

GCF Observer Network of Civil Society, Indigenous Peoples, and Local Communities

Intervention on

FP274: Building the Climate Resilience of Children and Communities through the Education Sector (BRACE)**Access the document:** <https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/gcf-b42-02-add16>

We overall welcome the submission of the BRACE project. This is the first dedicated education-sector adaptation project brought to the Fund, and it usefully broadens the GCF portfolio, addressing urgent needs of vulnerable countries and some of its most vulnerable population groups. Embedding climate-resilient design standards in schools across three highly vulnerable countries, while simultaneously supporting curriculum reform and finance readiness, is an important realization of the Fund's results areas and speaks directly to the priority of safeguarding children in a changing world.

We hope to see more projects of this kind in the near future that outline and respond to the undeniable interlinkages between climate change and the experiences of children.

We do agree with the ITAP's concern for negative spill-over effects. Climate-resilient school facilities could unintentionally generate barriers if the overall cost of attending or operating those schools rises. Higher fees, additional levies for maintenance, or stricter enrolment criteria - even if well-intentioned - could exclude precisely the low-income and marginalised children the project seeks to protect. We therefore recommend that the accredited entity and executing entities adopt explicit safeguards to prevent cost-shifting to vulnerable households and communities.

We note with appreciation the accompanying Gender and Social Inclusion Action Plan, which—contrary to many others, including some presented at B42—is not merely a checkbox exercise, but a well-founded assessment and action plan. The project's GESI Action Plan shows ambition to ensure gender-responsive action throughout, and its inclusive approach to both project management and execution reflects the ambition we would like to see in all of GCF's Funding Proposals. In an ever-harsher world, where existing inequalities will be exacerbated, GCF needs to take up responsibility for actively pursuing comprehensive gender-responsive action throughout all of its activities.

Indeed, the project's attention to gender not only in its gender documentation, but throughout the proposal is notable, and in contrast to many proposals that discover their commitment to gender only when it comes to their GAP or in the listing of co-benefits. By considering and

outlining the connections between climate, education, and gender—including, for example, climate impacts driving rates of child, forced, and early marriage and unions that led to educational loss, among other impacts across a child's life course, or impediments to dignified menstruation contributing to absenteeism—this proposal demonstrates how location-specific data and assessments can inform targeted, nuanced interventions. The proposal also directs attention to the diversity of children and their experiences, committing to inclusion of children with disabilities and recognizing that children who identify as gender or sexually diverse can experience greater violence during climate disasters.

We also appreciate the attention to the school infrastructure, with retrofitting to improve climate resilience with interventions that may include, for example, water and sanitation interventions. These grant-funded activities recognize that educational systems require scaled support to meet the comprehensive health and education needs of their students, as well as of the communities who often use their schools as safe places, in the wake of increasing climate challenges to meet the needs of their students. We can unfortunately contrast such a proposal with another proposal being presented at B.42 with an overlapping country, which proposes a privatized approach to adaptation that seeks to monetize the need of schools and ministries of education to provide safety and health infrastructure to their students.

We encourage the Secretariat and the Board to continue and expand its support for a climate-resilient education sector in vulnerable countries, and we urge continued support for people-centred, rights-based adaptation projects with 100% grant-based finance.

If we truly aim for transformational change, we should certainly aim to leave no child behind.