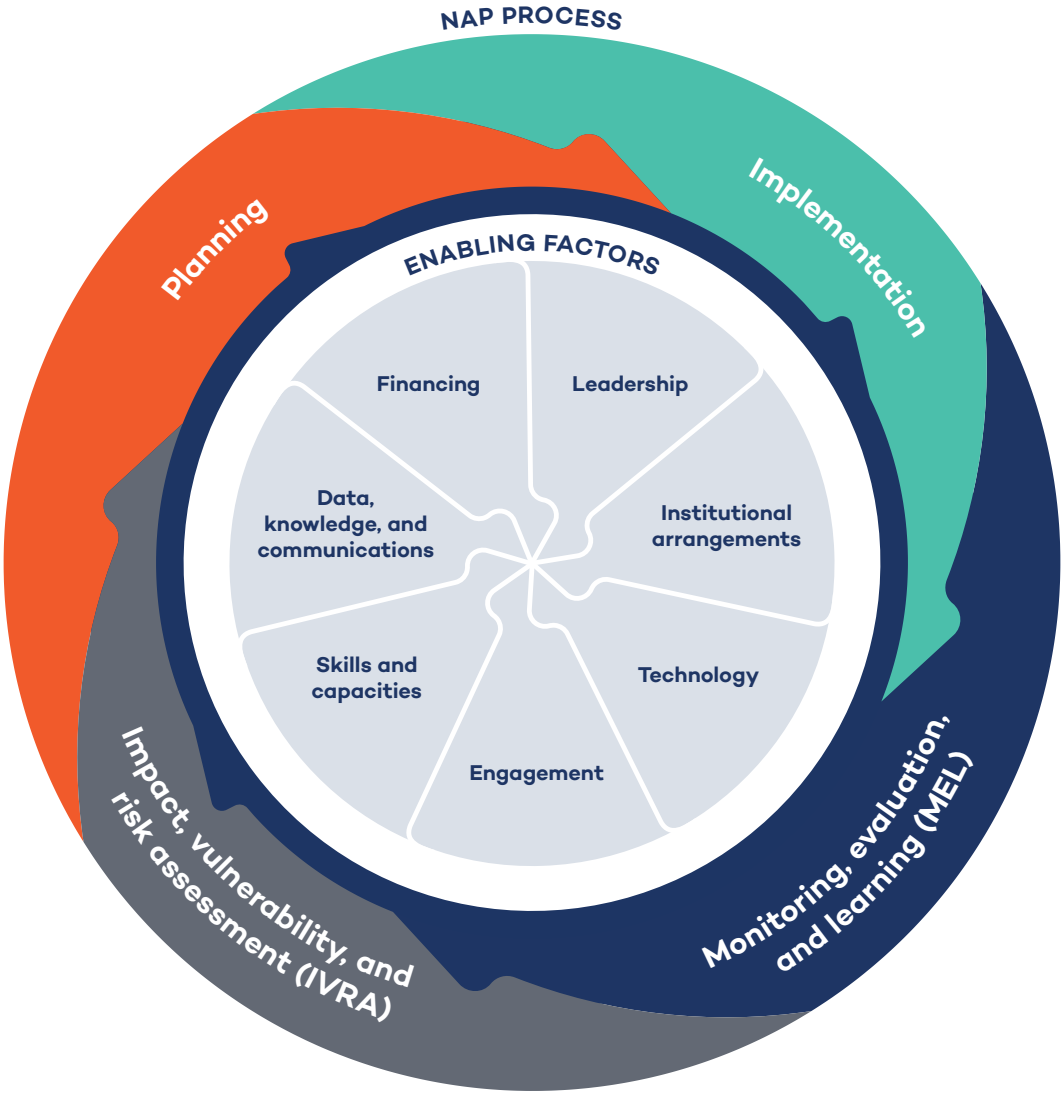
- providing an overview of a climate-resilient education system, particularly as it relates to children (Section 2),
- highlighting the enabling factors to support NAP teams' consideration of the education sector (Section 3), and
- providing an overview of the key considerations for including the education sector at each stage of the NAP process (Sections 4 to 7).

The report is structured around the figure of the NAP process (Figure 1).

[3] The term "youth" has different definitions depending on the country and context, but is generally used to refer to the transition to adulthood and independence during the period between 15 and 24 years (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, n.d.).

[4] This report uses the term "NAP teams" to refer to teams directly responsible for NAP development and implementation.

Figure 1. Figure of the NAP process and its enabling environment[5]



Source: NAP Global Network, 2023.

This report was developed through desk-based research, a review of evidence, tools and approaches used in the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative[6] and by the NAP Global Network, and case studies. A companion Guidance Note for education ministries is also available.

This report is intended as a starting point, and it is noted that the extent and approach to integrating the education sector in the NAP process will be dependent on country context, its priorities and the resourcing and capacity of NAP teams and education ministries. NAP teams are encouraged to use this report to identify initial and feasible entry points for integrating the education sector in the NAP process.

[5] For the official definition, objectives, and technical guidelines for the NAP process, visit the UNFCCC website (https://unfccc.int/national-adaptation-plans) and refer to the *NAP Technical Guidelines* (LEG, 2025).

[6] More details on the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative is available here: https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/climate-smart-education-systems-initiative

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Overview: What is a climate-resilient education system?

A climate-resilient education system[7] addresses key climate risks while also harnessing the power of education to increase the adaptive capacity of children and communities. This reduces the vulnerability of children to climate impacts and increases their resilience, with flow-on benefits to their communities. This report focuses on three elements of a climate-resilient education system:[8]

- **resilient education infrastructure:** Education infrastructure[9] that is built, retrofitted, and/or maintained to withstand current and future climate hazards (GPE, 2023). Resilient education infrastructure is gender and disability responsive, to ensure equitable access for all while building climate resilience.
- **school safety and educational continuity management:** The health, safety, access, and well-being of students, teachers, and other education staff while at, or on the way to and from, school or other education facilities, is protected in the face of climate hazards, which goes beyond the safety of the physical infrastructure. Through effective planning, disruptions to learning due to climate change are minimized. Educational continuity management and planning are gender and disability responsive to ensure that all students have continuous access to education (Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector, 2022). This may include increased equitable access to blended, digital, or distance learning, appropriate to the context.
- **teaching and learning:** Climate change curricula are integrated across subjects and grade levels in the formal education system, which empowers learners as agents of change and advocates for climate change adaptation and supports them to address the gendered impacts of climate change (GPE, 2023). This can also include non-formal education and extra-curricular opportunities, such as community outreach, radio programs, and child clubs. Teachers are trained and supported to deliver updated curricula.

[7] This report uses the term "climate-resilient education system" but acknowledges that different organizations use different terms, such as "climate-smart education" or "greening/green education systems," amongst other terms.

[8] These three components are not comprehensive, and there are other adaptation measures that can be considered alongside them for the education sector. For example, school feeding or other social protection programs that help reduce children's vulnerability to the impacts of climate change or supporting school governance through head teachers and school management committee trainings, etc.

[9] Education infrastructure includes school infrastructure such as classrooms, school buildings, school WASH infrastructure, playgrounds and other outdoor areas, other types of learning spaces that are used for non-formal education for children, youth, and adults, other education-related facilities such as teacher accommodation, TVET centres, and university infrastructure. It is important to note that resilient education infrastructure is a shared responsibility between the education sector and other sectors (e.g., the infrastructure sector or water sector).

These components are interdependent. For example, the success of curriculum initiatives depends on educational continuity management that ensures continuous and equitable access to learning and trained teachers who are confident in delivering the material.

A simplified, non-exhaustive list of key entry points for integrating the education sector in the NAP process is summarized in Table 1, as a potential checklist for NAP teams.

Table 1. Key entry points for integrating the education sector into the NAP process

Phase	Action	Checklist
Getting started	Engage the education ministry and its agencies throughout the NAP process, including as part of NAP consultations and in the NAP coordination mechanism.	☐
	Engage children and youth through their representative organizations, child, youth, or education-focused civil society organizations and networks, and other education actors in the NAP process and consultations.	☐
	Explore available climate finance sources (for example, Green Climate Fund (GCF), Least Developed Countries Fund, Adaptation Fund, Pilot Program for Climate Resilience) to understand what resources and funding windows exist to support early preparedness and adaptation in the education sector.	☐
Impact, vulnerability, and risk assessment (IVRA)	Identify the most relevant climate hazards, both current and projected, affecting the education sector, and determine which schools and education facilities, students, teachers, and other education-related staff are most exposed.	☐
	Assess the vulnerability of the education sector, considering both sensitivity and adaptive capacity, and noting that pre-existing conditions such as learning poverty, teacher shortages, and infrastructure deficits may compound climate impacts.	☐
	Where possible, disaggregate findings by gender, age, disability, and socio-economic status to identify who is most at risk.	☐
	Use IVRA findings to inform the prioritization and costing of adaptation measures in the planning phase.	☐

Phase	Action	Checklist
Planning	Conduct a stocktake of past or existing adaptation activities of the education ministry and subnational education authorities.	☐
	Through engagement with education sector actors, identify the most appropriate adaptation measures for the education sector, considering all components of a climate-resilient education sector and responding to the relevant climate risks identified in the IVRA stage.	☐
	Identify and cost the priority adaptation investments for the short and medium terms, and integrate them into the existing planning and budgeting processes at the appropriate levels. Explore available sources of finance and the appropriate financial instruments to support the implementation of priority adaptation investments.	☐
Implementation	Identify clear roles, responsibilities, timelines, and communication for the implementation of priority actions in coordination with education ministries and other relevant actors.	☐
	Develop an adaptation finance roadmap to help operationalize the mobilization of resources for priority adaptation investments in the education sector, including identifying financing needs, outlining potential funding sources, and defining the steps, responsibilities, and timelines required for implementation.	☐
	Work with the education ministry to access finance to support the implementation of priority adaptation actions for the education sector.	☐
Monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL)	Identify and map existing data sources and education sector MEL systems that can contribute to the MEL system for the NAP process.	☐
	Where appropriate, include indicators for adaptation measures that are beneficial for the education sector in the MEL system for the NAP process.	☐
	Consider how the learning component of the MEL system can be a tool to raise awareness, increase knowledge, and inform curriculum development.	☐

Source: Authors.

3
The Role of Enabling Factors for Integrating the Education Sector Into the NAP Process

An effective, inclusive NAP process needs a strong enabling environment, for which seven connected enabling factors are key (see Figure 1). NAP teams and education ministries can work together to strengthen these enabling factors to support the integration of priority adaptation measures for the education sector in the NAP process. Table 2 outlines potential ways to do this.

Table 2. Non-comprehensive list of ways NAP teams can strengthen the enabling environment for the NAP process to support the integration of the education sector

Enabling factor	How the NAP team can strengthen the education sector's role in this enabling factor
Leadership	• Work with the education sector to identify a "champion" to share perspectives on the importance of considering education in the NAP process.
Institutional arrangements	• Ensure education ministry representation on the NAP coordination mechanism(s). • Identify pre-existing mechanisms that support coordination between the education ministry and the environment and climate change ministries. Consider how these can be expanded or aligned to support coordination on the NAP process.

Enabling factor	How the NAP team can strengthen the education sector's role in this enabling factor
Engagement	• Engage with education actors to ensure that the NAP process is participatory, inclusive, and responsive to diverse needs. This includes engaging with subnational education authorities, schools, teachers or teacher unions, civil society organizations and networks (including those that focus on education), national education coalitions, and representative organizations of persons with disabilities. • Engage with child- and youth-focused and/or representative organizations that have expertise in engaging directly with children in participatory and inclusive ways, as well as child and youth councils (where they exist), particularly those from marginalized or climate-vulnerable communities.
Data, knowledge, and communication	• Communicate to the education ministry about key stages of the NAP process, including explaining what these stages entail and what is required of their engagement. • Identify relevant data/information that can be used to contribute to or share about the NAP process, for example, as part of the IVRA or MEL phase. Work with the education ministry to identify relevant data that is already collected through the education management information system (EMIS), or equivalent, and its relevance to the NAP process. • Where possible, promote the use of sex-, age-, disability-, and location-disaggregated data to better understand differential climate impacts within the education sector. Identify data gaps related to vulnerable or marginalized groups and propose practical steps to strengthen data collection and analysis to inform more equitable adaptation planning. • Include measures for child-sensitive communication and reporting tools about integration of adaptation in the education sector, as well as communication materials that schools and other education actors can use to promote engagement in the NAP process.
Skills and capacity	• Invest and support capacity strengthening on adaptation that is relevant for the education ministry and other education actors to support their effective engagement in the NAP process.

Enabling factor	How the NAP team can strengthen the education sector's role in this enabling factor
Financing	• Consider the resourcing needs to support the education ministry and other education actors' engagement throughout the NAP process, and work with education ministries to include financing for these actions in GCF Readiness Programme Proposals, which provide funding support for adaptation planning. • Work with education ministries and relevant priority sector actors (e.g., ministries of finance, ministries of water, ministries of planning) to access, budget, and track funding for the implementation of priority adaptation measures for the education sector.
Technology	• Identify existing technological resources, such as early warning systems, that would support building climate resilience in the education sector, while promoting equitable access to these technological resources, particularly for remote, rural, low-income, or otherwise marginalized children, to avoid deepening existing inequalities through implementation.

Source: Authors, adapted from NAP Global Network, 2023.

Good practice approach 1. Saint Lucia's Education Sectoral Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan

Saint Lucia identified education as a priority sector in its 2018–2028 NAP process cycle. To support this, the Ministry of Education (MoE) was involved at all stages of the NAP process and was empowered to lead the development of an Education Sectoral Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan (SASAP), which elaborates on the priorities and implementation of adaptation within the education sector. From the outset, the MoE has been a member of the National Climate Change Committee (the NAP coordination mechanism), enabling it to play a strong role throughout the process and to champion the integration of education considerations in adaptation planning. Saint Lucia's 2023 GCF Readiness proposal included measures to strengthen the MoE's capacity to engage in the NAP process, including training on climate risk assessments and the SASAP, as well as concept note development. This supported the MoE in leading and facilitating an inclusive and participatory process to develop the education SASAP, and strongly positioned them to be able to access climate finance to support education sector adaptation implementation in the future.

4
IVRA for the Education Sector

The IVRA phase can build an evidence base on how climate change affects the education sector, and to identify the education facilities, students, teachers, and other education actors most at risk from climate hazards to inform prioritization of adaptation measures. Despite the impacts of climate change on the education sector, it is still often overlooked in the IVRA phase, highlighting a key aspect to strengthen (Merryweather & Pham, 2025). Table 3 outlines some illustrative examples of climate risks to the education sector to consider.

Table 3. Illustrative examples of climate risk to the education sector

Component	Illustrative examples of climate risk
Education infrastructure	The risk of damage to, or destruction of, education infrastructure due to climate hazards and the resultant impact on education access and learning continuity.
School safety and educational continuity management	Risks to the safety and well-being of students, particularly for children and including differentiated risks due to age, gender, disability, etc., teachers, and other education-related staff, while at, or on the way to and from, school or other education facilities. The impact of education disruptions on student enrolment, attendance, and learning outcomes, as well as the impact of exposure to hazards on learning outcomes.
Teaching and learning	The current ways adaptive capacity is (or is not) strengthened through curricula that address climate change adaptation or disaster risk, and related child- and youth-focused resilience-building activities in and around schools or other educational facilities, non-formal education and extra-curricular activities, and the teacher capacity needed to deliver such curricula.
Cross-cutting: heat stress and thermal comfort	The risk that rising temperatures and increased frequency of extreme heat events reduce attendance, concentration, and learning outcomes, particularly in under-resourced schools without adequate ventilation or cooling. Heat stress disproportionately affects younger children, children with disabilities, and those in poorly constructed or maintained facilities.

Source: Authors, adapted from Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector, 2022 and GPE, 2023.

Noting that identification of key climate hazards (current and projected) will occur as part of the national IVRA, NAP teams, in partnership with education ministries, can then consider two aspects of climate risk for the education sector: exposure to the climate hazards, meaning which schools and other education facilities, students, teachers, and other education-related staff are exposed, and vulnerability. Consistent with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Sixth Assessment Report framework (2023), vulnerability encompasses both sensitivity or susceptibility to harm (i.e., the degree to which the education system and its actors are affected by climate hazards) and adaptive capacity (i.e., the mechanisms already in place to anticipate, respond to and recover from climate impacts).

It is also important to note that climate risks do not occur in a vacuum. Where learning poverty, teacher shortages, or infrastructure deficits already exist, climate impacts compound those challenges, placing the most fragile education systems disproportionately at risk. NAP teams should therefore consider baseline conditions of the education system as an integral part of the vulnerability assessment, not only climate-specific factors. Non-comprehensive examples of how NAP teams might approach assessing elements of exposure and vulnerability to inform an assessment of climate risk for the education sector are included in Table 4. Where possible, data should be disaggregated by gender, age, disability, socio-economic status, remoteness, and Indigenous status.

Table 4. Non-comprehensive examples of how NAP teams can approach the assessment of exposure and vulnerability

Element of IVRA	Example
Exposure When assessing exposure, NAP teams can	• Overlay education data with climate hazard mapping to determine how many schools, education facilities, students, and teachers are exposed to climate hazards (current and projected) by region or district. • In anticipation of higher magnitude and frequency of hazards, map annual weather patterns against the school year to determine when and how schools, students, and teachers are most exposed at a national and subnational level. • Use historical data to assess education disruption due to climate hazards, considering frequency and duration. • Map how roads to schools and other education facilities are exposed to hazards and who will be most impacted by disruptions to access routes. For example, there may be safety or accessibility concerns for girls or children with disabilities.

Element of IVRA	Example
Vulnerability When assessing vulnerability, NAP teams can	• Assess the sensitivity or susceptibility of education infrastructure to damage by climate hazards, considering, for example, poor construction or lack of regular maintenance. Consider who may be most affected, for example, girls may be more impacted by damaged water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure at schools, and children with disabilities may face increased physical barriers. • Consider evidence of factors that increase vulnerability of school communities, for example, a lack of school climate safety or disaster risk reduction (DRR) plans in place, or if they are in place, the training or materials/equipment available to support their implementation; lack of access to early warning systems. Consider who is most at risk of not returning to school if education is disrupted, and accessibility of early warning systems to children, including girls and children with disabilities. • Consider information about how teaching and learning address climate change adaptation and/or DRR at all levels of formal and non-formal education, and what training supports teachers or other educators to deliver this.

Source: Authors, adapted from the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative's education climate risk assessments conducted with the support of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's International Institute for Educational Planning in Malawi and Zimbabwe and Save the Children in Somaliland.

Possible Education Data Sources to Inform the IVRA

NAP teams can work with the education ministry to identify possible data sources to inform the IVRA phase. Climate data can be merged with education data, including school geolocalization data, and vulnerability data (where this data is collected) in order to depict exposure and highlight vulnerabilities. The EMIS may have education data that can be overlaid with climate hazard information to assess climate risk for the education sector. In recent years, there have been increasing efforts to integrate climate-related indicators into EMIS. For example, under the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative, some countries have begun incorporating data on school infrastructure characteristics, exposure to climate hazards, and disruption to education services into routine data collection systems.

There are also several other sources that can be used, such as education sector analysis reports, humanitarian impact reports documenting the effects of disasters on education, and reports from civil society organizations on the impact of climate change on their education programs. Websites such as Prevention Web, the World Bank Knowledge Portal, and verified

news coverage may also be good sources of information. Education units that monitor attendance rates and learning outcomes can provide information about current education attainment rates, as well as trends over time, which can be mapped against climate risks.

Where data gaps exist, NAP teams can support the education ministry to engage with subnational education authorities, education actors and schools, including through participatory approaches. Working with education ministries to support students, teachers, and school leadership to undertake participatory climate risk assessments can help fill gaps and ground the IVRA in lived experience (see Box 2). Actions to address data gaps can also be included in the NAP document, for example, Kiribati's NAP includes an action to "assess the vulnerability of the infrastructure of each school" (Government of Kiribati, 2019, p. 137).

From Assessment to Action

IVRA findings for the education sector should feed directly into the prioritization of adaptation measures and the costing of interventions within the NAP. NAP teams and education ministries can use the evidence generated to identify which schools, communities and students face the greatest risk and therefore warrant early action, and to build the case for investment in targeted adaptation measures such as climate-resilient school construction, revised school calendars, heat-responsive design standards and climate literacy curricula. Linking IVRA outputs explicitly to adaptation options and budget estimates is essential to ensure the education sector secures adequate representation in the overall NAP investment framework.

The IVRA for the education sector will be an iterative process and does not need to be fully comprehensive in the first instance. NAP teams and education ministries can work together to take a phased approach and identify feasible first steps for the education sector's inclusion that can be progressively strengthened over successive NAP cycles.

Box 2. Did you know that children can contribute to the IVRA phase?

Involving children in a participatory approach to climate risk assessments at a school level can help elucidate the specific risks they face, ensure their needs and capacities are centred in adaptation planning, and increase their voice and agency in adaptation decision making (Children in a Changing Climate Coalition, 2015). For example, the Solomon Islands Knowledge, Action, Sustainability for Resilient Villages project supports school disaster management committees to assess risks and implement practical, school-prioritized solutions. Teachers, students, and parents participated in facilitated workshops to assess risk and identify priorities, ensuring that plans reflected lived experience and inclusive decision-making. This school-based climate adaptation planning contributes directly to provincial and local adaptation processes, which serve as critical inputs to the Solomon Islands NAP process.

Featured resource: Plan International's *Child-Centred Multi-Risk Assessment Guide and Toolkit* provides a list of sample tools and resources for child-centred risk assessments.

5
Adaptation Planning for the Education Sector

The planning phase is an opportunity to identify and prioritize adaptation interventions for the education sector based on the main climate risks identified in the IVRA phase. Potential actions[10] that NAP teams can take to ensure the education sector is effectively integrated include

- **undertaking stocktaking** of past and current education plans and programs that include a focus on climate change and disaster risk reduction, or school safety, such as school continuity plans, adaptation in school improvement plans, and education DRR and climate change adaptation plans, as well as adaptation-related education activities and projects, to identify current priorities and gaps (Price-Kelly & Hammill, 2015).
- **taking a holistic approach to integrating adaptation of education** by considering multiple components of a climate-resilient education system, including education infrastructure, school safety and educational continuity management, and teaching and learning (GPE, 2023).
- **supporting a participatory and inclusive prioritization process** to include the education ministry and other education actors in the planning process and increase ownership of adaptation priorities for the education sector (Beauchamp et al., 2024).
- **developing criteria for assessing education sector-specific adaptation options:** With the education ministry and other education actors, determine criteria for prioritizing adaptation measures for inclusion in the NAP document (LEG, 2025). This could include, for example, assessing education loss for children and the implications for poverty reduction. For example, Bangladesh's NAP notes that education disruption "may lead to intergenerational transmission of vulnerability and impaired … future earnings" (Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, 2022, p. 44).
- **aligning with other sectors:** coordinate adaptation priorities in the education sector with other sectors (Dazé et al., 2018). For example, WASH or health sector priorities may cover WASH facilities in schools, such as in Madagascar's NAP, which includes measures to improve school WASH infrastructure as part of a health priority (Ministère de l'Environnement et du Développement Durable, 2021). Working with other sectors that may share priorities with the education sector can also support the inclusion of education sector-specific adaptation priorities.

[10] NAP teams can refer to the NAP Technical Guidelines (LEG, 2025) for further information about what is involved in the planning phase of the NAP process.

- **translating identified adaptation measures into concrete, finance-ready investment propositions for the education sector** by defining the scale of action, estimating indicative costs, and articulating the climate evidence and expected resilience outcomes. This step helps shift broad adaptation priorities into actionable investment opportunities that can be integrated into national planning and budgeting processes and presented to potential funders. Climate finance institutions such as the GCF and Least Developed Countries Fund emphasize clear investment pathways and measurable adaptation benefits.
- **including the education sector in the design of relevant logic model(s) for adaptation processes:** this helps to define results and explain how education sector adaptation activities are expected to contribute to short and long-term change in resilience (Beauchamp et al., 2024).

Adaptation Measures for the Education Sector

Table 5 outlines an illustrative and non-exhaustive list of adaptation measures currently included in NAPs across the components of a climate-resilient education system.

Table 5. Adaptation measures related to a climate-resilient education system included in NAPs

Component	Example measures
Resilient education infrastructure	• Cameroon: Increase the resilience of school and university infrastructures to climate change through climate proofing (Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development, 2015, p. 81) • South Sudan: Incorporate innovative architectural designs into new schools and develop guidelines to reduce adverse impacts of climate change (e.g., heat) on students (Ministry of Environment and Forestry, 2021, p. 104)
School safety and educational continuity management	• Bangladesh: Gender-, age- and disability-responsive, youth-led disaster preparedness and emergency rescue and evacuation services (Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, 2022, p. 116) • Pakistan: Develop emergency and evacuation standard operating procedures for educational institutions and associated facilities, and provide training and simulations (or drills) for teachers, students, workers, and other education personnel on emergency response and evacuation procedures (Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, 2023, p. 67)

Component	Example measures
Teaching and learning	• Grenada: Expansion of Climate Change and Adaptation Education (programs and schools) … starting from the pre-school level, incorporat[ing] materials and lessons (building on the Greenz Climate Champion initiative) into the curriculum for both boys and girls… focusing on how climate change affects boys and girls differently and how they respond (Government of Grenada, 2025, p. 119) • Republic of the Marshall Islands: Training of teachers to successfully deliver the revised curriculum (Ministry of the Environment, 2023, p. 162)

Source: Authors, adapted from NAP documents referenced.

Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in Adaptation Interventions for Education

Gender intersects with other factors such as age, disability, and poverty, which influence vulnerability to climate change and adaptive capacity, as well as access to quality and equitable education (NAP Global Network & United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 2019; GPE, 2023). Gender equality and social inclusion are critical for effective responses to climate change and must be mainstreamed in adaptation for education (GPE, 2023). This can include specific strategies to address the gendered impacts of climate change, such as gendered disruptions to education access, including the heightened risk of child marriage for girls (Sims, 2021) or for boys, increased pressure to drop out of school and seek work, as is the case in the Caribbean (Thailinger et al., 2023). Other strategies may include curriculum and non-formal education initiatives that empower girls and women to lead climate action (GPE, 2023). Curriculum initiatives and non-formal education programs can also include and embed Indigenous knowledge (GPE, 2023).

Additionally, children and young people with disabilities are disproportionately affected by climate change. Nearly 240 million children worldwide have disabilities, and these children are more likely to be left behind, abandoned, or neglected during a disaster; are more likely to experience stigma, discrimination, and violence; and face physical and environmental barriers during slow- and sudden-onset hazards. It is essential that schools, for example, consider the climate risks that may worsen the impact for children with disabilities and seek their participation (or that of a representative group) in designing inclusive and accessible adaptation solutions. This includes, but is not limited to, appropriate and accessible alert systems with visual and audio cues and educational continuity management that meet the needs of children with disabilities (UNICEF, 2024b).

Good practice approach 2. Education priorities in Kiribati's NAP

Kiribati's NAP assesses the vulnerability of school infrastructure and safety risks to students and teachers as part of the IVRA assessment. It then prioritizes a "national programme of school upgrades [and] retrofit[s]… to withstand extreme weather events," ensuring that these designs are gender responsive and accessible (Government of Kiribati, 2019, p. 145). It commits to integrating climate change adaptation and DRR into primary, secondary, and TVET curricula, alongside actions to support training for teachers and TVET educators, including on disability inclusive teaching methods. It also includes actions to link what is taught in formal schooling with non-formal and community-based education programs that include "accurate, locally relevant … and traditional knowledge," with a focus on the inclusion of marginalized groups (Government of Kiribati, 2019, p. 150).

6
Implementation Phase for the Education Sector

The phase is an opportunity to design sound implementation strategies and identify and mobilize financing to implement adaptation priorities relevant for the education sector.

Implementation Strategies

Implementation strategies detail the roles and responsibilities of education actors, and the support (including resource needs) the education ministry and other education actors will require to ensure successful and inclusive adaptation implementation.

Good practice approach 3. Somalia's implementation roadmap for the education sector

Somalia's NAP identifies education as a cross-cutting sector, with a focus on public awareness campaigns and capacity building across communities. The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change subsequently identified the need to detail the implementation arrangements for the education activities in the NAP through a roadmap. This will include an overview of the current status of adaptation implementation in the education sector; prioritization and sequencing for the implementation of NAP education activities; alignment with other planned adaptation actions; and implementation needs, such as skill and capacity strengthening and financing. This implementation roadmap will be finalized in 2026.

Finance for Implementation

Investing in adaptation in the education sector can leverage multiple streams of finance across the NAP cycle. Early preparedness and readiness support, such as GCF Readiness support used by countries like Saint Lucia to support capacity strengthening of the education ministry, can build foundational capacity in ministries and systems before specific investments are defined.

Once priority adaptation investments are identified, countries can explore a broader finance mix that draws on domestic resources (including national and sectoral education budgets), international public finance, and relevant private financing. Co-financing models are already emerging: for example, the Building the Climate Resilience of Children and Their

Communities Through the Education Sector project combines financing from the education sector (through the GPE) and the climate sector (through the GCF), to strengthen the resilience of education systems in the face of climate change in South Sudan, Cambodia, and Tonga (GCF, 2023). This is in addition to domestic budget allocations for the education sector that act as in-kind support for adaptation interventions financed through national funds (e.g., climate/environmental funds) and/or climate change projects financed via grants or other sources of financing from public, private, domestic, and international financial institutions.

7
Integrating the Education Sector in MEL Systems for NAP Processes

MEL is the mechanism that ensures consideration of the education sector in the NAP process translates from policy commitments into tangible results for students, teachers, and schools. Integrating the education sector into MEL systems for the NAP process is critical in order to monitor the implementation of adaptation priorities for education; evaluate the impact of adaptation measures, particularly those that build education system resilience for the most vulnerable children; and generate evidence and learning about what is working (GPE, 2023; Montpetit et al., 2025).

Education Sector MEL and Horizontal Integration of MEL

MEL systems for NAP processes can build on existing structures and sectoral approaches, while also consolidating these within a unifying framework (Beauchamp et al., 2024). Education ministries and other education actors can contribute to the design of the MEL framework, helping to define objectives, what is measured, and what success looks like, increasing ownership and transparency (Beauchamp et al., 2024). NAP teams can build on or adapt pre-existing education sector MEL systems, which can help ensure that MEL systems for the NAP process align with education sector priorities and data systems (Beauchamp et al., 2024). The NAP process is an opportunity to consolidate this through a unifying framework across ministries, which can include ensuring coherent and aligned data systems, data disaggregation by age, gender, and disability, and data-sharing protocols (Beauchamp et al., 2024).

Monitoring the Adaptation Priorities for the Education Sector

Monitoring is an ongoing activity throughout the NAP process (Beauchamp et al., 2024). Including the adaptation priorities for the education sector in logic model(s) for the NAP process supports the monitoring of these activities, enabling NAP teams and education ministries to track implementation, understand the causal pathway from activities to outcomes, and test assumptions about how change happens (Beauchamp et al., 2024). Indicators are a tool for tracking the implementation and results of adaptation in the education sector. Indicators can be identified and selected based on the logic model or theory

of change, and NAP teams can work with education ministries to design indicators that are gender and age responsive, measure the integration of adaptation in the education sector at multiple levels, including output, outcome, and impact, and that disaggregate data by sex, age, and disability (including disaggregation by other factors if possible). However, indicators have limitations, namely that they are not designed to show how or why change happened. As such, it is important to complement their use with additional information and techniques, such as qualitative analysis, to understand causal pathways in more depth (Beauchamp et al., 2024).

Identification and Mapping of Existing Data Sources

NAP teams can work with education ministries to identify and map existing data sources that can contribute to the MEL system (Beauchamp et al., 2024). This can include current education MEL systems at a national, subnational, and program or project level; existing data sources, indicators, and baselines for adaptation in the education sector; other data that can provide important context, such as enrolment and attendance data; and data sources already being used to inform reporting to monitor progress against international frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals, the Sendai Framework, and the Comprehensive School Safety Framework. Data sources identified in the IVRA phase can also be used in the MEL phase. Identifying and mapping existing data sources can also help identify the gaps for future data collection.

Evaluation of Adaptation Measures for Education

Evaluating adaptation measures for education as part of NAP process evaluations helps track their performance and assess whether these activities are meeting their stated objectives (Beauchamp et al., 2024). Beyond tracking indicators, evaluation can help answer strategic questions about integration of adaptation priorities for the education sector, such as what works for whom, under what conditions, and at what cost. Key steps to ensure that these priorities for education are considered in NAP evaluations often include

- defining clear roles and responsibilities for the education ministry as part of the MEL system, as well as communication and data-sharing protocols between climate and education ministries and other relevant actors (Beauchamp et al., 2024).
- identifying, accessing, and mobilizing investment for education actors' involvement in the NAP MEL system, including the ongoing costs of data collection, analysis, and dissemination of findings (Beauchamp et al., 2024).
- integrating specific questions and considerations for how adaptation is integrated in the education sector within selected performance criteria used for NAP process evaluations (Beauchamp et al., 2024), including considerations related to equity, access, and the differential impacts of climate risks on children and education personnel.

Learning About Adaptation for the Education Sector

Learning is critical for effective adaptation and needs to be deliberatively integrated into the NAP process (Dekens & Harvey, 2024). This includes learning from evidence generated from monitoring and evaluation, but also includes other activities conducted as part of the NAP process, such as research or knowledge exchange (Dekens & Harvey, 2024). A deliberate and coordinated learning agenda can support policy-makers in learning about what works when it comes to adaptation interventions for the education sector, and to modify strategies based on new evidence or changes in context (Beauchamp et al., 2024, p. 78).

NAP teams can consider establishing a learning agenda on adaptation for the education sector and the NAP process, with NAP teams, within the education ministry, and with other education actors (Dekens et al., 2025). This might include establishing regular opportunities for information sharing and capacity strengthening on adaptation interventions between education and climate actors (Dekens et al., 2025). As part of this, NAP teams can work with education ministries to feed learning back into the NAP process via various learning loops, including curricula. For example, MEL findings on integration of adaptation in the education sector can inform updates to the IVRA and future adaptation planning and implementation strategies with the education sector. This is important for the NAP process to be iterative and continuously improved upon, including in response to evolving climate and social conditions.

8
Conclusion

Integrating the education sector into the NAP process has many benefits, but primarily it supports the education system in becoming climate resilient, which in turn contributes to community resilience. Adapting the education sector to the impacts of climate change protects children's right to an education, supports communities in developing the skills, knowledge, and understanding they need to adapt to a changing climate, and helps build the human capital needed to drive climate adaptation and sustainable livelihoods.

This report provides key considerations, tips, and tools for NAP teams to start effectively integrating the education sector into the NAP process. It is not a comprehensive list of actions that every NAP team can and must do. NAP teams are balancing competing priorities within and across sectors within adaptation planning. However, steps to engage the education ministry, assess the key climate risks to the education sector, and use this to prioritize, implement, and learn from adaptation initiatives can reap benefits in terms of both protecting the education system from the impacts of climate change, as well as realize the potential of the education system to reach children, youth, teachers, and communities to drive climate change adaptation.

Including education in NAP processes will advance commitments adaptation under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change—including implementation of the Paris Agreement and the related Action for Climate Empowerment agenda—as well as helping to meet the Sustainable Development Goals and address inequality in accessing education. Investing in children's future through education is a critical way to address and respond to the many risks exacerbated by climate change.

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