



**GREEN
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FUND**

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Consideration of accreditation proposals and activities – Addendum XII

Upgrade assessment of Save the Children Australia

Summary

This document contains the assessment conducted by the Secretariat and the Accreditation Panel in accordance with decision B.31/06 and the transitional arrangements in respect of the revised accreditation framework adopted in decision B.42/13 paragraph (m) and set out in annex VI to that decision, and the recommendation by the Accreditation Panel for an upgrade of the accreditation scope of Save the Children Australia (SCA), based in Australia.

I. Introduction

1. Save the Children Australia (SCA) is a non-governmental organization based in Australia that operates internationally through its network. With its vision to ensure a world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, and development and participation, the applicant tackles various issues that affect children, including access to health and education, saving lives in a disaster, mitigating and adapting to stopping climate change and protecting children from harm. The applicant manages various programmes related to climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, education, health and nutrition, and urban and humanitarian areas, among other areas. The applicant integrates knowledge of climate change impacts into its programmes, which helps children and their communities to better prepare for future disasters and the effects of climate change and helps to safeguard the outcomes of the programmes.

2. The applicant was accredited by the Board on 14 November 2019 in decision B.24/11, paragraph (b), for the following parameters, as recommended by the Accreditation Panel (AP), under the fit-for-purpose approach of the GCF:

- (a) **Access modality:** international access;
- (b) **Track:** normal track;
- (c) **Maximum size of an individual project or activity within a programme:** small;¹
- (d) **Fiduciary functions:**²
 - (i) Basic fiduciary standards;
 - (ii) Specialized fiduciary standard for project management;
- (e) **Maximum environmental and social risk category:** minimal to no risk (category C);³

3. The applicant submitted an application to upgrade its accreditation scope via the Digital Accreditation Platform on 17 June 2025. Accreditation fees in relation to the upgrade application were received from the applicant on 23 October 2025, thereby launching the Stage I institutional assessment. Stage I was completed on 30 October 2025, and the applicant progressed to the Stage II (Step 1) accreditation review, which has been concluded with the publication of this assessment. The applicant has applied to be upgraded for the following parameters under the fit-for-purpose approach of GCF,⁴ and has also updated the indicative result areas for the projects/programme it intends to submit to GCF to the following:

- (a) **Maximum size of an individual project or programme:** medium⁵;
- (b) **Maximum environmental and social risk category:** medium risk (category B);⁶
- (c) **All other criteria for which the applicant is accredited:** no change.

¹ As per annex I to decision B.08/02 (annex I to document GCF/B.08/45), “small” is defined as “maximum total projected costs at the time of application, irrespective of the portion that is funded by the Fund of above USD 10 million and up to and including USD 50 million for an individual project or an activity within a programme”.

² Decision B.07/02.

³ As per annex I to decision B.07/02, category C is defined as “Activities with minimal or no adverse environmental and/or social risks and/or impacts”.

⁴ Refer to section 4.2 below for the scope of accreditation recommended by the Accreditation Panel.

⁵ As per annex III to decision B.31/06, “medium” is defined as “maximum total projected costs at the time of application, irrespective of the portion that is funded by GCF, of above USD 50 million and up to and including USD 250 million for an individual project or programme”.

⁶ As per the Revised Environmental and Social Policy adopted in decision B.BM-2021/18, category B is defined as “Activities with potential limited adverse environmental and/or social risks and impacts that individually or cumulatively, are few, generally site-specific, largely reversible, and readily addressed through mitigation measures”.

- (d) Indicative result areas for intended projects/programmes with GCF:
- (i) Livelihoods of people and communities;
 - (ii) Health, food and water security;
 - (iii) Infrastructure and built environment; and
 - (iv) Ecosystems and ecosystem services; as well as
 - (v) Public, private and cross-cutting types of projects/programmes.

II. Stage I institutional assessment

4. The applicant applied and was assessed by the Secretariat during Stage I under the normal track accreditation process in accordance with the GCF policies and standards to the extent applicable to accreditation below:

- (c) Strategic Plan for the GCF 2024–2027 (decision B.36/13);
- (a) Updates to the accreditation framework (decision B.31/06); and
- (b) Guidelines for the Operationalization of the Fit-for-purpose Accreditation Approach (decision B.08/02).

2.1 Legal status, registration, permits and licences

5. As confirmed by the applicant, there have been no material changes to SCA's legal status, registration or authority to operate since its original accreditation by the GCF. SCA continues to operate under established governance arrangements that are consistent with those assessed at the time of its initial accreditation.

6. SCA is incorporated as a company limited by guarantee under the laws of Australia with registration number ABN 99008 610 035 and is registered as a charity in Australia.

2.2 Institutional presence and relevant networks

7. SCA is part of the global Save the Children movement, which brings together national Save the Children organisations around the world. Through this movement, Save the Children International (SCI) coordinates international programmes and humanitarian responses, working through country offices globally. SCA is one of the largest Save the Children member organisations, with approximately 820 employees across Australia and the Pacific. SCI is the implementing arm for international programmes of SCA in accordance with its Master Programming Agreement which governs the operational, financial and governance relationship between the two entities. SCI coordinates international programming, humanitarian response and global advocacy on behalf of the movement, while member organizations such as SCA retain legal independence and fiduciary responsibility for their respective relationships with donors.

8. The applicant's strategic orientation is grounded in advancing children's rights to survival, protection, development and participation. The Group Strategy 2025–2027 identifies climate change as a major and escalating threat to children, particularly in the Pacific region and other vulnerable contexts including the Middle East and Africa. The strategy highlights the need to integrate climate risk and resilience considerations across sectoral programming, including health, education, food security and child protection.

9. SCA's programming approach emphasizes partnership-based delivery models, including collaboration with national and subnational governments and local organizations. The applicant positions climate adaptation and resilience as cross-cutting priorities, with a particular focus on community-based and child-centred approaches that respond to the needs of vulnerable populations.

10. SCA has an established track record in the implementation and management of climate adaptation and resilience programmes, including projects financed by GCF across a range of countries and regions. These projects include both full-size projects and simplified approval process projects and focus primarily on adaptation, resilience-building and systems strengthening in sectors such as education, health, food and nutrition security, social protection and community resilience.

11. SCA channels GCF funds through SCI country offices or network members under established agreements and has applied to upgrade its accreditation scope from small to medium, with anticipated future proposals of USD 50 million to USD 85 million, including potential multi-country projects.

2.3 Track record

12. The applicant's current GCF portfolio includes projects implemented in countries such as Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, South Sudan, Tonga and Vanuatu, and includes but not limited to the following:

- (a) USD 46.7 million (grants) for FP274: Building the Climate Resilience of Children and Communities through the Education Sector;
- (b) USD 37 million (grants) for FP244: Climate Resilient Health and Well-Being for Rural Communities in southern Malawi;
- (c) USD 32.65 million (grants) for FP184: Vanuatu community-based climate resilience project;
- (d) USD 31.8 million (grants) for SAP027: Solomon Islands Knowledge-Action-Sustainability for Resilient Villages project; and
- (e) USD 26.8 million (grants) for SAP036: Sierra Leone Coastal Resilience Project.

13. The project information provided demonstrates the applicant's experience of working through national and subnational government systems and in collaboration with implementing partners, with an emphasis on reaching vulnerable children and communities affected by climate change. Project modalities include community-based interventions, sectoral systems strengthening and supporting decentralized planning processes.

2.4 Potential support for direct access entities

14. SCA reports that its GCF-financed projects are designed to work through national and subnational government systems, with the objective of strengthening institutional capacity relevant to climate adaptation, planning and financing.

15. In accordance with decision B.10/06, paragraph (i), SCA has reported annually from 2021 to 2025 on support provided through capacity-building initiatives to national designated authorities, direct access entities and potential direct access entities. This includes collaborating with accredited direct access entities during project implementation, supporting national institutions with developing concept notes and funding proposals and engaging in activities comparable to readiness support within sectoral programmes. The applicant notes

that such support is provided at the invitation of governments and that uptake varies by country context.

III. Stage II accreditation review assessment

16. The applicant applied under the normal track accreditation process. Its application has been assessed by the AP during Stage II (Step 1) against requirements in accordance with the GCF policies and standards identified in paragraph 4 above.

17. As part of this assessment, the AP consulted the applicant's website and third-party websites to complement the information provided in the application.

3.1 Fiduciary standards

3.1.1 Specialized fiduciary standard for project management

18. SCA did not have any conditions with regard to the specialized fiduciary standard for project management recommended by the AP for the original accreditation application.

19. SCA's cumulative portfolio of projects with GCF amounts to USD 305.4 million, of which USD 257 million is GCF financing. Projects span multiple countries including Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, South Sudan, Tonga, Vanuatu and Zimbabwe.

20. Since the original accreditation in 2019, SCA has strengthened its project development and implementation capacity by establishing in 2021 a Climate Change Division (CDD) that provides oversight and support for the growing GCF portfolio. The CDD has expanded significantly since its establishment with 27 staff as of December 2025, and its organizational chart was shared with the AP. The division is responsible for fulfilling the accredited entity function and conducts quarterly performance and risk meetings for all GCF projects, while the executing entities track implementation progress and risks, with a sample quarterly report shared with the AP. Two core oversight mechanisms of CDD have been established: (1) members of SCA executive team, and (2) a GCF oversight committee which meets quarterly and comprises the chief finance officers and executive directors for international programmes of all Save the Children members who act as the channelling executing entities for GCF projects. SCA reviewed and restructured the CDD in 2025 in anticipation of the growing portfolio and no additional changes are anticipated in the near term. SCA may add roles to the existing teams if needed.

21. SCA has demonstrated execution capacity of projects and programmes commensurate with medium size category. As well as the GCF-funded projects, SCA is also responsible for all official development assistance to the Save the Children network originating from Australia, while also playing a key role in supporting the delivery of multilateral official development assistance from the Global Partnership for Education (grants amounting to USD 81 million extended since 2020) and Education Cannot Wait, (grant portfolio amounting to USD 67 million). The Government of Australia continues to fund SCA's projects on a rolling basis. These grant portfolios are subject to regular fiduciary and performance reviews in line with donor requirements, providing additional assurance regarding SCA's financial management, internal controls and delivery capacity.

22. For the 2017–2022 period (prior to the commencement of GCF disbursements) the annual programme expenditure of SCA ranged from 75 million to 130 million Australian dollars (AUD) (USD 60 million to USD 90 million) and reached AUD 125 million to AUD 135 million (USD 83 million to USD 90 million) for the 2023–2024, which demonstrates a consistent track record of grant management and programme implementation over multiple years.

23. Another example of a larger project managed by SCA is the Myanmar Education Consortium project, which began in 2013 and continues today. Initiated by SCA with funding from the Government of Australia, the project grew to a total value of USD 133 million, of which USD 47 million was channelled through SCA. The project has been implemented through the SCI Myanmar country office. The project was “localized” during its multiple phases of implementation, enabling additional funds to flow directly from the Government of Australia and other key donors to the Myanmar country office of SCI. As the project founder and the ongoing recipient of government funding, SCA maintains its role as an oversight entity throughout delivery. This project illustrates SCA’s capacity to implement projects in fragile contexts, with localization and layered implementation.

24. As the executing entity of SCA, SCI has been designing and implementing many other projects in the USD 50 million to USD 80 million range. Examples include the Suchana national nutrition programme in Bangladesh (USD 63.53 million funded by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office/European Union; 2015–2023; final independent evaluation report published in 2024⁷), Growth Through Nutrition in Ethiopia (USD 79 million; 2016–2023; funded by United States Agency for International Development) and MaMoni MNCSP in Bangladesh (USD 67.3 million; 2018–2023; completion report published in 2023⁸). The completion of these projects further attests to the implementation capacity of the SCI and its global network.

25. SCA publishes evaluation reports of the projects undertaken on its website⁹ and maintains a section on programming with GCF, where project descriptions¹⁰ are posted as projects become effective. SCA has the systems and capacity to review, monitor and oversee GCF-funded projects through its CDD.

26. The AP finds that the applicant’s policies, procedures and capacity, supported by evidence of its track record, fully meet the specialized fiduciary standard for project management for a maximum size category of medium.

3.2 Environmental and social safeguards

27. During the stage II (step 2) review, the applicant decided to withdraw its application for the medium environmental and social risk category.

IV. Conclusions and recommendation

4.1 Conclusions

28. Following the assessment, the applicant is found to have the potential to support GCF in implementing its Strategic Plan for 2024–2027 with respect to:

- (a) Potential contribution to the adaptation and mitigation balance in the GCF portfolio because the applicant focuses on adaptation and supporting diversity in GCF results areas such as health, food and water security, and ecosystems and ecosystem services;
- (b) Mobilizing climate finance at scale because the applicant is being recommended for accreditation in the medium size category; and

⁷ See <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/Suchana-Final-Evaluation-Report-.pdf>.

⁸ See <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/MaMoni-MNCSP-EOP-Report.pdf>.

⁹ See <https://www.savethechildren.org.au/about-us/accountability/evaluation-reports>.

¹⁰ See <https://www.savethechildren.org.au/our-work/our-programs/international/fostering-climate-resilience>.

(c) Addressing interests of particularly vulnerable groups and communities. In particular the applicant has extensive experience and know-how in community participation and empowerment contributing to locally led climate action.

29. Following its assessment, the AP concludes the following in relation to the application with respect to the applicant's ability to meet the GCF accreditation standards identified in paragraph 16 above:

(a) The applicant meets the requirements of the GCF specialized fiduciary standard for project management with respect to a maximum of medium size category.

4.2 Recommendation on accreditation

30. The AP recommends, for consideration by the Board, SCA for an upgrade in its accreditation type, as originally accredited in decision B.24/11, paragraph (b), as follows:

(a) **Accreditation type:**

(i) **Maximum size of an individual project or programme:** medium;

(ii) **All other criteria for which the applicant was accredited:** no change; and

(iii) **Additional conditions:** none.

31. The applicant has been informed of the recommendation for accreditation scope upgrade, including the accreditation type, and agrees to the recommendation.
