CLIMATE SMART EDUCATION SYSTEMS INITIATIVE

Progress Report 2024 (January-December)

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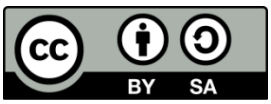
Final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined.

Whatever the terms used in this document to designate the people carrying out the functions, it goes without saying that the holders of these positions can be either men or women.



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Acronyms

CSESI	Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
IIEP-UNESCO	UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

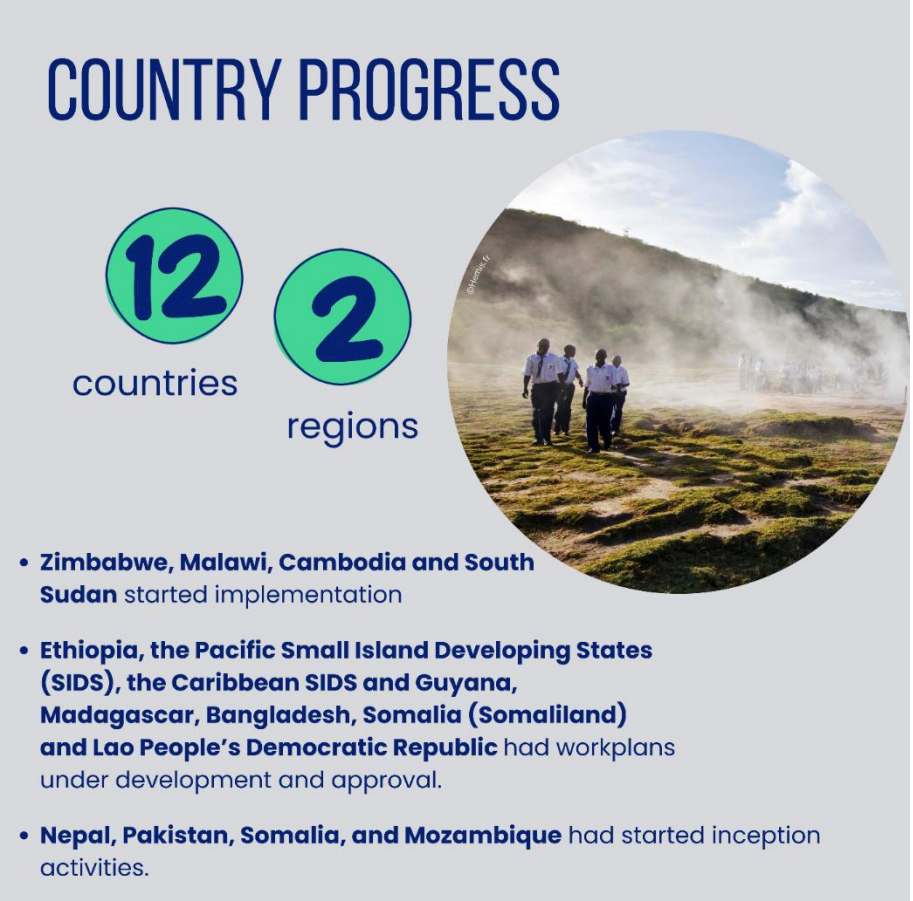
Executive Summary

The Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative (CSESI) is a technical assistance initiative launched in March 2023 that aims to enhance countries' capacities for mainstreaming climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability into education sector plans, budgets and strategies, and for cross-sectoral coordination on climate and environment-related policy and programming. To achieve this goal, the initiative provides support through seven interconnected components of targeted, context-specific technical assistance:

1. Evidence-based policies and planning
2. Cross-sector and internal coordination
3. Access to climate finance
4. Climate data and evidence for educational planning and policies
5. Safer and greener infrastructure
6. School safety and educational continuity
7. Curricula, pedagogy and teacher training

This progress report provides an overview of country-level progress and results, global communication and outreach, lessons learned and risk management during 2024.

Country-Level Progress



Implementation Highlights:
With the support of the Climate Smart Education Systems initiative partners, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Cambodia and South Sudan began implementing their workplans encompassing all seven technical components in an interconnected way. Across all four countries, national stakeholders valued opportunities for learning to understand, analyze and act on climate risks, feeling better equipped to play a part in mainstreaming climate change adaptation and building resilience.

Zimbabwe	Malawi
Workplan performance rating Highly satisfactory	**Workplan performance rating** Highly satisfactory
Implementation start April 2024	**Implementation start** July 2024
Expected end date: March 2025	**Expected end date** July 2025
Climate profile Droughts most significant stressor, shifting rainfall patterns, floods, increasing temperatures	**Climate profile** Wide range of increasingly frequent climate hazards, including floods, droughts and heatwaves
Activity highlights • Capacity development on climate risk analysis • Climate risk analysis for education sector developed through a participatory process • Cross-sectoral meetings and development of a roadmap for accessing climate finance • Climate-smart standards for school inspection and co-creation workshops for the greening of teacher education and national curriculum	**Activity highlights** • Cross-sectoral climate risk analysis capacity development • Drafting of a climate risk analysis for the education sector to support evidence-informed planning and the future development of a climate change strategy • Hiring of national and international experts and first in-person working session to support greening of curriculum and teacher education
What's next? Piloting and revision of learning materials and online evaluation of integration efforts in teacher education	**What's next?** Two additional working sessions to validate updated curricula and to train Teacher Training Colleges
Cambodia	**South Sudan**
Workplan performance rating Highly satisfactory	**Workplan performance rating** Highly satisfactory
Implementation start September 2024	**Implementation start** November 2024
Expected end date September 2025	**Expected end date** end 2025
Climate profile Rise in frequency and severity of climate hazards in recent years, including heatwaves and floods	**Climate profile** Worsening climate hazards, compounded by political and economic instability
Activity highlights • Capacity development sessions on identifying climate stressors and evaluating impacts • Integration of climate and disaster risk reduction related data for educational planning	**Activity highlights** • Significant progress in priority setting of activities • Identification of the development of state-level climate risk analyzes to guide decision-making as the first priority for the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative.

• Assessing existing capacities and exploring strategies for climate adaptation through cross-sectoral collaboration and peer learning • Comprehensive climate risk analysis currently under development	• Reinvigoration of a task force to improve both internal and cross-sectoral coordination • Development of a climate finance report support access to climate funding • Development of a sector contingency plan to support contingency planning at the national, sub-national and local level
What's next? Findings from the climate risk analysis will guide efforts to develop an operational plan for climate change adaptation in the education sector.	**What's next?** Ministry of Education and UNESCO will build on Greening Curriculum Guidance to integrate climate change in curricula and teacher education.

Global Communication and Outreach

During 2024, the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners:

- ➔ Developed a joint communications plan to foster a unified, collaborative approach,
- ➔ Forged strategic partnerships in global, regional and national arenas,
- ➔ Continued to share experiences through publications and global advocacy opportunities, including the Greening Education Partnership,
- ➔ Established a global support group in curriculum, pedagogy and teacher education that will strengthen quality assurance during country-level implementation and facilitate learning among the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative beneficiary countries.

Learning across the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative

The Initiative's approach to monitoring and evaluation is responsive and includes adaptation and learning, incorporating feedback from country partners and other stakeholders as part of 'learning by doing' and adjusting based on need. Reflecting on initiative progress during 2024, has revealed a number of insights, which will help to inform the ongoing implementation of the initiative in 2025.

High-Level Insights:

Insight 1: Government engagement	**Insight 2: Collaboration and coordination**
Governments are highly engaged in the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative and there is growing recognition of education's role in climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability	Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative offers strategic opportunities to drive cross-sectoral collaboration and coordination between education and climate stakeholders
Insight 3: Prioritization and alignment	**Insight 4: Interest and demand**
Alignment of Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative activities with existing national priorities is an opportunity for increased impact	Interest and demand from countries not eligible to the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative, countries to learn and to scale up the work of the initiative is growing

Component-Level Insights:

1. **Evidence-based policies and planning:** Countries prioritized capacity development for climate risk analysis to support policy and planning but there is a need for further

awareness-raising of the importance of systematically including education in climate change discourse.

2. **Cross-sector and internal coordination:** Countries are exploring how to improve both internal coordination and coordination between disaster management authorities and the education sector through meetings and the establishment of coordination mechanisms and task teams.

3. **Access to climate finance:** In recognition of the importance of increasing access to climate finance, status reports have been developed in each country, and Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners have facilitated meetings and delivered "Climate Finance 101" training on this issue, which will support the development of finance roadmaps.

4. **Climate data and evidence for education planning and policies:** Countries are prioritizing capacity strengthening to map existing data sources and tools and to enhance data collection mechanisms but there is a need to strengthen broader data capacities across ministries beyond education management information systems staff to ensure climate considerations are integrated into planning.

5. **Safer and greener infrastructure:** Countries are prioritizing revision of existing construction guidelines and designing new climate-smart school buildings and there is now a high demand to look at cost-effective approaches for retrofitting and maintenance of existing facilities.

6. **School safety and educational continuity:** Countries have recognized the importance of prioritizing and tailoring school safety and educational continuity management activities to their specific context.

7. **Curricula, pedagogy and teacher training:** The Greening Curriculum Guidance document is a valuable tool to support the comprehensive integration of climate change and education for sustainable development into national curricula, teacher education and teaching and learning materials.

Key Takeaways:

- ➔ Engaging local education groups and other key partners from the outset is vital for smooth implementation of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative.
- ➔ Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners have learned to streamline the process of prioritizing activities by, for example, providing a succinct list of potential activities to ministry of education representatives early on and ensuring concise and straightforward documentation
- ➔ Workplans have been developed through extensive consultation at the country level to ensure that there is alignment with other initiatives and the potential for synergies is maximized
- ➔ Recognizing the disproportionate impacts of climate change on women and girls, Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners have drawn on in-house gender expertise and adopted a gender-responsive approach

Risk Management

Throughout 2024, Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners undertook monitoring activities at the global and local level to identify and mitigate internal and external risks. Low-level risks included difficulty in building consensus among Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partnerships, lack of local ownership and limited political will, while medium-level risks included socio-political unrest and natural hazards and degradation of the economic situation and subsequent decline in investments. Mitigation strategies included regular communication and consensus-building, co-designed and needs-based activities, advocacy and dialogue and contingency planning prioritization.

The Way Forward

Students riding bikes in Lao PDR. John Warburton Lee / Hemis.fr

Over the next 12 months, four countries are expected to complete implementation, while a further nine countries and two regions are expected to start implementation. Inception activities will be initiated in a further seven countries, who will then work with Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners to determine a timeline for the drafting of inception reports, scoping missions and workplan development.

1. Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative Overview

1.1. Introduction and Background

Extreme weather events such as cyclones, floods, and heatwaves are becoming more frequent and severe, threatening lives, infrastructure, and livelihoods while disrupting the education of nearly 40 million children annually, especially those in vulnerable groups. Education is increasingly recognized as crucial for climate action, with schools and communities playing vital roles in climate adaptation and resilience building.

EDUCATION IS INCREASINGLY RECOGNIZED AS CRUCIAL FOR CLIMATE ACTION, WITH SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES PLAYING VITAL ROLES IN CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE BUILDING.

In response, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) launched the "Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative" (CSESI) in 2023, with the overall goal **to enhance countries' capacities for mainstreaming climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability** into education sector plans, budgets and strategies, and for cross-sectoral coordination on climate and environment-related policy and programming.

Since 2023, Save the Children, UNESCO and IIEP-UNESCO (referred to as "CSESI partners") have served as the grant agents and are responsible for overseeing the initiative and providing guidance and technical support to participating countries. Beginning with support to two pilot countries—Malawi and Zimbabwe— Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative is being progressively expanded and will include up to 35 of the most climate-vulnerable countries between 2024 and 2026.

The present annual progress report provides an overview of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative's scope of work, main processes, and key results achieved under each technical component during the year 2024. Section 1 provides an overview of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative's processes and milestones. In Section 2, the report highlights the inception and implementation progress made at the country level. Section 3 presents consolidated results achieved during the reporting period according to the Global Results Framework. Section 4 presents key learning efforts and reflections across Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners and countries. Sections 5 and 6 respectively report Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative's global outreach and collaboration with other partners and key developments in risk management. The report concludes with a forecast for key activities planned for the next 12 months.

1.2. Technical Components and Objectives

To achieve the overall goal of Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative to enhance countries' capacities for mainstreaming climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability into their education systems, seven interconnected components of targeted, context-specific technical assistance have been identified and objectives have been articulated to guide activities within each component:

1. **Evidence-based policies and planning:** Strengthen evidence-based planning and policy development for climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability strategies
2. **Cross-sector and internal coordination:** Improve cross-ministerial and intra-ministerial coordination (ministries of education, climate change, disaster risk management and environmental sustainability)
3. **Access to climate finance**: Support education ministries to access climate finance to integrate climate change into the education sector
4. **Climate data and evidence for educational planning and policies**: Integrate climate change data into the management of the education sector including for the collection, harmonization, analysis and use of country-level data on climate change
5. **Safer and greener infrastructure:** Support safer, greener and more resilient education infrastructure
6. **School safety and educational continuity**: Strengthen implementation of climate-risk reduction and resilience strategies, including comprehensive approaches to school safety
7. **Curricula, pedagogy and teacher training:** Integrate climate change into curricula, pedagogy and teacher training.

Ministries of education will be responsible for determining which of these components will be prioritized in their respective contexts, based on discussions with Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners.

1.3. Approach and Process

The initiative utilizes a phased approach as follows:

- *Inception phase*: The purpose of this phase is to build a strong foundation for technical assistance, allowing project teams to understand the local context and enabling stakeholders to review existing frameworks related to climate change and education, identify challenges, opportunities, and gaps, and align with ongoing initiatives. By the end of the inception phase, stakeholders are expected to have a shared understanding of needs across the seven technical components outlined above.

- *Development of a country work plan*: Based on the inception reports and scoping mission reports, participant countries work in collaboration with Climate Smart

Education Systems Initiative partners to develop a costed work plan consisting of a set of activities in one or more of the seven technical components aimed at enhancing the capacity of the education sector to address climate change impacts and the identification of roles and responsibilities for implementation of these activities.

- *Implementation of technical support*: Following the endorsement of the work plan by the ministry of education and the local education group, technical support activities are implemented, valued at between US$400,000 and US$700,000. Note that countries are prioritized to receive this support based on high climate vulnerability. Project implementation is undertaken by country teams.

Rather than using more traditional *monitoring and evaluation* approaches, the initiative takes a more responsive approach, which includes *adaptation and learning*, incorporating feedback from ministries of education as part of 'learning by doing' and adjusting based on need.

Source: IIEP-UNESCO, based on GPE.

To build a strong foundation for contextualization, cross-initiative learning, more efficient resource allocation, and more responsive implementation strategies, Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners identified two countries for the *piloting of the initiative*: Zimbabwe and Malawi. The selection of these countries was based on their involvement in the initiative design and was approved in March 2023 by the GPE CEO. Informed by the piloting and the initiative's design process, in June 2023 the GPE board agreed to scale this support to up to 18–20 additional countries, given the increasing demand and urgency of needs from other partner countries. With this initial investment, the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners have tested the inception phase approach in both countries, which was completed in April 2024. Implementation started in April 2024 in Zimbabwe and in July 2024 in Malawi.

Key Milestones

Source: IIEP-UNESCO, based on GPE.

2. Country-Level Progress

2.1. Overview of Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative country progress

In 2024, 12 countries and two regions had initiated work on the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative. Four countries (including the two pilot countries) had started implementation, five countries and two regions had workplans under development and approval, and a further four countries had started inception activities. This information is provided in the table 2.1.

Table 2.1. Overview of country-level progress of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative during 2024

	Country /Region	Inception initiated	Workplan under development and approval	Implementation started
1	Zimbabwe			
2	Malawi			
3	Cambodia			
4	South Sudan			
5	Ethiopia			
6	Pacific SIDS			
7	Caribbean SIDS and Guyana			
8	Madagascar			
9	Bangladesh			
10	Somalia (Somaliland)			
11	Lao PDR			
12	Nepal			
13	Pakistan			
14	Somalia			
15	Mozambique			
16	Chad			
17	Cabo Verde			
18	Comoros			
19	Maldives			
20	Timor Leste			
21	Haiti			
22	São Tomé and Príncipe			

The following sections provide an overview and highlights of progress made by countries in the various phases of the process, starting with those countries that are furthest along in the process.

2.2. Implementation Progress Overview and Highlights

During 2024, four countries began implementing the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative, following the approval of their workplans:

- Zimbabwe (workplan approved: March 2024, first implementation activity: April 2024)
- Malawi (workplan approved: April 2024, first implementation activity: July 2024)
- Cambodia (workplan approved: April 2024, first implementation activity: September 2024)
- South Sudan (workplan approved: September 2024, first implementation activity: November 2024).

With the support of Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners, the four countries set out to implement comprehensive workplans, encompassing all seven technical components in an interconnected way. Across all four countries, it is clear that learning to understand and analyze risk and to subsequently develop and apply a climate risk analysis are key skills valued by national stakeholders, who feel better equipped to play a part in mainstreaming climate change adaptation and building the climate resilience of their respective education systems. These and other highlights are captured in the sections that follow.

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe's workplan overview
Workplan approval date: March 2024
Implementation initiation date: April 2024

The approved workplan encompasses a comprehensive set of activities aimed at enhancing the resilience of the education sector to climate change impacts.

Key activities:

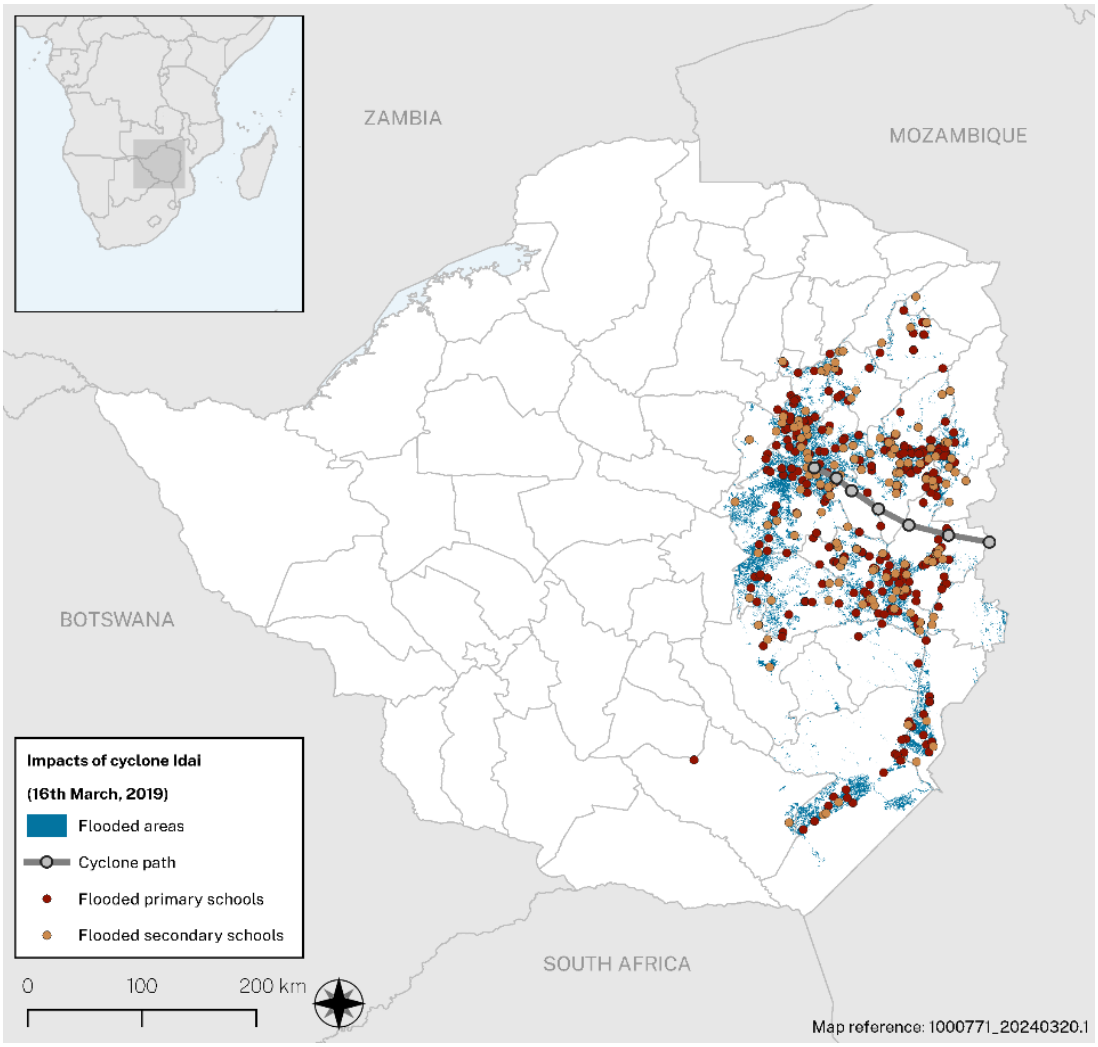
- Conducting a climate risk analysis for the education sector
- Enhancing cross-sector coordination to ensure that education is effectively integrated into climate policy and planning processes and facilitating access to climate financing
- Strengthening climate data access and collection tools
- Integrating climate considerations into school infrastructure standards
- Integrating climate change, disaster risk reduction, and education for sustainable development into curriculum review processes, as well as supporting the development of learning materials on these topics.

By December 2024, seven activities have been initiated and implemented in Zimbabwe. All activities are expected to close by March 2025.

Context

Zimbabwe's climate profile, characterized by increasing temperatures, erratic rainfall and frequent droughts, poses significant threats to the education sector. Droughts, identified as the most critical climate stressor, have devastating effects on agriculture and water availability, exacerbating economic hardships for many households. Additionally, Zimbabwe's geographical location in the tropics means that it is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, particularly when it comes to shifting rainfall patterns. The map below, which provides an overview of the primary and secondary schools that were flooded by Cyclone Idai in 2019, illustrates just how far-ranging these impacts can be on the education system, and makes a powerful case for investing in efforts to enhancing education sector resilience (see map below).

Impacts of cyclone Idai on primary and secondary schools in Zimbabwe in 2019



Source: IIEP-UNESCO calculations. Official Zimbabwe boundaries from UN SALB (2024). Official international boundaries from United Nations Geospatial Information Section (2023). UNOSAT data.
Note: The map represents the schools in 2023. The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of GPE, the UN, Save the Children, UNESCO or IIEP-UNESCO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

The implementation of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative in Zimbabwe in 2024 reflects the commitment of the Zimbabwean government to mainstreaming climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability in education sector planning. It is a significant step towards a more resilient education system and the supporting of teachers and learners with the necessary tools and knowledge to address climate change effectively. Some of the highlights from the implementation process are provided below.

Learning to Understand and Analyze Climate Risk

Early on, Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners and government representatives identified a priority need to build key stakeholder skills in the identification of climate stressors and analysis of their impacts on Zimbabwe's education system. Two capacity development workshops held in April and June 2024 brought together a diverse group of stakeholders, including educational planners and infrastructure development officers from the provincial level, as well as representatives from other ministries and key UN and Nongovernmental organization partners.

Participants of the Climate Risk Analysis workshop in Harare gather in the sunshine for a group photo. IIEP-UNESCO/Mathilde Tréguier.

In addition to working on skills development, participants evaluated existing capacities to address climate-related disruptions and developed strategies to ensure learning continuity, especially in vulnerable regions. Participants identified capacity gaps preventing access to schools, including a lack of resources for retrofitting and school infrastructure maintenance, leading to rapid deterioration and unsafe learning environments. In terms of management, they found that while there are promising initiatives such as the Disaster Risk Management and Resilience Plan for the Education

Sector 2021–2023, which aims to improve disaster preparedness and response, gaps remain in funding and implementation. Examples of these gaps include the dependency on paper-based school management records and key registers that are vulnerable to

destruction during natural disasters and the inaccessibility of schools during and after climate events that hinders continued management and inspection routines. Emphasizing cross-sectoral collaboration and peer learning, these capacity development workshops fost[illegible]d a shared vision for addressing climate challenges in education.

Testimonial from Samulo Mutale, Education Research Officer in Zimbabwe's Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, on the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative

"Participating in the climate risk analysis workshop offered me many new insights, especially around areas I hadn't encountered before," Mutale said at a workshop in Harare in October 2024. "One valuable lesson was learning to identify and analyze climate-related risks to education, helping me understand how these hazards can impact equity, access, quality, and management within the education system."

Identifying Data Needs and Fostering Evidence-Informed Decision Making

As an essential next step following the climate risk analysis skills development workshops, a series of stakeholder consultations was held in June 2024 with the objective to map of all relevant data collection tools and existing datasets that can be used to assess the impacts of climate related risks on the education sector, or to monitor strategies and measures taken by education stakeholders to address these impacts. Following the consultations, a specialized working session took place in October 2024 with key government departments involved in education and climate-related data collection and management and key UN and Nongovernmental organization partners. During the session, participants validated the key data needs that had been previously identified, explored the extent to which the data needs could be covered by existing tools, and discussed ways to improve interoperability across different data producers and coordination and data sharing across stakeholders.

Success: Putting skills into action in shaping Zimbabwe's approach to climate adaptation

The outputs from these workshops are already shaping Zimbabwe's approach to climate adaptation in education. In addition to supporting skills development for participants, the workshops resulted in a concrete output: a finalized climate risk analysis for the education sector, which was shared for government- and partner approval on 5 August 2024 and has since been officially endorsed. Elaborated in a participatory process, the risk analysis provides a holistic understanding to the country's main climate risks, their potential impact in the education system, as well as existing capacities to mitigate these impacts.

The risk analysis will serve as a critical resource for the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to understand their main capacity gaps, for example, identifying ways in which the country can enhance its education data collection tools.

Strengthening Inter-Ministerial Coordination and Including Education in Financial Pipelines

In September 2024, meetings and a cross-sectoral coordination workshop were conducted involving relevant UN agencies, representatives from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and other parts of government and other key climate change and education stakeholders to:

- Identify climate change coordination forums and potential entry points and elicit information on actionable steps that the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education could take to integrate climate change into the National Adaptation Plan (NAP), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) mechanisms and climate finance pipelines
- Ensure the inclusion of education in UNFCCC processes and NAPs through cross-sectoral coordination.

Participants engaged in group activities exploring the NAP, UNFCCC and COP processes, focusing on enhancing the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education's role in climate education coordination. They drafted lists of existing coordination forums, discussing their structure, mandate and gaps, before moving onto discussing Zimbabwe's NAP. These discussions were followed by a panel on cross-departmental exchanges to clarify roles and responsibilities in supporting the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education's efforts on climate change education coordination, UNFCCC mechanisms and climate finance pipeline.

Success: Improving cross-sectoral coordination and developing a roadmap for accessing climate finance and including education in the forthcoming Green Climate Fund strategy

The meetings and workshop concluded with a sense of achievement, as participants developed a roadmap and identified key issues and capacity gaps, proposing actionable plans to ensure the integration of education into climate change initiatives. A post-workshop survey revealed significant knowledge gains, with participant scores increasing from 75 percent to 90 percent. Following these sessions, the Permanent Secretary, focal points and the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education staff committed to initiating a climate finance roadmap in the first quarter of 2025. To support these efforts, Save the Children has prepared a summary paper on climate finance mechanisms providing guidance to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education on accessing climate finance. Bilateral meetings were held with key education and climate change financing actors in Zimbabwe in December 2024 with the purpose of refining education sector priorities and the developing a roadmap for the Ministry of Primary and Secondary

Education to access climate finance and inclusion of education in the forthcoming Green Climate Fund strategy will be developed in January 2025.

Integrating Climate-Smart Quality Standards into National School Inspection Tools

Through the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education is working on defining and contextualizing climate-smart school standards, building on the momentum of the work of the Greening Education Partnership and recent efforts to modernize school inspection processes to focus on education quality rather than compliance. As part of this activity, UNESCO and the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education co-facilitated a two-day working session in October 2024, which included participants from various government departments, UNICEF, civil society organizations and sub-central level inspectors, who met to develop a minimum list of quality standards for climate smart schools in Zimbabwe.

Known as the Green School Quality Standards, the aim of the document is to provide education stakeholders, including policymakers, school inspectors, school heads and teachers with a common framework for establishing climate-resilient schools. Once agreed upon by stakeholders, these contextualized standards will be endorsed and disseminated across schools by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. School heads and inspectors will be trained to understand, apply and promote them. For school heads and teachers these standards offer clear, actionable steps to integrate sustainability and climate action into all aspects of school daily life from management to teaching.

THE AIM IS TO EQUIP SCHOOLS WITH THE TOOLS TO FOSTER A CLIMATE-READY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT, TAILORED TO THEIR SCHOOL'S SPECIFIC CONTEXT AND RESOURCES.

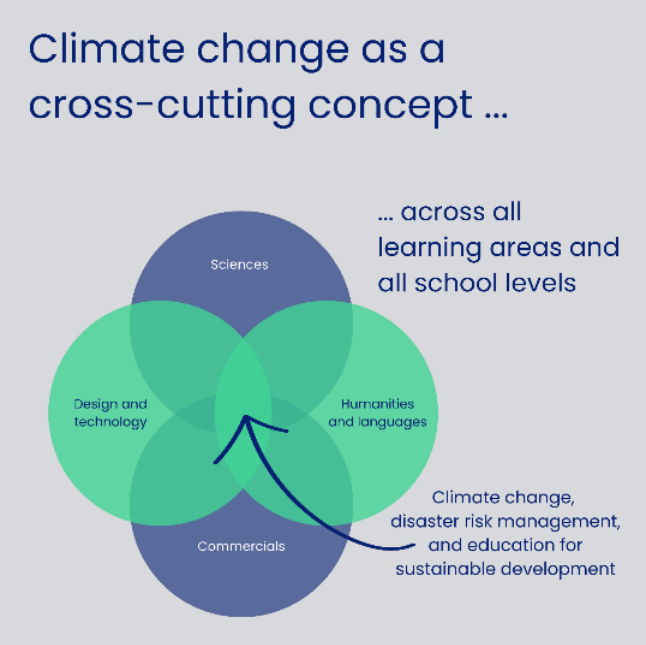
For school inspectors, the standards will be applied through the school inspection tools, with specific training to ensure they can evaluate and support schools in their transition to climate resilience. Inspectors will use the standards to assess progress, offer guidance and ensure continuous improvement.

Greening Teacher Education and the National Curriculum

In addition to introducing climate-smart standards into schools, to successfully build education system resilience and enable teachers and learners to be climate-smart citizens, attention must be paid to what content related to climate change, if any, is taught and how that content is taught. For this reason, the government and Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners identified reviewing and revising teacher education and national curricula and teaching and learning resources as priority activities.

Using UNESCO's Greening Curriculum Guidance, Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners supported a comparative analysis of the teacher education curriculum across various disciplines, including arts, humanities, practical subjects and sciences, with a focus on content, pedagogy and assessment. The analysis identified gaps and opportunities and provided actionable recommendations for greening teacher education through the integration of key climate-related topics.

UNESCO also supported the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education in revising the national curriculum during the transition to the Heritage Based Curriculum framework (2024-2030) and reviewing certain syllabi and existing school learning materials, using resources from the Greening Education Partnership. As a result, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education has integrated Climate Change, Disaster Risk Management and Education for Sustainable Development as key themes across all learning areas, as shown in the figure below.



Source: UNESCO

Following each review, UNESCO and the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education brought together stakeholders for two co-creation workshops: one on knowledge and strategies for greening teacher education in July 2024 and one on developing teaching and learning materials on climate change, disaster risk reduction, and education for sustainable development in November 2024.

In preparation, facilitators participated in two online support sessions from Unbounded Associates on *Greening strategies for curriculum planners* and *Developing learner centered materials on climate change for young learners.*

Success: Using co-creation workshops to support the greening of teacher education and learning materials

In July 2024, 70 participants, including representatives from the Ministries of Primary and Secondary Education and Higher and Tertiary Education, as well as Education for Sustainable Development, climate change and disaster risk reduction experts, and lecturers from universities and teacher colleges, came together for a co-creation workshop aimed at greening pre-service primary and secondary teacher education. Initially planned as two separate workshops for primary and secondary teacher training, they were combined to minimize costs, which also had the advantage of ensuring continuity across primary and secondary education. Through the workshops, participants were able to: (1) develop a shared understanding of the importance of greening aspects (climate change, Education for Sustainable Development and Disaster Risk Reduction) in teacher education, (2) exchange conceptual, pedagogical and curricular strategies for strengthening these aspects in alignment with the new Heritage-Based Education framework, and (3) initiate the process of integrating greening elements into the teacher education curriculum.

In November 2024, 40 participants, including teachers, curriculum specialists and teacher educators, came together to co-create teaching and learning materials to support the integration of greening aspects into the classroom. Based on draft materials shared with them prior to the workshop, participants used the session to develop activity books for early childhood development A (4–5-year-olds), early childhood development B (6-year-olds), Grades 1 and 2, and Grades 3–7. The drafts developed by participants were in turn shared with international consultants for feedback.

Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners will support a pilot test in selected schools during February and March 2025 to evaluate the effectiveness and usability of the draft teaching and learning materials developed during the co-creation workshop. The goal is to collect feedback from both learners and teachers during the pilot to refine the materials, to ensure they align with the Heritage-Based Curriculum and to troubleshoot any issues that may arise before full implementation.

Additionally, an evaluation of climate change, disaster risk reduction and education for sustainable development integration in teacher education will take place by March 2025. Due to budget constraints, this will be done online, with additional support through webinars for teacher education institutions. The evaluation will provide insights into best practices, areas for improvement and strategies to enhance the achievement of goals, guiding decision-making and promoting accountability.

Malawi

Malawi's workplan overview

Workplan approval date: April 2024

Implementation initiation date: July 2024

The approved workplan outlines a set of activities aimed at enhancing the capacity of the education sector to address climate change impacts.

Key activities:

- Conducting a climate risk analysis for the education sector
- Developing a consolidated climate strategy for the education sector and integrating education into the National Adaptation Plan
- Focusing on climate data for planning
- Integrating climate risks into school infrastructure policies
- Developing standard operating procedures for school safety and continuity
- Facilitating access to climate finance and enhancing cross-sector coordination, and
- Assisting the Ministry of Education in integrating climate change into key teaching frameworks, standards and curricula.

By December 2024, seven out of thirteen activities have been initiated and implemented in Malawi. All activities are expected to close by late 2025.

Context

Malawi experiences a wide range of climate hazards, including floods, droughts, cold spells, heatwaves, strong winds and thunderstorms, which can have devastating impacts on the country's education system. In recent years, the government has expressed concern over the recurrence of floods and droughts, which have a disproportionate effect on poor, rural communities as they lead to increased food insecurity, incidences of disease and pollution, among other problems. As a result, the Malawian government has launched a number of strategies and initiatives to combat climate change and build resilience across many sectors, including in education. The implementation of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative in Malawi in 2024 marks a significant step towards the mainstreaming of climate change adaptation and building a more resilient education system that benefits learners and their communities. Some of the highlights from the implementation process during the past year are provided below.

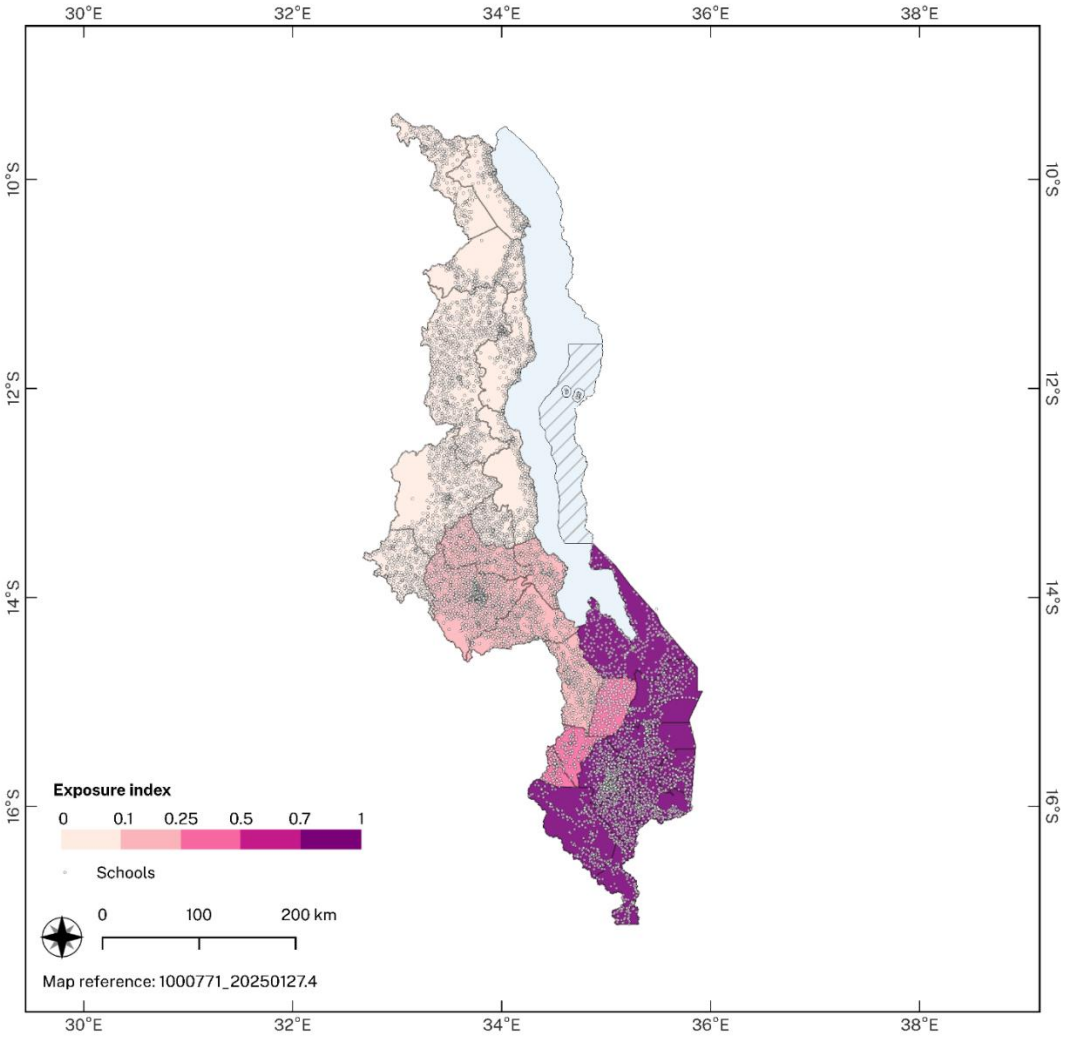
In recognition of the need for a comprehensive but nuanced climate risk analysis to inform education planning, government representatives and Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners identified capacity development in this area as a priority activity. Consequently, two capacity development workshops were held in July and October 2024, bringing together a diverse group of stakeholders, including representatives from the Ministry of Education, the Department of Disaster Management Affairs and partner representatives from the local education group and the education cluster, including relevant UN agencies and Nongovernmental organizations.

Success: Strengthening capacities for undertaking climate risk analysis

Through these workshops, participants strengthened their capacities to identify climate stressors and evaluate their impacts on the Malawian education system. They also worked together to identify and assess existing capacities for addressing climate-related disruptions in the country. The rich outputs consolidated from these workshops are being used to draft a climate risk analysis for the education sector, which is currently under development. Once completed, the analysis will be used to guide evidence-informed decisions to address the impacts of climate change, in particular helping plan for climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability. The results of the risk analysis will also inform other activities that will be implemented as part of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative , such as the inclusion of education in the country's forthcoming National Adaptation Plan (NAP) and the development of a consolidated climate change strategy for the education sector, among others.

While the development of the climate risk analysis was ongoing at the time of writing, preliminary findings provided insight into the most affected regions and districts, and how extreme weather events affect children's education in Malawi. The analysis highlights the various ways in which climate change hinders access, quality and management of education, and emphasizes that climate change will further exacerbate existing inequities in the country. To better understand the exposure of different regions in Malawi to the main hazards over the past five years, a composite exposure index was created to measure exposure to droughts, extreme temperatures and floods through consultation with the Ministry of Education and the Department of Disaster Management Affairs. The map below presents the results of the exposure index, showing that districts in the southern region are among the most exposed to these events.

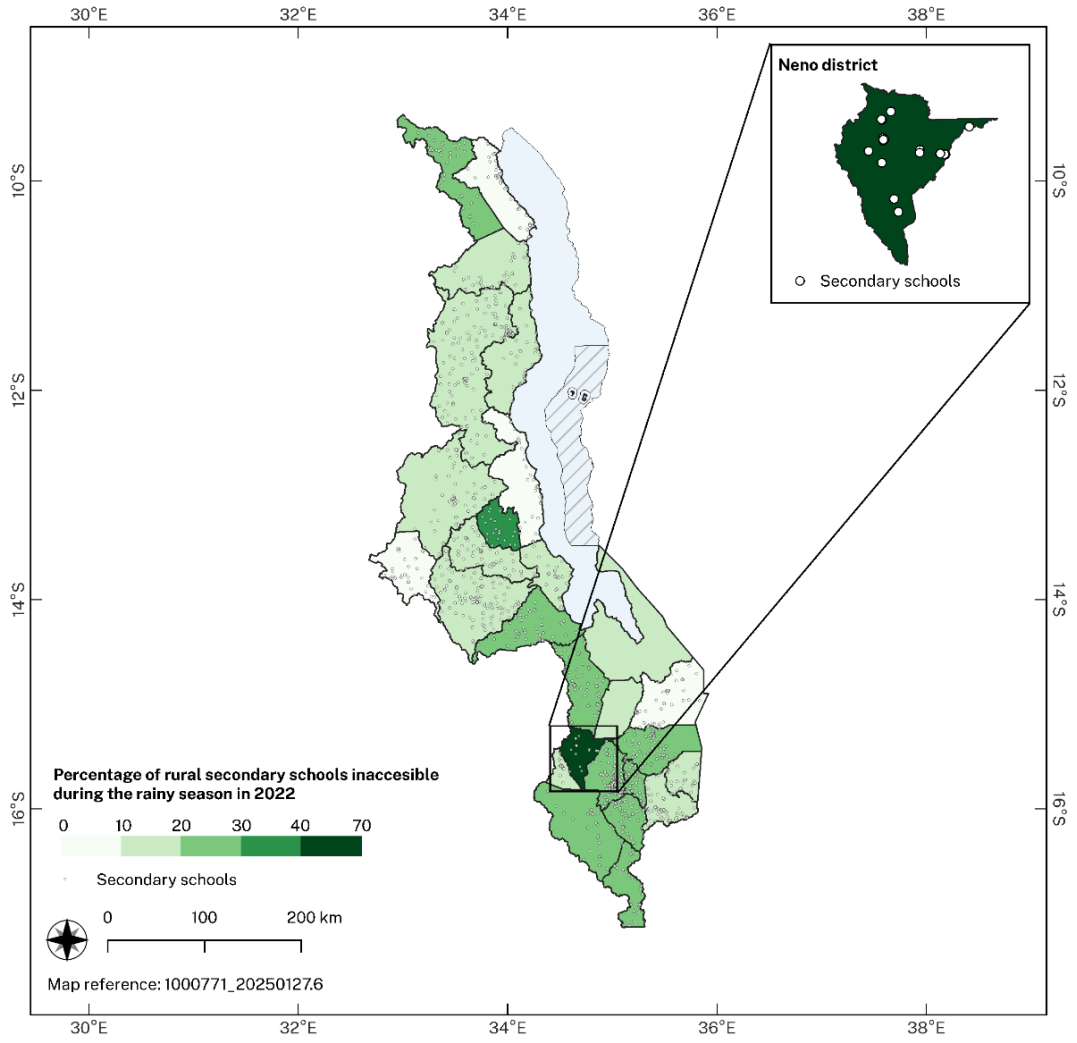
Exposure index, hazards by district in Malawi, 2017–2022



Source: IIEP's calculations. Official Malawi boundaries from UN SALB (2024). Official international boundaries from United Nations Geospatial Information Section (2023), SPEI and ERA 5 data, EMIS DATA.
Note: The exposure index ranges from 0 to 1, with 1 indicating that a district is highly exposed to these events. The map represents the schools in 2024.
Disclaimer: The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the UN, UNESCO or IIEP concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

The preliminary analysis also highlights that flooding damages roads and infrastructure, hindering access to schools. For example, with 80% of secondary schools located in rural areas, the 2022 rainy season rendered 19% of secondary schools inaccessible. In Neno district alone, 70% of rural secondary schools became unreachable, making it extremely difficult for students to attend school (See map below).

Proportion of rural secondary schools inaccessible during the 2022 rainy season by district in Malawi



Source: IIEP's calculations. Official Malawi boundaries from UN SALB (2024). Official international boundaries from United Nations Geospatial Information Section (2023), EMIS DATA.
Note: The map represents the rural secondary schools in 2024.
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The risk analysis also takes a closer look at the extent to which extreme weather events impact education through, for example, increased dropout rates. It reflects that climate change affects the quality of education in numerous ways, including by damaging and destroying teaching and learning materials and causing school closures, which hamper education continuity. The analysis highlights that climate change poses challenges for the effective management of the education system, straining available resources and disrupting school administration. It also reflects the significant impacts of climate change on equity, with particularly severe consequences for vulnerable groups such as girls, children with disabilities and orphans. As extreme weather events are becoming

increasingly common in Malawi, the analysis underscores the importance of implementing climate change adaptation measures in the education sector.

Integrating Climate Change into Education Sector Coordination Mechanisms

With the purpose of strengthening coordination across different line ministries, Save the Children Malawi and directors from the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Natural Resources and Climate Change came together for a series of meetings to determine a detailed implementation plan for activities related to coordination, school safety, infrastructure and climate financing. This included developing detailed terms of references for each activity under these components in the workplan that are to be signed off by the Ministry of Education, and who will also be on the committee to select consultants for some of the activities. Meeting participants also discussed the NAP process and how to include education.

Strengthening Climate Change Integration in Curriculum and Pedagogy

In the context of curriculum and teacher training support, including the activities related to the integration of the Greening Curriculum Guidance into the national curriculum in Malawi, as well as the development of guidelines for teacher training institutions, two national curriculum and teacher experts have been hired, and will be joined by an international curriculum expert (expected to start in January 2025). With backstopping from an international advisory team and based on the Greening Curriculum Guidance and other global reference materials, these experts are undertaking a comprehensive review of the curriculum and the development of learning materials and a desk-based comparative analysis of the existing curriculum framework against the learning outcomes, with a focus on content, pedagogy and assessment.

The first in-person working session to review the curriculum, select priority learning outcomes to be integrated through the project and identify gaps and opportunities, including on the development of necessary learning materials, is scheduled for early March 2025. Documentation of existing and potential classroom activities in key carrier subjects (e.g., science, technology, agriculture, art, language) and extracurricular activities (e.g., tree planting, essay competition, field trip) will be addressed. Two additional working sessions will follow: the first to validate the updated curricula and model school developed, and the second to train staff at Teacher Training Colleges.

Cambodia

Cambodia's workplan overview

Workplan approval date: April 2024

Implementation initiation date: September 2024

The approved workplan includes a wide range of activities designed to bolster the education sector's resilience to the effects of climate change.

Key activities:

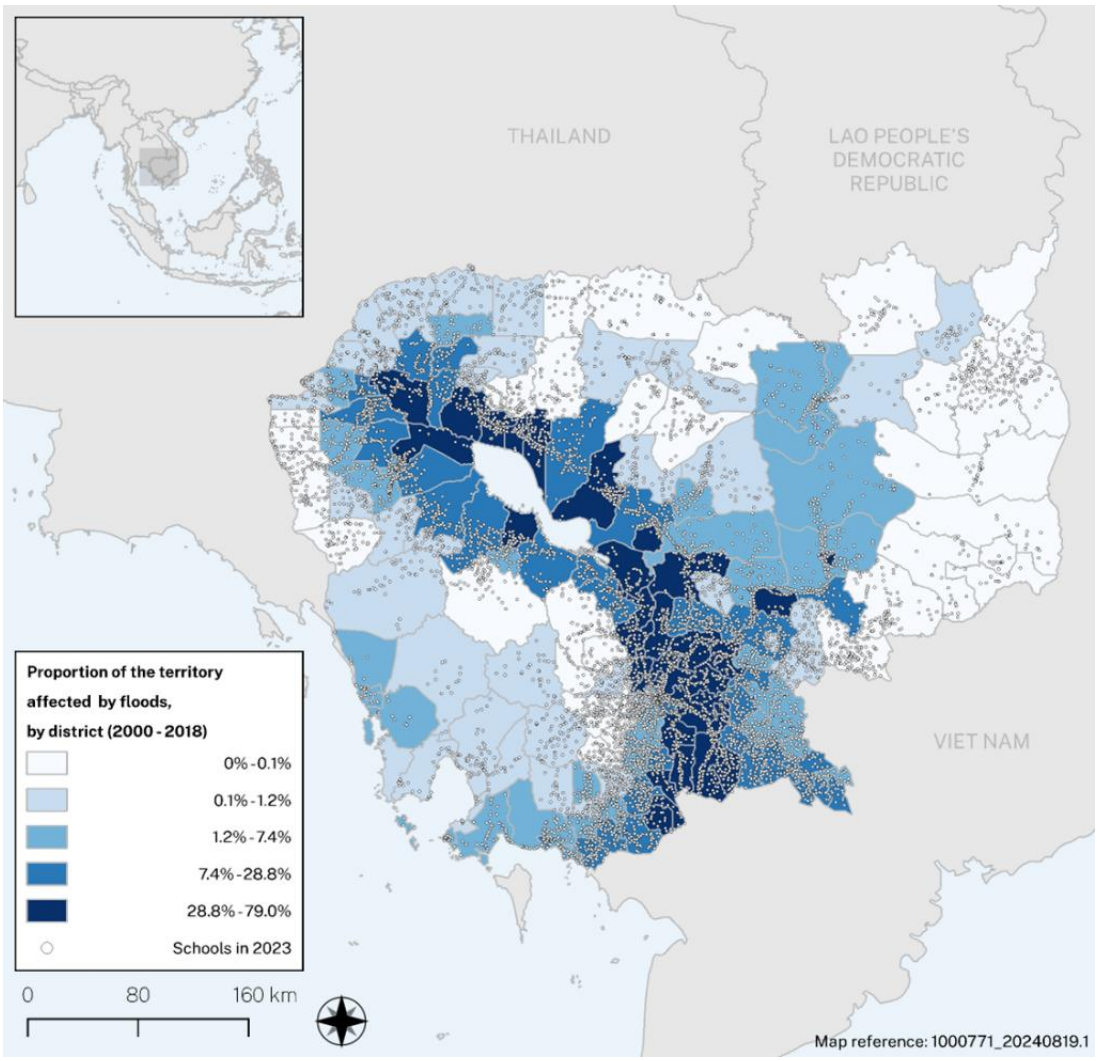
- Conducting a climate risk analysis for the education sector
- Developing an operational plan for climate change adaptation in the education sector
- Strengthening the capacities of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport to track the impact of climate change on education at the school level and to use and analyze climate data for education decision making
- Reviewing and improving inter-ministerial and inter-agency coordination and reviewing and identifying eligible climate finance mechanisms
- Consolidating disaster risk management resources into a standard framework and guidelines for schools and building stakeholder awareness and capacity for implementation
- Integrating climate change and sustainable development into curricula and teacher training, with priorities identified and training resources developed.

By December 2024, two activities have been initiated and implemented in Cambodia. All activities are expected to close by September 2025.

Context

Cambodia is increasingly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, with a rise in the frequency and severity of climate hazards and disasters in recent years, including droughts and floods. The map below, which provides an overview of the proportion of the country's territory affected by floods between 2000 and 2018 and the location of schools, is a powerful reminder of the vulnerability of schools to hazards and disasters and underscores the urgency of investing in building resilience in the education sector.

Proportion of Cambodia's territory affected by floods, by district (2000 - 2018) and school locations



Source: IIEP-UNESCO calculations. Official Cambodia boundaries from UN SALB (2024). Official international boundaries from United Nations Geospatial Information Section (2023). UNOSAT data.
Note: The map represents the schools in 2023. The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of GPE, the UN, Save the Children, UNESCO or IIEP-UNESCO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries

In 2024, Cambodia took significant strides toward protecting its education sector against the impacts of climate change as it began implementing the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative . With support from IIEP-UNESCO, the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports began developing a comprehensive climate risk and vulnerability analysis, as a crucial first step in implementation. This evidence-informed analysis aims to facilitate critical planning processes, including climate change adaptation, environmental sustainability strategies, and resilience-building in schools. Some of the highlights from the implementation process in 2024 are provided below.

Strengthening Capacities for Climate Risk Analysis at National and Subnational Levels

In recognition of the urgent need to strengthen capacities for understanding and analyzing climate risks to the education system at both national and subnational level, two capacity development workshops were held in September and November 2024, bringing together a diverse group of stakeholders, including 31 representatives from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports at both national and provincial levels. Seven planning officers from Cambodia's most climate-vulnerable provinces participated, alongside representatives from the Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology.

Through these workshops, participants honed their skills in identifying climate stressors and evaluating their impacts on the Cambodian education system. Participants also assessed existing capacities in addressing climate-related disruptions and explored strategies to ensure learning continuity, particularly in vulnerable regions, such as adjusting school calendars to avoid extreme heat periods and providing access to remote learning during floods. Cross-sectoral collaboration and peer learning were key features, creating a shared vision for tackling climate challenges in education.

Testimonial from H.E. Dr Lim Sothea, the Director General for Policy and Planning of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport in Cambodia, on the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative

"The Climate Smart Education System Initiative provides valuable knowledge and tools to assess climate risks and develop strategies to protect schools from extreme weather events. This includes improving school buildings to make them more resilient to climate impacts and ensuring that schools can continue functioning during weather disruptions."

Success: Using the climate risk analysis to support inclusion of education measures into national development plans

The outputs from these capacity development workshops are already shaping Cambodia's approach to climate adaptation in education. The climate risk analysis, currently under development, will serve as a critical resource for the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, guiding efforts to include education measures in the country's forthcoming Nationally Determined Contributions and the forthcoming education sector operational plan for climate change adaptation which will be developed through the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative.

Participants at a capacity development workshop hone their climate risk analysis skills in Cambodia. IIEP-UNESCO/Yi Shi.

Fostering Evidence-Informed Decision Making

A specialized training session in September 2024 further enhanced the ability of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports to integrate climate and disaster risk reduction related data for educational planning. Eighteen officials from key departments, including policy planning and Education Management Information Systems, learned to process and analyze climate-related vulnerabilities using tools the National Council for Sustainable Development's Vulnerability Index and data from the Annual School Census Survey.

Testimonial from a training session participant from the Education Management Information Systems Department

"The training equipped us with tools to create meaningful visualizations and indicators. This will help us present data in a way that informs real action."

As a direct result of the training, participants contributed valuable insights to the ongoing climate risk analysis, creating a robust foundation for planning and policy-making that prioritizes sustainability and resilience.

South Sudan

South Sudan's workplan overview

Workplan approval date: September 2024

Implementation initiation date: November 2024

The approved workplan includes activities aiming to strengthen the education sector's resilience to climate change in various ways.

Key activities:

- Developing a climate risk analysis covering 10 states and three administrative areas
- Enhancing the data collection tools of the Ministry of General Education and Instruction to track and analyze climate data
- Administering a survey to understand current knowledge, attitudes and practices, and supporting the Ministry to prepare a national contingency plan for the education sector
- Improving cross-sectoral and internal coordination, and understanding climate finance mechanisms and donor opportunities
- Revising infrastructure standards for climate considerations and elaborating guidelines for a model green school
- Integrating climate change into curricula and teacher training materials.

By December 2024, six activities have been initiated and implemented in South Sudan. All activities are expected to close by the end of 2025.

Context

In addition to ongoing political and economic instability, South Sudan is vulnerable to a number of worsening climate hazards and disasters, including heatwaves, droughts and floods, which put lives and livelihoods at risk, particularly among the poorest and most vulnerable communities. As a result, South Sudan's education system faces a number of challenges, including shortages of teachers, particularly trained teachers, high rates of out-of-school children and levels of internal displacement, and limited education infrastructure. By initiating implementation of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative in late 2024, the government has made a significant commitment to mainstreaming climate change adaptation in the education sector and to building resilience in and through education. While implementation activities have only recently started, some highlights are provided below, along with the rationale for planned activities.

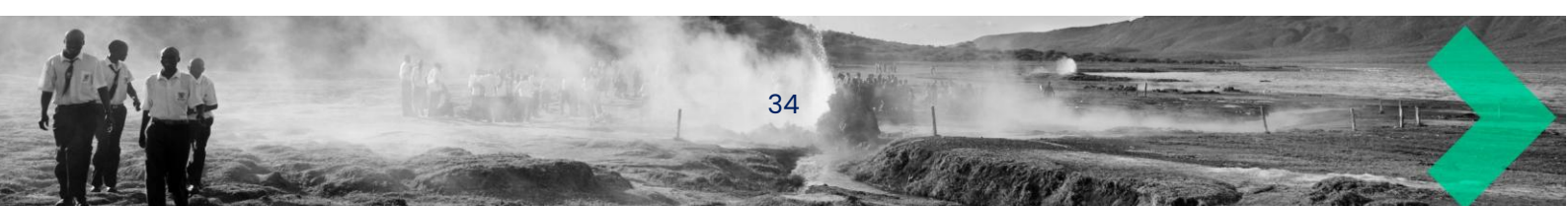
Developing State-Level Climate Risk Analyses to Support Evidence-Based Policy and Planning

In order to effectively plan for climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability, the Ministry of General Education and Instruction prioritized the development of state-level climate risk analyzes for the education sector. These analyzes will guide evidence-informed decisions to address the impacts of climate change. A core dimension of the risk analyzes consists of analyzing climate and educational data, including the annual school census questionnaire, as well as learning assessment data. This analysis will help the Ministry of General Education and Instruction to better identify the most at-risk schools in each of the states, as well as to have a better understanding of the impact of extreme weather events on education.

To support the implementation of this activity, Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners intend to use the Ministry of General Education and Instruction's raw Education Management Information Systems data, including the location of schools over the past five years, along with learning assessment data. This analysis will help identify correlations between climate change and education system performance, contributing to the development of a comprehensive risk analysis.

Enhancing Cross-Sector Coordination through Task Force Reinvigoration

During the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative scoping mission in South Sudan, a lack of both internal coordination within the Ministry of General Education and Instruction and cross-sectoral coordination with other government departments were identified as challenges to implementing climate-smart education initiatives. To tackle this, the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative has reinvigorated a task force that was established through the GPE flood response and Education Cannot Wait Multi-Year Resilience Program (ECW-MYRP), involving representatives from different departments across the Ministry of General Education and Instruction. Through the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative, this task force acts as a space to plan and execute the implementation of all the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative activities, build ownership of different government departments on the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative, and acts as a space to coordinate with other programs, such as Building the Climate Resilience of Children and Communities through the Education Sector (BRACE). The task force has met twice since the start of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative (29th November and 10th December 2024). In Quarter 1 of 2025, Save the Children will explore with the opportunities to invite representatives from other line ministries, including the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management and the Ministry of Environment and Forestry to strengthen cross-sectoral coordination.



Key stakeholders gather to form the Green School Committee in South Sudan. Save the Children South Sudan/Ojara George.

Exploring Strategies to Build Partnerships and Secure Climate Finance

To enable South Sudan to explore strategies to secure climate finance for building resilience in its education sector, Save the Children has prepared a climate finance report, which examines the global landscape of climate finance, highlighting its purpose, distinctiveness from development or humanitarian finance and the limited allocation towards education. Despite the availability of significant global climate funding, Africa receives a small share, with education often overlooked. The report recommends building partnerships with accredited entities, leveraging existing frameworks such as South Sudan's National Adaptation Plans, and enhancing the climate rationale for education. Key actions include targeting Green Climate Fund, seeking bilateral support, and aligning with multilateral strategies to address climate change while improving education resilience. Save the Children will present this report to the Ministry of General Education and Instruction climate change task force in January 2025, which will help to better position the ministry for upcoming climate funding opportunities.

Using Contingency Planning to Improve School Safety and Educational Continuity Management

The education sector in South Sudan is regularly disrupted by climate-related emergencies. There are, however, minimal contingency plans and guidance in place to ensure education continuity faced by schools and education officials. Through the GPE-funded flood response and ECW-MYRP, supported by the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative, a contingency plan for the education sector was produced in late 2024. The Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative is now working with the Ministry of General Education and Instruction climate change task force on how to take forward this contingency plan and disseminate the detailed information from the plan, in easy-to-use formats for use by education officials at national, sub-national and local levels.

Integrating Climate Change into Curricula, Pedagogy and Teacher Training

As part of the work prioritized by the Ministry of General Education and Instruction, UNESCO will lead activities to integrate climate change into curricula, pedagogy and teacher training in South Sudan. These activities will involve conducting a review of subject-level curricula and sampled non-formal programs for early childhood, primary and secondary education, focusing on climate and environmental topics and related learning outcomes. Based on this review, a set of priority topics and learning outcomes from the Greening Curriculum Guidance will be identified, taking into account local knowledge and learning assessments, as well as learning materials that are adaptable for formal, non-formal and informal education contexts. Additionally, a training manual for teachers and educators will be developed based on the identified priority topics and learning outcomes. Both activities will involve piloting and testing some of the materials, gathering feedback from teachers, learners and facilitators, and revising them as necessary.

Testimonial: Ojara George, Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation Specialist from the Save the Children International South Sudan Country Office

"The Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative is one of the most meaningful initiatives I've ever worked on. Having lived through the devastating effects of climate change—such as floods destroying schools and homes—I feel deeply committed to this work. Those experiences drive my passion to ensure the Initiative's success and its far-reaching benefits for South Sudan's children.

"What makes the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative unique is its potential to build climate resilience, for example, through reviewing and strengthening sustainable school infrastructure standards and the Green Schools Guidelines, developed with the Ministry of General Education and Instruction. I was inspired when the Ministry's Director General shared that the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative could shield South Sudan's education system from climate change, reaffirming the importance of our efforts."

2.3. Workplan Development Progress Overview and Highlights

The table below provides an overview of workplan status for all Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative countries since the start of the initiative.

Table 2.2. Workplan approval and rating

	Country/ Region	Workplan approval date	Expected implementation closing date	Workplan performance rating (December 2024)[a]
1	Zimbabwe	March 2024	March 2025	Highly satisfactory
2	Malawi	April 2024	July 2025	Highly satisfactory
3	Cambodia	April 2024	September 2025	Highly satisfactory
4	South Sudan	September 2024	September 2025	Highly Satisfactory
5	Ethiopia	Expected in Jan 2025	TBD	
6	Pacific SIDS	Expected in Q1 2025	TBD	
7	Caribbean SIDS and Guyana	Expected in Q1 2025	TBD	
8	Madagascar	Expected in Q1 2025	TBD	
9	Bangladesh	Expected in Q1 2025	TBD	
10	Somalia (Somaliland)	Expected in Q1 2025	TBD	
11	Lao PDR	Expected in Q1 2025	TBD	
12	Nepal	Expected in Q2 2025	TBD	
13	Pakistan	Expected in Q2 2025	TBD	
14	Somalia	Expected in Q2 2025	TBD	
15	Mozambique			
16	Chad			
17	Cabo Verde			
18	Comoros			
19	Maldives			
20	Timor Leste			
21	Haiti			
22	São Tomé and Príncipe			

Note: In alignment with the CSESI Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework, the Partnership Framework, and GPE's policies and guidelines, the following guidance is referred to assess the workplan performance rating:

a. Highly satisfactory: **all** major outputs are expected to be fulfilled/exceeded efficiently.
b. Satisfactory: **minor** shortcomings/delays exist, and **almost all** major outputs are expected to be fulfilled efficiently. If the workplan has been recently approved, and no activities have taken place (according to plan), then use "Satisfactory" as well.
c. Moderately satisfactory: **moderate** shortcoming/delays exist, but **most** of the major outputs are expected to be fulfilled efficiently.
d. Moderately unsatisfactory: **moderate** shortcoming/delays jeopardize achievement, but a resolution is **likely**.
e. Unsatisfactory: **significant** shortcoming/delays jeopardize achievement, and a resolution is **uncertain**.
f. Highly unsatisfactory: **major** shortcoming/delays jeopardize achievement, and a resolution is **unlikely**.

As can be seen in the table, as of the end of 2024, all countries with an approved workplan have a performance rating of "highly satisfactory", indicating all major outputs are expected to be fulfilled efficiently.

Ethiopia and Madagascar are currently finalizing their workplans and their progress is summarized below.

Ethiopia

At the time of writing, the workplan for Ethiopia is under finalization in collaboration with the government, considering the activities prioritized during the scoping mission. The Ministry of Education of Ethiopia has placed a high priority on the *safer and greener infrastructure and school safety* component, together with evidence-based policies and plans, data and information, curriculum and teaching, as well as on coordination. Upon final approval of the workplan, Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners will develop a timeline for implementation in consultation with relevant sections of the Ministry.

Madagascar

At the time of writing, the costed workplan is under prioritization with the government, considering the activities identified during the scoping mission. Key proposed activities encompass conducting a climate risk analysis for the education sector, covering each region of the country, and developing a roadmap to strengthen the integration and use of climate data in educational planning processes. Additionally, the plan involves reviewing various coordination structures at both central and decentralized levels to improve intersectoral and internal collaboration. To facilitate access to climate financing, the workplan includes mapping donors involved in climate change adaptation and mitigation and developing a roadmap to integrate the education sector into the Nationally Determined Contribution 3. Efforts will also focus on mapping local safe and green initiatives in school construction and rehabilitation, aiming to establish recommendations for safe and green standards. Furthermore, the plan includes updating existing training tools for preparedness and anticipatory action in education during emergencies as well as delivering training to central and regional stakeholders within the Ministry of Education. Lastly, the plan aims to carry out a comprehensive diagnostic of curricula to identify gaps and opportunities to integrate climate change, disaster risk reduction and education for sustainable development into the curriculum, complemented by training for curriculum designers.

2.4. Inception Progress Overview and Highlights

Table 2.3 below indicates the progress that has been made with the three key activities of the inception phase during the current reporting period (highlighted in blue) according to country and/or region.

As part of the inception process, and in order to ensure complementarity with ongoing initiatives at country level, there is a significant amount of stakeholder consultation that takes place during the inception phase. Ministries of education, including representatives from planning, infrastructure, data and curricula departments to name a few, are systematically consulted. Additionally, discussions take place with members of countries' Education Sector Working Groups as well as with civil society organizations. Given the cross-sectoral nature of this work, ministries of environment and disaster management authorities are also involved in the inception process at country level.

Table 2.3. Progress of inception phase work by country/region

	Country	Introductory calls with ministries of education and local offices	Inception report drafted	Scoping mission implemented
1	Zimbabwe	X	X	X
2	Malawi	X	X	X
3	South Sudan	X	X	X
4	Cambodia	X	X	X
5	Ethiopia	X	X	X
6	Bangladesh	X	X	X
7	Pakistan	X	X	
8	Caribbean SIDS and Guyana	X	X	N/A
9	Pacific SIDS	X	X	X
10	Madagascar	X	X	X
11	Nepal	X	X	
12	Lao PDR	X	X	X
13	Somalia	X	X	
14	Somalia (Somaliland)	X	X	
15	Mozambique	X	X	
16	Chad			
17	Cabo Verde			
18	Comoros			
19	Maldives			
20	Timor Leste			
21	Haiti			
22	São Tomé and Príncipe			

As shown in the table, during the current reporting period, in six countries and one region (the Pacific) all inception activities were completed (in addition to the pilot countries). The Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners did not conduct a mission in Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Guyana but instead disseminated a survey and conducted a series of country-specific consultations in order to ascertain needs and develop a workplan for the region (see below for additional information). A further five countries have held introductory calls and drafted inception reports. Some highlights from the inception phase in different countries and regions are provided below.

To ensure that the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative effectively addresses the unique challenges faced by different regions, Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners have developed regional and federal approaches tailored to the specific contexts of the Caribbean, the Pacific and Pakistan. These approaches allow for a comprehensive understanding of localized needs, enabling targeted interventions that align with regional priorities and existing initiatives.

Caribbean and Guyana

Using a Regional Inception Survey to Support Workplan Development in Caribbean and Guyana

For the four eligible Small Island Developing States which are part of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and Guyana, Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners have worked on the development of an inception survey structured around the four following overarching domains, which are based on the seven technical components outlined above: 1) Evidence-based policies and planning, coordination, financing and data management, 2) Infrastructure, 3) School safety and education continuity and 4) Curricula, pedagogy and teacher training. The objective of this survey is to identify key priorities and emerging needs in order to inform the development of a regional workplan for Guyana, Saint Lucia, Grenada, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the Commonwealth of Dominica. The survey was disseminated to ministries of education, ministries of environment and relevant national disaster agencies at country level as well as to key regional partners from the OECS Regional Education Group. Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners also conducted follow-up interviews and focus group discussions to probe for additional information not shared in the inception tool and to explore themes emanating from the inception tool to inform the development of the workplan, which was under progress at time of writing and expected to be validated by ministries of education and GPE in early January 2025. The box below summarizes the content of the draft workplan.

Caribbean and Guyana's draft workplans

The draft workplan is built around four key workstreams, which map onto the key areas explored in the inception survey and aims to support efforts aim to integrate climate resilience into education systems and ensure sustainability.

1. Under **evidence-based policies and planning, coordination, financing and data management**, countries will be supported to identify existing data and gaps in the climate data ecosystem and will have the opportunity to use climate data for educational planning as they develop risk analyzes and climate adaptation plans. Regional workshops to discuss methodology and frameworks will be followed by tailored in-country support to ensure the application of methodologies and approaches for planning for climate adaptation. Coordination among stakeholders will be strengthened by promoting peer learning and documenting best practices, shared through webinars to foster collaboration. Furthermore, ministries will be supported in accessing climate finance through resources such as proposal templates, case studies and webinars, with remote guidance for proposal development.

2. The **infrastructure** workstream focuses on integrating climate resilience and environmental sustainability into school construction and maintenance practices. Online training will disseminate best practices and align efforts with regional frameworks. Additionally, a helpdesk and peer network supported by regional architects and engineers will provide technical guidance to ministries in updating infrastructure standards.

3. For **school safety and educational continuity**, the proposal prioritizes emergency preparedness and response. Tailored training sessions will equip stakeholders with essential coordination and information management skills, while workshops and follow-up support will ensure practical application in managing emergencies.

4. Lastly, the **curricula, pedagogy and teacher training** component aims to embed Education for Sustainable Development, climate change education and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) into teaching frameworks. Activities include auditing existing curricula, delivering capacity-building programs, and co-creating gender-responsive and locally relevant teaching resources. These efforts will align education systems with climate resilience goals while addressing diverse local needs.

Pacific

Identifying Needs in the Pacific through Priority Setting and Reviewing Updated Risk Analyzes

The Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative in the Pacific also benefited from alignment with ongoing work on regional disaster risk reduction efforts. The Pacific Coalition for the Advancement of School Safety (PCASS) organized a regional priority setting workshop in July 2024, where the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners collaborated with PCASS to integrate the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative efforts in the region to enable complementarity with the wider agenda. This workshop brought together key stakeholders, experts, practitioners and policy makers to collectively assess the status of school safety and climate change adaptation in the education sector in the Pacific region. Participants discussed and identified priority needs in addressing climate resilience in education systems, shared best practices, strengthened partnerships and developed actionable strategies. These efforts aimed to promote climate resilience, safeguard access to quality education and ensure the well-being of Pacific children and youth in the face of evolving hazards and risks.

The outputs of this workshop, combined with the findings of the pre-workshop survey that was disseminated and completed by ministry of education representatives from 11 Pacific Island Countries prior to the Pacific regional stakeholders' consultation workshop, were crucial to inform the development of the Pacific SIDS workplan.

Upon reviewing the outputs of the workshop, the stakeholders prioritized the following components/activities:

- Access to climate finance
- Curricula, pedagogy and teacher training
- Partnerships and coordination
- Safe, green school infrastructure
- Policies, plans and data/information management for school safety and climate resilience
- School safety and education continuity.

Emphasis has been placed on creating regional capacity building and coordination mechanisms to strengthen these key areas, leveraging existing national and regional partners and the current Regional Education Framework and its implementation partners. The workplan for the Pacific SIDS is currently being reviewed.

Additionally, the Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector (GADRRRES) is working to update national Disaster and Climate Change Education

Sector Risk Analyses in 2024 and early 2025, including in the Pacific. These updated analyzes will inform upcoming Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative activities.

Pakistan

Taking a Federal Approach to Identify Needs in Pakistan

In Pakistan, given the federal nature of the State and the fact that the Constitution declares education as a provincial subject, the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners have developed a federal approach for the inception phase in the four provinces of Pakistan (Sindh, Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan). More specifically, the inception phase relies on a review of the existing Pakistan federal and provincial education policies, sector plans and frameworks and best practices related to climate resilience, focusing on initiatives that have successfully integrated climate change topics into educational systems. This review will be complemented by stakeholder consultations at both federal and provincial levels. Based on this information, Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners developed four inception reports for each province and one overall report including four chapters focusing on the specific issues for each of the four provinces. The validation mission, planned for the first quarter of 2025, will bring together key provincial stakeholders at federal level in Islamabad to discuss and validate the findings and to define priority areas of work. Subsequently, a workplan and budget for a federal program for the four provinces will be developed. This approach will enable Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners and the provincial governments to co-design activities that address the specific needs and tackle the distinct climate context of each of the four provinces. Working in this manner will allow the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners to capitalize on synergies and foster joint implementation across provinces, as relevant, to allow for economies of scale and learning at federal level.

3. Results Achieved in Relation to the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative Global Results Framework

To lay a solid foundation for the monitoring and evaluation work of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative, the initiative partners developed a monitoring, evaluation and learning strategy at both global and country levels. The strategy puts forward a global results framework describing tools and approaches for monitoring progress towards 30 global output indicators across seven key outcome indicators. Section 3 summarizes progress made against each of the seven global outcomes during this reporting period.

At the country level, a customized results framework adapted from the global results framework is developed and included in the country's workplan. The country-level results frameworks serve as the basis for annual reporting and are aggregated into the global results framework. The next section elaborates the progress made at the country level through the inception and implementation phases.

By December 2024, Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners had achieved progress on six of the seven key global outcomes and 14 global output indicators. The following sections provide a summary of progress made in each global outcome during this reporting period.

Global Outcome 1: Evidence-Based Policies and Planning Addressing Climate Change Impacts

In 2024, Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners conducted capacity development workshops to develop a climate risk analysis for the education sector in **Zimbabwe**, **Malawi** and **Cambodia**, making progress towards achieving global output indicators 1.1 and 1.5. In Zimbabwe, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education finalized a climate risk and vulnerability analysis for the education sector, which is now pending approval. Malawi's Ministry of Education and Cambodia's Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport are currently developing similar analyzes and expected to complete in 2025. The findings will respectively inform the development of Malawi's forthcoming Climate Change Strategy for the Education Sector and Cambodia's operational plan for climate change adaptation in the education sector. These efforts highlight the engagement of ministries of education in integrating climate considerations into sectoral analyzes while also building the capacity of their staff to create evidence-based policies and plans for climate change adaptation and sustainability.

Outcome 1: Evidence-based policies and planning addressing climate change impacts			
Key outcome indicator	*Global output indicators*	*Baseline (2023)*	*2024*
1. # of ministries of education having strengthened evidence-based planning and policy development for climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability strategies	1.1 # of ministries of education that developed a specific chapter of their education sector analysis on the impact of climate change OR that conducted specific climate risk assessments for the education sector to inform climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability measures in and through education	0	3
	1.2 # of ministries of education with education sector policy or planning documents that include climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability measures	0	N/A
	1.3 # of ministries of education with budgets containing costed activities for climate adaptation and environmental sustainability in the Education Sector Plan or in the climate change strategy for the Education Sector	0	N/A
	1.4 # of ministries of education with M&E frameworks containing specific indicators and targets for climate adaptation and environmental sustainability	0	N/A
	1.5 # of ministries of education staff who acquired capacity to develop evidence-based policies and plans for climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability	0	3

Global Outcome 2: Cross-Sector and Internal Coordination of Climate Change Impacts on Education

In 2024, Save the Children supported the ministries of education in **South Sudan** and **Zimbabwe** to establish internal and cross-sectoral coordination mechanisms and working groups. In Zimbabwe, in September 2024, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education was supported to prepare terms of reference to establish a cross-sectoral coordination mechanism. In South Sudan, the Ministry of General Education and Instruction established a climate change task force. The focus of this task force was initially on the Ministry of General Education and Instruction, but in January 2025, the membership will be expanded to include other line ministries. These activities align with the global output indicators 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3.

Outcome 2: Cross-sector and internal coordination of climate change impacts on education			
Key outcome indicator	*Global output indicators*	*Baseline (2023)*	*2024*
2. # of ministries of education having improved cross-sector and internal coordination of climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability in the education sector	2.1 # of ministries of education that put in place organizational structures for internal and cross-sectoral coordination on climate change	0	2
	2.2 # of ministries of education that have demonstrated improved cross-sectoral coordination and collaboration for climate-related policy and programming (e.g., through intersectoral working groups)	0	2
	2.3 # of ministries of education that demonstrate improved internal coordination and collaboration for climate-related policy and programming	0	2
	2.4 # of ministries of education that successfully advocate for the inclusion of education sector-specific considerations in climate change adaptation and mitigation plans at national and subnational levels	0	0

Global Outcome 3: Access to Climate Financing to Address the Impacts of Climate Change on Education

In 2024, Save the Children prepared climate finance background papers for **Zimbabwe**, **Malawi** and **South Sudan**. These climate finance reports outline the status of each country's current climate finance commitments, their access to global climate funds, as well as a mapping of main climate change and education donors. These climate finance reports form the basis of the preparation of climate finance roadmaps for each country. In **Zimbabwe**, in December 2024, Save the Children conducted additional face-to-face bilateral meetings with climate change and education donors to identify opportunities to inform the preparation of the climate finance roadmap. These activities contribute to achieving the global output indicator 3.1. Also in **Zimbabwe,** Save the Children delivered a face-to-face training for The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education on climate change, including United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) mechanisms, National Adaptation Plans and Nationally Determined Contributions. This contributes to global output indicator 3.4.

Outcome 3: Access to climate financing to address the impacts of climate change on education			
Key outcome indicator	*Global output indicators*	*Baseline (2023)*	*2024*
3. # of ministries of education having improved capacity to access funding for climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability	3.1. # of ministries of education that have developed a climate finance roadmap that identifies funding sources and includes strategies to access them	0	0
	3.2 # of ministries of education that develop climate-smart education proposals for climate financing sources	0	0
	3.3 # of ministries of education that have successfully advocated for the inclusion of climate-smart education in national climate focused financing strategies and proposals	0	0
	3.4 # of ministries of education staff who have built the capacity to identify funding sources and develop proposals for climate financing.	0	24

Global Outcome 4: Climate Data and Evidence for Education Planning

In 2024, Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners conducted capacity development workshops in **Zimbabwe** to map all relevant data collection tools and existing datasets that can be used to assess the impacts of climate-related risks on the education sector, or to monitor strategies and measures taken by education stakeholders to address these impacts, making progress towards achieving global output indicators 4.1 and 4.2.

Additionally, in **Zimbabwe**, **Malawi** and **Cambodia**, capacity development workshops took place as part of the drafting of a climate risk analysis. Participants of the workshops acquired capacity to jointly analyze educational information with historical and projected climate data to develop maps that identify schools located in risk-prone areas and inform policy and planning for the education sector, making progress towards achieving global output indicator 4.5.

Outcome 4: Climate data and evidence for education planning			
Key outcome indicator	*Global output indicators*	*Baseline (2023)*	*2024*
4. # of ministries of education having more	4.1 # of ministries of education that have conducted a mapping of climate-related data needs for the education sector and identified gaps	0	1

resilient and climate-sensitive national data & information systems for policy and planning purposes	4.2 # of ministries of education that have revised and harmonized tools for collecting, accessing and sharing data on climate change and disasters to better inform educational policy planning	0	1
	4.3 # of ministries of education that have used disaster and climate change-related data, including maps, for analytical reports and educational planning	0	3
	4.4 # of ministries of education that include questions related to school-based climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability measures in their annual school census and/or related Education Management Information Systems tools	0	N/A
	4.5 # of ministries of education staff who acquired capacity to jointly analyze educational information with historical and projected climate data to develop maps that identify schools located in risk-prone areas and inform policy and planning	0	3

Global Outcome 5: Safer and Greener School and Educational Facilities Infrastructure

The country work plans for **Malawi, Zimbabwe and South Sudan** have all prioritized work around safer and greener school infrastructure. Save the Children is currently working with each country to prepare terms of reference for this work, aligned with other partners who are engaged in this work at country level, including the World Bank. Save the Children is also exploring the potential for a dedicated partnership to support cross-country learning and establishing good practices for safer and greener school infrastructure.

Outcome 5: Safer and greener school and educational facilities infrastructure			
Key outcome indicator	*Global output indicators*	*Baseline (2023)*	*2024*
5. # of ministries of education having successfully implemented climate resilient plans and strategies to strengthen safer and greener infrastructure	5.1 # of ministries of education that conduct a climate-sensitive infrastructure assessment exploring opportunities to reduce safety risks, environmental impact and carbon emissions	0	0
	5.2 # of ministries of education that review or update school infrastructure standards to include reduce climate-sensitive safety risks, environmental impact and carbon emissions	0	0
	5.3 # of ministries of education that have developed policies and plans for building, retrofitting, and operation and maintenance of safer and greener school facilities	0	0

Global Outcome 6: School Safety, Anticipatory Action and Educational Continuity Management for Climate Change Impacts

In **South Sudan**, a contingency plan was developed in late 2024 to provide guidance for schools and education officials who regularly face climate-related emergencies. The Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative is working with the Ministry of General Education and Instruction climate change task force to disseminate the detailed information from the plan, in easy-to-use formats for education officials at national, subnational and local levels.

Outcome 6: School safety, anticipatory action and educational continuity management for climate change impacts			
Key outcome indicator	*Global output indicators*	*Baseline (2023)*	*2024*
6. # of ministries of education that have successfully strengthened school safety, anticipatory action and educational continuity management for climate change impacts	6.1 # of ministries of education that have developed participatory school safety and educational continuity plans/framework and guidance, including establishing risk assessment, risk reduction, anticipatory action and response-preparedness protocols (at national, subnational, school levels)	0	1
	6.2 # of ministries of education that develop education plans and policies to ensure education continuity in case of climate-induced disruption, to safeguard learning and reduce dropout	0	0
	6.3 # of ministries of education that develop plans to disseminate guidance on education stakeholder roles and responsibilities for school safety and anticipatory action and educational continuity management for climate change impacts	0	0
	6.4 # of ministries of education staff who acquire capacity to strengthen school safety, anticipatory action and educational continuity management for climate change impacts	0	0

Global Outcome 7: Integration of Climate Change into Curricula, Pedagogy and Teacher Training

An international team of consultants and experts in curriculum and resource development has been hired to support country interventions under outcome 7. The team has developed training and mentoring tools, as well as presentations, and has collaborated with national teams in **Zimbabwe, Malawi and Cambodia**. Progress has been particularly strong in Zimbabwe, where a comprehensive analysis of teacher education curricula was

conducted, followed by a co-creation workshop advocating for the greening of teacher education. The Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative provided support for the revision of the national curriculum, ensuring that

Climate Change Education and Education for Sustainable Development have been integrated into the 2024-2030 Heritage-Based Curriculum framework. Additionally, new learning materials were developed, and curriculum reviews are underway in Malawi and Cambodia.

Outcome 7: Integration of climate change into curricula, pedagogy and teacher training			
Key outcome indicator	*Global output indicators*	*Baseline (2023)*	*2024*
7. # of ministries of education having integrated and implemented climate change into formal curricula, pedagogy and teacher training as well as non-formal learning opportunities.	7.1 # of ministries of education that have included Education for Sustainable Development, climate change education and Disaster Risk Reduction in the curriculum frameworks, subject syllabi, teaching resources and learning assessments and extra-curricular resources at early childhood care and development, primary and secondary levels and in TVET and non-formal education	0	1
	7.2 # of ministries of education that have included education for sustainable development, social and emotional learning, climate change education and disaster risk reduction in their teacher development policy, teacher training curricula and programs	0	1
	7.3 # of ministries of education that have assessed the institutional capacity regarding teacher training and para-teachers/community volunteers	0	0
	7.4 # of ministries of education staff who acquired capacity to mainstream climate change into curricula, pedagogy and teacher training and school community mobilization	0	2
	7.5 # of ministries of education that have developed and provided non-formal learning activities to support teaching and learning	0	0

4.Global Communication and Outreach

In 2024, Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners have collaborated to develop **a joint communications plan** aimed at fostering a unified and collaborative approach to communications. The overarching goal of this plan is to raise awareness and encourage broader engagement in the intersection of climate change and education. By clearly defining the purpose of Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative's communications, the plan highlights the initiative's added value and unique voice in this space.

There has been overwhelming interest in the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative by education and climate change focused organizations, networks and donors. Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners continue to actively **share the experiences** of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative and **forge strategic partnerships** in various global, regional and national arenas.

For instance, upon the kick-off of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative work in Zimbabwe, Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners **published articles** describing Zimbabwe's experience of developing the country's first climate risk analysis on the websites of GPE and IIEP-UNESCO, as well as via local media outlets. UNESCO also highlighted the work the country is doing to strengthen its green curriculum, teacher training and schools. The articles contribute to a growing body of knowledge on climate-resilient educational planning worldwide and ensure that Zimbabwe's evidence-informed approach serves as an example for other countries facing similar climate challenges.

Internationally, Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners have been showcasing the progress of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative through various **global advocacy opportunities** including events organized in the context of the Greening Education Partnership. For example, UNESCO leadership highlighted the experiences of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative at the Education World Forum in May 2024, and a GPE representative was invited to share the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative best practices during the greening education session at the post-UN Transforming Education Summit global stock take meeting in June 2024. Additionally, global and national Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners presented the initiative at prominent forums, such as the Schools2030 Forum, London Climate Week, a GADRRRES-organized school safety webinar, the Education Cannot Wait Civil Society Organization working group, the Global Response to Education and Environment Network's (GREEN) quarterly call, and through engagements with organizations such as the National Adaptation Plan Global Network, the NDC partnership and the Green Climate Fund.

In the area of curriculum, pedagogy and teacher development, a **global support group** has been established, composed of curriculum and climate change education experts. This group aims to strengthen quality assurance in the country-level implementation of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative, based on the newly published Greening Curriculum Guidance and Quality School Standards produced by the Greening Education Partnership after an intensive series of consultations and piloting in different countries which are not currently part of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative. The support group will also facilitate learning among the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative beneficiary countries, systematically documenting good practices and lessons learned, which will be made available publicly. In each Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative beneficiary country, an onboarding briefing session is systematically organized together with national experts (Zimbabwe as the first of the series in July 2024), followed by mentoring and advice during the implementation period. Knowledge sharing opportunities will also be arranged among beneficiary countries with the assistance of the global support group.

Capacity building webinar on climate-smart education systems

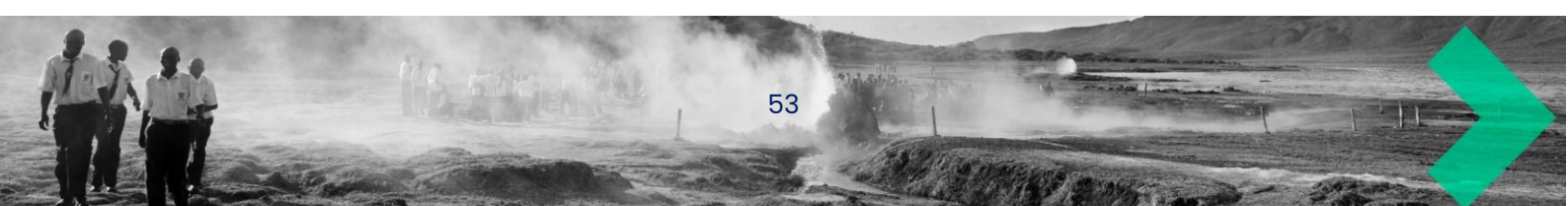
On 7 November 2024, the Greening Education Partnership organized the first in a series of capacity building webinars titled "Climate-Smart Education Systems: A Holistic Approach to Greening Education." Over 750 participants from the 96 Member States and 1,600+ Greening Education Partnership member organizations joined, including technical ministry staff, members of the Permanent Delegation to UNESCO, development partners, and stakeholder organizations.

The objectives of the webinar were:

1. To raise awareness about the climate-smart education systems initiative.
2. To demonstrate how the seven-dimension framework can break down silos by emphasizing complementarity.
3. To highlight the key role of multistakeholder collaboration at country and global levels.
4. To provide practical examples of the initiative in action in Zimbabwe.

Highlights:

- ➔ Zimbabwe's Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education presented the methodology and results of the climate risk and capacity analysis developed as part of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative.
- ➔ Participants learned about Zimbabwe's efforts to improve interministerial coordination on issues relating to climate change through meetings and workshops, which led to a roadmap to improve cooperation on climate change adaptation between the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and other sectors.
- ➔ Zimbabwe's Education Ministry also shared progress with greening the curriculum and teacher training by working with partners to conduct comprehensive reviews of existing materials and participating in co-creation activities to strengthen greening.



Advocacy for the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative and education in NDCs and NAPs during 29th United Nations Climate Change Conference

At the 29th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP29), participants adopted the Baku Guiding Principles on Human Development for Climate Resilience, a set of core principles reflecting the strategic direction and aspiration for human development in the context of climate resilience. In a historic first, education was included as part of the official COP presidency program, and, indeed, the Baku Guiding Principles included two principles on climate education as well as a call for Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) to include education. In addition, a Joint Statement on the Baku Initiative on Human Development for Climate Resilience made reference to the Declaration on the Common Agenda for Education and Climate Change adopted at the 28th United Nations Climate Change Conference and called for countries to integrate climate change education into broader education and climate policies and financing and to make a commitment to strengthening dialogue at the intersection between climate policy and human development.

On Human Development Day, 18 November 2024, the COP29 Presidency hosted a high-level meeting to take a holistic view of how climate change impacts human development, which was followed by a series of focused roundtables. During this event, a UNESCO representative highlighted the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative as an example of how countries can be strategically supported to integrate climate change into their education systems. There was representation from GPE at various events, including the Ministerial Roundtable on Greening Education co-organized by UNESCO and the OECD, which served as the 2nd Annual Meeting of the Greening Education Partnership. UNESCO highlighted the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative work in various other side events, including:

1. A session on climate change-resilient education systems in the most vulnerable nations, co-organized by the Global Education Monitoring Report, the Islamic Development Bank, and Education Cannot Wait.
2. Reach Out To All (ROTA) International Dialogue on the Future of Climate Change Education, co-organized by the Education Above All Foundation on behalf of the State of Qatar and the Kingdom of Morocco, in collaboration with UNESCO and UNDP.
3. An informal Meeting of the UN Alliance on Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) as one of the key activities that UN agencies and other partners are implementing as part of the ACE agenda.
4. A side event organized by the COP29 Presidency Youth Champion and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
5. A side event on Greening Education Partnership Targets with Quality: Critical Enablers, organized by Foundation for Environmental Education, Office for Climate Education and Centre for Environment Education CEE India, which reflected on the progress of the Greening Education Partnership.

5. Learning across the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative

The Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative has made significant strides in fostering climate resilience and sustainability in education systems across participating countries. As the initiative progresses, reflecting on the lessons learned is vital to understanding its impact and identifying opportunities for enhancement. This section provides an overview of high-level insights gained, examines learning and findings specific to each of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative's seven components, and shares reflections on the approaches and adaptations undertaken by the partners.

5.1. High-Level Insights

Insight 1: Government engagement

GOVERNMENTS ARE HIGHLY ENGAGED IN THE CLIMATE SMART EDUCATION SYSTEMS INITIATIVE AND THERE IS GROWING RECOGNITION OF EDUCATION'S ROLE IN CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY.

The investment of ministry of education and ministry of environment representatives (alongside other key ministries such as the Ministry of Public Works and the National Disaster Management Offices equivalents) in the engagement at the project inception phase and during implementation of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative activities has been encouraging. Participating countries are highlighting the relevance and timeliness of the project and its importance for addressing climate change through a comprehensive approach. Governments have shown strong enthusiasm for the implementation of the activities, nominating focal points from within technical departments either for the initiative as a whole or for the different areas of work.

Testimonial from H.E. Dr Lim Sothea, Director General for Policy and Planning of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport in Cambodia, on the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative

"Assistance from the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative is essential for creating a more resilient education system in Cambodia. It helps ensure that students can continue learning, even when climate-related disruptions occur and equips them with the knowledge and skills needed to build a more sustainable future."

Additionally, the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative 's focus on capacity development has been highly valued, with government authorities nominating relevant participants from both national and subnational levels to engage in various Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative activities. This has greatly facilitated the co-design and co-

drafting with national technical teams of the tools and documents that have been produced during implementation.

In Zimbabwe, for example, there is a growing recognition of the link between climate change and education. The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education has affirmed its commitment to the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative, expressing a strong interest in gaining a comprehensive overview of the impacts of climate change on the education sector. More specifically, education officers at provincial levels have demonstrated high commitment towards the topic and have very constructively contributed to the discussions during the two climate risk analysis workshops organized in Harare. They have also provided extremely valuable inputs to the development of the climate risk analysis for the education sector, drawing on their knowledge of the situation at grassroots level. This highlights the importance of continuing to ensure the participation of education officials at the provincial level in upcoming activities, including workshops, training, and working sessions.

Insight 2: Collaboration and Coordination

THE CLIMATE SMART EDUCATION SYSTEMS INITIATIVE OFFERS STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES TO DRIVE CROSS-SECTORAL COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION BETWEEN EDUCATION AND CLIMATE STAKEHOLDERS.

From the outset, the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative has designed scoping missions and stakeholder consultations to include diverse representatives from ministries of education and environment, disaster management authorities, ministers of public works, development partners and civil society organizations. This inclusive approach provides a collaborative space for stakeholders to exchange concerns and ensures that a wide range of perspectives and expertise are incorporated into the planning of activities.

A diverse group of key stakeholders meets for a workshop to strengthen coordination in South Sudan. Save the Children South Sudan/Ojara George.

Testimonial from Ojara George, Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation Specialist from the Save the Children International South Sudan Country Office

"Collaboration is at the heart of this project. With our partnership with UNESCO, and IIEP-UNESCO, as well as active engagement from government ministries and civil society organizations, we are creating real momentum for change. To my colleagues leading similar initiatives, I say: be proud of your work. We are laying the foundation for a brighter, more resilient future."

During the implementation phase participants in workshops, meetings, trainings, and working sessions from all countries emphasized the value of bringing together stakeholders who rarely have the opportunity to collaborate. In Cambodia, for instance, province-level participants noted that the risk analysis workshop marked their first face-to-face meeting with officials from the Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology. These interactions are crucial for effective information exchange across different sectors and different levels of government; while ministry of education officials gain insights into early warning systems, crisis and risk management experts learn how to better tailor their tools to meet the specific needs of the education sector.

Insight 3: Prioritization and Alignment

ALIGNMENT OF CLIMATE SMART EDUCATION SYSTEMS INITIATIVE ACTIVITIES WITH EXISTING NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND INITIATIVES IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR INCREASED IMPACT.

Since the launch of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative, partners have endeavored to align the initiative with existing national programs. In Zimbabwe, Malawi, Cambodia and South Sudan where the implementation of the initiative is underway, numerous climate-related projects have taken important steps forward already. While some national projects are still evolving in scope and sustainability, they provide valuable opportunities for scale up and improvement as more long-term funding and support become available and as coordination mechanisms become more structured. The Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative capitalizes on these experiences by building on and integrating successful practices into its capacity development approach to institutionalize climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability in the education sector for long-term impact.

For instance, in Zimbabwe, through the Greening Education Partnership, the Green School Quality Standard has been piloted in the country, and, in parallel, the country's school inspection tools have recently been revised and updated. Building on these two efforts, Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative's activity on defining quality standards for climate-smart schools further contextualizes the standards to the local education reality. Furthermore, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education aims to revise inspection

tools to measure climate-smart school standards, contributing to Zimbabwe's goal of improving school resilience to climate change impacts.

In South Sudan, the country's most recent Education Sector Plan (ESP) included provisions for the establishment of a technical working group on climate change and education in emergencies. Through the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative, this ambition has become a reality, and work on other Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative activities will also contribute to the implementation of the country's ESP.

Insight 4: Interest and Demand

INTEREST AND DEMAND FROM NON- CLIMATE SMART EDUCATION SYSTEMS INITIATIVE COUNTRIES TO LEARN AND TO SCALE UP THE WORK OF THE INITIATIVE IS GROWING.

As more countries and stakeholders are made aware of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative, there has been a noticeable increase in interest and requests from non-eligible countries to learn from the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative experience. For example, in the area of curriculum, pedagogy and teacher training, countries are keen to understand the process of integrating climate change education into education systems. The latest global standard defined by the Greening Curriculum Guidance and Green School Quality Standard has been of particular interest, given that curriculum reform and other major windows of opportunity in a country may not be readily available. Many stakeholders have also expressed interest in accessing learning materials for curriculum developers and policy makers, teacher training, and classroom activities developed through the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative so that they can gain inspiration to adapt to their country's needs. On accessing climate finance, the local education group in Sudan and local education group members in Tanzania have been reaching out to the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative team to gain more of an understating of how they can support their ministry of education partners to explore accessing climate finance.

This observation not only informs the implementation but also raises important points for consideration for the communication activities of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative, to ensure the achievements and the outputs of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative are shared with the global community of practice. It would also be valuable to spotlight the achievements of Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative countries through the global monitoring of progress on climate change education. For example, as the COP30 in November 2025 is expected to take stock of the global progress on the four pillars of the Greening Education Partnership, Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners can ensure that Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative countries that have integrated Greening Curriculum Guidance and Green School Quality

Standard are duly highlighted, to respond to the growing interest from non-eligible countries.

5.2. Component-Level Insights

In addition to high-level insights that underscore the overarching successes and challenges of CSESI, each component of the initiative offers unique insights into its specific area of focus. Interestingly, activities within each of the seven areas of work have been systematically prioritized by countries, pointing towards the needs and relevance of each of the areas.

These component-specific lessons learned highlight both the complexities and opportunities inherent in integrating climate change adaptation and sustainability into education systems. The following sections delve into these learnings, offering actionable insights and examples from the field.

COMPONENT 1: EVIDENCE-BASED POLICIES AND PLANNING

The challenge: Across most countries where the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative work has started, there is a limited evidence base for the impacts of climate change on the education system, and limited inclusion of the education sector within climate change and disaster risk reduction policies and strategies. Similarly, the integration of climate change considerations into education sector plans is inconsistent, reflecting a lack of alignment between these critical policy domains.

The response: Recognizing these gaps, ministries of education in eight countries to date have prioritized capacity development for a climate risk analysis for the education sector at national level. However, to date, only two countries have highlighted the importance of developing education sector strategies for climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability, and the inclusion of education in forthcoming National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), indicating the need for further awareness-raising and the importance systematically including the education sector into the broader climate change discourse. As countries are updating their NDCs in 2025, there is a huge opportunity for ministries of education to actively engage in the process and advocate for the inclusion of education as a critical component of national climate strategies. Such engagement can ensure that the education sector not only builds resilience against climate impacts but also contributes meaningfully to mitigation and adaptation efforts.

COMPONENT 2: CROSS-SECTOR AND INTERNAL COORDINATION

The challenge: Cross-sectoral coordination between ministries of education and line ministries responsible for climate change and disaster risk management has been

identified as a gap during many of the scoping missions completed to date. As a result, the education sector does not typically feature in climate change plans and policies,

including NAPs and NDCs, and when it does, the focus is often narrowly on the curriculum rather than broader components of climate-resilient education. Education sector stakeholders are also often excluded from climate change coordination committees at national and subnational level and ministries responsible for climate change are often not aware of or engaging in initiatives led by the education sector.

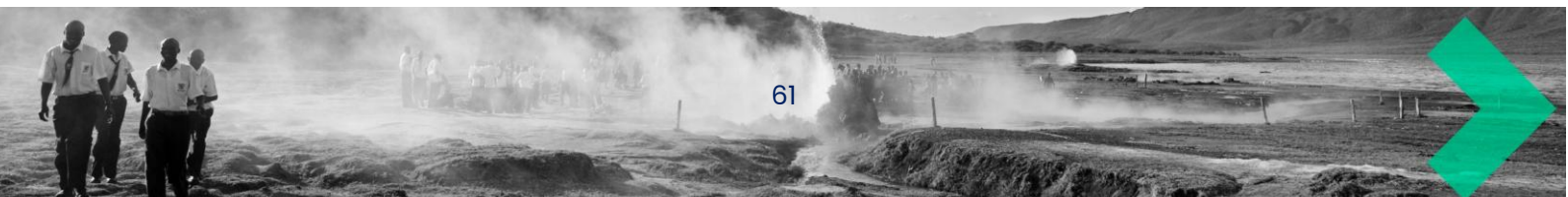
The response: Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative countries have started to explore how to improve coordination between disaster management authorities and the education sector to enhance school safety management and school capacity to respond to disasters. In Zimbabwe, training on United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) processes brought together diverse government departments and resulted in terms of reference for a cross-sectoral coordination committee, prepared by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, focused on climate change and the education sector. Ministries of education are also exploring how to strengthen internal coordination on climate change, disaster risk reduction and school safety. For example, in South Sudan, Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative will support the Ministry of General Education and Instruction to prepare terms of reference for a focal point to

COMPONENT 3: ACCESS TO CLIMATE FINANCE

coordinate climate change initiatives across different departments within the Ministry.

The challenge: During the scoping missions, ministries of education reported that they are not aware of 1) what climate finance is in practice, 2) the various climate finance mechanisms that exist, and 3) the opportunities for the education sector and how they should engage. For these reasons, the education sector has not been accessing climate finance, with only 0.03 percent of climate finance going to the education sector. In a promising development, across all Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative countries there has been significant interest among ministries of education in exploring how to access climate finance. However, climate finance is a very new topic for many ministries of education, so it is a steep learning curve both for them and their local education group partners.

The response: To address these gaps, implementation of climate finance activities in the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative focus countries has started with an initial desk-based review of the status of climate finance and potential opportunities in each country. This has then been followed up with bilateral meetings with government departments, donors and other partners to understand their priorities and any opportunities for the education sector to access climate finance. Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners have also focused on raising awareness on what climate finance is through "Climate Finance 101" training and will collaborate with ministries to



develop climate finance roadmaps to support the education sector access climate finance. Many of the foundational inputs under this pillar are now being repurposed, built upon, and contextualized for use in other countries, capitalizing on the economies of scale of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative being a multicounty initiative.

COMPONENT 4: CLIMATE DATA AND EVIDENCE FOR EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND POLICIES

The challenge: Using climate change and disaster risk reduction data for educational planning remains a significant capacity gap across many ministries of education. While there is growing availability of climate- and disaster-related data, the potential to merge these data with the education data for climate-resilient educational planning remains largely untapped. Only one country among those engaged in the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative has already included specific questions related to climate change data in its Education Management Information Systems tools. This highlights the need for a systematic approach to incorporating climate data into education sector planning and monitoring systems.

The response: Recognizing these challenges, four countries have expressed the need for capacity strengthening to map existing data sources and tools and to enhance data collection mechanisms within ministries of education. Furthermore, three countries have requested specialized training and tailored capacity-building initiatives to enable effective use of climate and educational data, including geospatial data, for planning purposes. Beyond Education Management Information Systems staff, there is also a pressing need to strengthen broader data capacities across ministries of education to ensure that climate considerations are integrated into educational decision-making and policy development. Addressing these gaps will unlock the potential for evidence-based, climate-resilient educational planning and management.

COMPONENT 5: SAFER AND GREENER INFRASTRUCTURE

The challenge: No countries that have been supported to date have specifically looked at the impacts of climate change on school infrastructure, but all countries are keen to understand these impacts in the future. Whilst there are good examples of the integration of 'safety' in school design for hazards such as earthquakes (shaking) and cyclones (high wind loads), gaps remain when it comes to mitigating the impact of extreme heat. This is key as extreme heat is anticipated to be widespread based on climate models in most Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative countries and there is significant evidence highlighting the negative impact heat has on teaching and learning.

To compound this challenge, this component necessarily involves a number of different stakeholders and government departments outside of education who are engaged in the construction and maintenance of school buildings. Furthermore, in Climate Smart

Education Systems Initiative countries a significant amount of school construction is funded through development assistance and is delivered through project-based approaches of varying scales and integration in the network of key partes making it fragmented and not always effectively coordinated.

The response: The priorities identified by the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative countries to date have focused on revising existing construction guidelines, designing new school buildings to consider climate change and the environment and the costing of potential design modification. Indeed, there is high demand for looking at cost-effective approaches for retrofitting and maintenance of existing school facilities. The scoping missions also highlighted the importance of looking at the whole school environment beyond infrastructure – including the school grounds, boundaries, and ensuring safety and accessibility for girls, boys and children with disabilities, which links to discussions around school safety management and educational continuity outlined below.

There has been significant interest in this component, including opportunities for collaboration with other partners in addition to governments who are engaged in school construction at scale, including the World Bank. This presents a significant opportunity for any guidelines reviewed and updated by the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative to be implemented by other partners. Once a few countries have reviewed their school design, the Initiative's team will be able to start to develop generic guidance based on live test cases on design reviews to aid the process of review in future countries to leverage the economies of scale of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative.

COMPONENT 6: SCHOOL SAFETY AND EDUCATIONAL CONTINUITY

The challenge: While a number of Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative countries have experience implementing the Pillar 2 of the Comprehensive School Safety Framework on school safety management and educational continuity, including through the undertaking of participatory school-level risk analysis and preparing school safety plans, change at scale has proved elusive, especially when it comes to guiding frameworks or tools that are owned by the ministries of education and rolled out through their regular school leadership and management policies and practice.

The response: The school safety and educational continuity management activities selected by Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative countries in Cambodia, Malawi and South Sudan are specific to the priorities in their context. For instance, in Cambodia, a guiding framework for implementation by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport that brings together different, related approaches has been prioritized. In Malawi, standard operating procedures climate-related emergencies, and guidelines for minimizing the use of school as temporary shelters are under development with the Ministry of Education. In South Sudan, the first contingency plan for the education sector will be rolled out to education officials and schools at subnational level. The Comprehensive School Safety

Framework pillar 2 guidelines prepared by the Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector, the Global Education Cluster guidelines for preparedness and anticipatory action, and the Greening Education Partnership green school guidelines will inform implementation of this component to ensure a comprehensive approach.

COMPONENT 7: CURRICULA, PEDAGOGY AND TEACHER TRAINING

The challenge: While planned or ongoing curriculum revisions present a valuable opportunity to integrate climate change education through the embedding of sustainability and environmental issues into existing frameworks, very few countries are currently in a position to undertake such revisions. In many cases, curricula are either already outdated or are undergoing slow, incremental changes that may not immediately accommodate the integration of new topics such as climate change. This means that expecting curriculum intervention proposals to be readily implemented across all contexts may not be realistic.

Moreover, in the majority of countries, there is a significant disconnect between teacher education programs and the school curricula. Teacher training often lacks a focus on the content and pedagogical strategies necessary for effectively teaching climate change or sustainability, while the curricula themselves may not emphasize these issues either. This system mismatch, where teacher preparedness does not align with curricular goals, creates an additional layer of challenge for Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative interventions. Even if the curriculum is updated to include climate change, teachers may not be adequately prepared to deliver this content, further complicating efforts to achieve meaningful educational outcomes related to environmental sustainability. Therefore, addressing this disconnect and ensuring alignment between teacher education and curriculum development is a critical component for the success of Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative interventions.

The response: The Greening Curriculum Guidance document is a valuable tool for guiding countries in the comprehensive integration of Climate Change and Education for Sustainable Development. It takes a holistic approach, addressing all dimensions of learning and offering recommendations for age-appropriate, cross-disciplinary content. This guidance ensures that climate change and sustainability are embedded not only within specific subjects but across the curriculum, fostering a well-rounded understanding of these critical issues. In Zimbabwe, co-creation workshops on greening teacher education and teaching and learning materials have proved fruitful, emphasizing the importance of bringing together key stakeholders, including teacher educators, curriculum experts, and ministry representatives to work together to put this guidance into practice.

5.3. Reflections on the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative's Approach and Adaptations

During this reporting period, Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners continued to foster internal feedback loops to identify lessons learned covering key areas such as country engagement, prioritization, workplan alignment, gender mainstreaming, implementation, governance and communication. The following section highlights some of these key takeaways as well as the adaptations that have been proposed by Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners to further enhance the initiative's effectiveness and impact at country level.

Engaging local education groups and other key partners from the outset is vital for the smooth implementation of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative. These stakeholder groups often play a significant role in education sector dialogue, including inclusive consultation on policy and programming, approving GPE support, and supporting mutual accountability, so their involvement should begin early in the process. Governments frequently rely on support from coordinating agents and grant agents to drive GPE processes forward, which can cause delays if their roles are not clear. To ensure effective engagement, one-on-one conversations with coordinating agents early in the process can help facilitate smoother interactions and keep discussions on track. The Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative team are still seeking to find the right balance between bringing in outside support to the ministries of education and local education group teams to inject specialized technical expertise and reduce the workload of the busy country teams and local education group partners, whilst not undermining the local ownership of the activities. With slower than anticipated progress against country lead activities this is still a delicate balancing act.

The process of **prioritizing activities** for then Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative has varied across countries, providing valuable lessons on how to streamline this critical step. Recognizing that government officials responsible for prioritizing activities and approving workplans often face heavy workloads, Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners worked together to shorten the prioritization process and have suggested a list of succinct potential activities to ministry of education representatives at the end of subsequent scoping missions whilst still in country. Overall, ensuring concise and straightforward documentation is expected to help streamline ministerial decision making on prioritization and expedite approvals.

Workplans for the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative have been developed through extensive consultations at the country level, and Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners strive to clearly articulate how the proposed support **aligns with other ongoing initiatives**, including GPE-funded programs. To ensure coherence alignment and potential synergies, a summary table is being developed during the inception phase that clearly outline how the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative activities connect to other national efforts, such as Partnership Compacts or existing

partner support. Moreover, throughout implementation, key partners are also invited to take part in Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative activities, which also contributes to alignment with other ongoing initiatives.

Another critical insight is the importance of **gender mainstreaming** in the development and execution of Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative workplans. Recognizing the disproportionate impacts of climate change on women and girls, the key role of gender in ensuring equal educational opportunities and addressing gender-specific needs in climate resilience, the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners have worked to include gender considerations in several capacity development activities. For example, the development of climate risk analyzes for the education sector drew on gender-disaggregated data and examined the gender-based vulnerabilities to climate hazards. Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners will continue to draw on existing tools and guidance on gender-responsive planning and proactively work with in-house gender expertise to apply a gender lens across the whole program cycle from inception phase, workplan development to implementation arrangements.

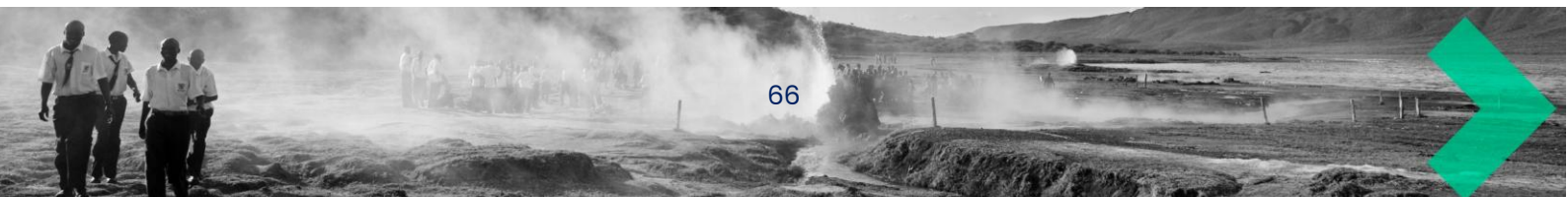
6. Risk Management

To ensure the successful planning and implementation of the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative, the partners constantly identified and monitored any internal and external risks at the global and country level and promptly took relevant mitigation measures. Table 6.1. presents the mitigation strategies that the Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners used to address the implementation risks during this reporting period.

The risk of **political instability** in the participating countries presents unique challenges during both the inception and implementation phases. In addition to posing a security threat for all stakeholders, political crises can also cause significant delays in implementation. In Bangladesh, ongoing political unrest led to delays with the inception mission. These political complexities add layers of difficulty to the initiative's progress in these areas.

To mitigate these challenges, Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners actively monitor the political landscape, working closely with in-country teams to provide early warnings of potential disruptions. This proactive monitoring enables adjustments to the timeline before delays become critical. By establishing regular communication with both local and national stakeholders, the initiative ensures flexibility in decision-making and scheduling, accommodating changes in the political environment.

In addition to political instability, **climate conditions** can also impact the implementation of activities. In South Sudan, for example, the rainy season, which runs from May to October, often causes flooding in some areas, making them inaccessible by road and preventing planes from landing. Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners have

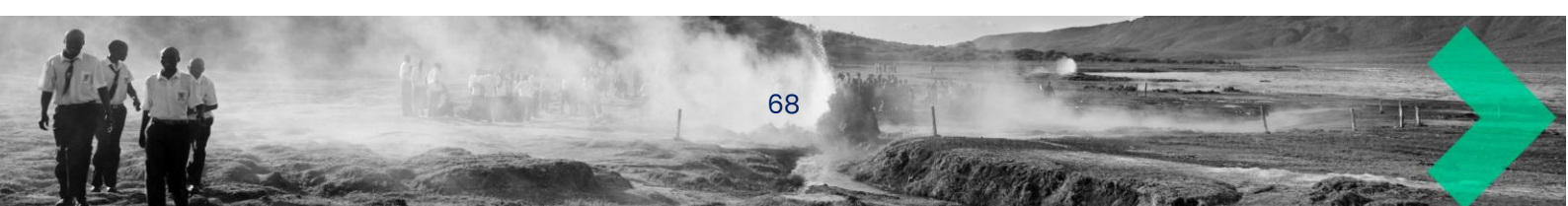


therefore adapted the activity implementation schedule to account for potential climate risks.

Table 6.1. Mitigation strategies used to address implementation risks

	Risk	Level	Rating	Mitigation measures used
1	Difficulty in ensuring all relevant Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners agree on approaches and way forward for planning and implementation of the activities	Global	Low	• Ensured continuous exchange with all relevant Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners at global and country level on technical and management issues to ensure shared vision of program objectives and approaches
2	Lack of ownership by local actors, which may hinder effective implementation	Country	Low	• Co-designed country level program activities with key stakeholders at local level to foster ownership • Developed user-friendly, pragmatic guidance and tools based on local needs rather than theoretical or conceptual documents
3	Limited political will by the various education actors to adopt climate resilient approaches	Country	Low	• Ensured regular dialogue with policy makers

				• Provided and supported continuous advocacy for climate resilient planning • Included specific activities focused on policy makers
4	Socio-political unrest and natural hazards in the selected countries disrupting the planning and implementation of proposed activities	Country	Medium	• Worked closely with country teams to monitor early warning signs to respond/re-orient activities as required • Identified alternative modes of planning and implementation (e.g., more distance support, etc.)
5	Inflation, degradation of economic situation resulting in decline in investments in social sectors, including education and climate change adaptation & environmental sustainability	Global & Country	Medium	• Ensured programs are designed to address priority needs and target the most marginalized climate change-affected children and communities • Pursued advocacy at all levels to prioritize education



7. Financial reporting

Country Implementation Grant				
Approved Budget Lines	**UNESCO Budget**	**Total UNESCO Expenditure as at 31 December 2024**	**Save the Children Budget**	**Save the Children Expenditure as at 31 December 2024**
Zimbabwe	422,712.00	221,211.07	174,999.00	37,110.00
Malawi	387,194.00	64,363.62	312,806.00	16,073.00
Cambodia	510,869.00	91,812.95	188,000.00	3,421.00
South Sudan	465,340.00	0	234,501.00	620
Total	**1,786,115.00**	**377,387.64**	**910,306.00**	**57,224.00**

Global Coordination Grant				
Approved Budget Lines	**UNESCO Budget**	**Total UNESCO Expenditure as at 31 December 2024**	**Save the Children Budget**	**Save the Children Expenditure as at 31 December 2024**
Global Coordination Grant	1,139,200,00	480,938.21	870,000.00	366,910.00
Total	**1,139,200,00**	**480,938.21**	**870,000.00**	**366,910.00**

*The low spend rate for Save the Children reflected derives from a lag of cost reports across its multiple country offices, and minor delays on the start of specific activities.

8. Future Processes

Over the next 12 months, four countries are expected to complete implementation, while a further nine countries and two regions are expected to start implementation (with implementation continuing in South Sudan). Inception activities will be initiated in a further seven countries, who will then work with Climate Smart Education Systems Initiative partners to determine a timeline for the drafting of inception reports, scoping missions, and workplan development. The forecast for the next twelve months by country/region is captured in the table below.

Table 7.1. Summary of what the initiative will do in the year 2025

	Country /Region	Q1 2025	Q2 2025	Q3 2025	Q4 2025
1	Zimbabwe	Implementation completed			
2	Malawi	Implementation completed			
3	Cambodia	Implementation completed			
4	South Sudan	Implementation continues			
5	Ethiopia	Workplan approval	Implementation starts		
6	Pacific SIDS	Workplan approval	Implementation starts		
7	Caribbean SIDS and Guyana	Workplan approval	Implementation starts		
8	Madagascar	Workplan development and approval	Implementation starts		
9	Bangladesh	Workplan development and approval	Implementation starts		
10	Somalia (Somaliland)	Workplan development and approval	Implementation starts		
11	Lao PDR	Workplan development and approval	Implementation starts		
12	Nepal	Scoping mission	Workplan development and approval	Implementation starts	
13	Pakistan	Scoping mission		Workplan development and approval	Implementation starts

14	Somalia	Scoping mission	Workplan development and approval	Implementation starts	
15	Mozambique	Scoping mission		Workplan development and approval	Implementation starts
16	Chad	Inception initiated			
17	Cabo Verde	Inception initiated			
18	Comoros	Inception initiated			
19	Maldives	Inception initiated			
20	Timor Leste	Inception initiated			
21	Haiti	Inception initiated			
22	São Tomé and Príncipe	Inception initiated