

Application Form for Regional Education Sector Program Implementation Grant – Regional ESPIG

OVERVIEW	
Countries/ Islands:	Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu
Grant agent(s):	Asian Development Bank
Coordinating agency(ies):	New Zealand MFAT
Date of submission of the endorsed regional ESP:	5/1/2018
Period covered by the regional ESP:	7/1/2019 to 6/30/2030
Date of submission of this application package:	10/15/2020
Program name (optional):	PacREF Programme 2019-2030
Regional ESPIG amount requested:	USD 15 million
Agency fees - additional to the allocation:	USD 750,000
Multiplier ESPIG amount requested (if applicable):	Not Applicable
Co-financing mobilized (list amount and donors):	NZ MFAT: USD \$2,037,726 (via the ADB) Regional Implementing Agencies: \$2,647,646 (direct financing of activities)
Agency fees – additional to allocation:	Not Applicable
Estimated starting date:	PacREF Programme is underway. MFAT funding to come on line 4th quarter of 2020; GPE funding in 2nd quarter of 2021
Estimated closing date (last day of the month, e.g. May <u>30</u> , 2025):	12/31/2023
Expected submission date of completion report:	6/30/2024
Grant currency - please enter 'X' in the box to indicate the currency of the grant amount and fees	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> US Dollar
	<input type="checkbox"/> Euro
Grant modality - (please enter 'X') ¹	<input type="checkbox"/> Sector Pooled or Budget Support
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project Pooled/ Co-financed
	<input type="checkbox"/> Project/ Stand-alone

¹ See Annex 1 for definitions.

NOTE TO THE USER

Disclosure of ESPIG Documents:

→ Following the final approval of this application, the final document will be published on GPE website. This is in line with GPE's transparency policy, requiring that all approved ESPIG applications and other related documents, including program documents and Joint Sector Review reports or aide memoirs, will be published on GPE website under the country pages of the developing country partners unless objected by the countries. Please note that sensitive personal information, including phone numbers and email addresses, will be redacted/erased from documents prior to publishing on our website.

Notification to the Secretariat:

→ Prior to any ESPIG application development process, the coordinating agency should always notify the Secretariat of the country's intent to apply. The Secretariat will engage with the government and coordinating agency to agree on a timeline for the preparation and submission of the application, based on the countries' or region's own education sector planning and GPE submission dates.

Application Guidelines:

→ Applicants should read the [Regional ESPIG Guidelines](#) and/ or [Multiplier ESPIG Guidelines](#) (where relevant), which explain the application development process, including timeline, necessary steps and intermediary submissions for the quality assurance process of the application. In case additional information is needed, the applicant can contact the country lead at the Secretariat.

Application Package:

→ The full application package is considered an integral part of the grant approval. Changes to any of these documents after submission to the GPE should follow the [ESPIG Policy](#). This includes any changes to program documents during the internal approval process of the grant agent.

Data Sources:

→ The financial, education sector, and any country data included in the application should be accompanied by the relevant sources in the corresponding sections of the form.

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I. MULTIPLIER ESPIG

(skip this section if this application does not include a Multiplier allocation)

II.1 Sources and types of co-financing

The GPE Multiplier mobilizes external funding alongside a contribution from GPE. Please list the funding mobilized from each partner, the name of the partner, and the instrument (for example grant, loan, etc.).

The Amount of funding should equal or exceed the value of co-financing included in the Expression of Interest. If it does not, please provide an explanation.

The Application may not be approved if the total value of all co-financing is lower than the US\$ 3 to US\$ 1 ratio required to access the Maximum Allocation from the Multiplier.

#	Partner	Amount (US\$)	Instrument (grant, loan, etc.)
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
	Total in US\$:		

II. FULFILLMENT OF FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

II.1 Requirement 1: Credible, endorsed regional education plan

Please explain why your endorsed education plan can be considered a credible plan by summarizing the main conclusions and recommendations of the appraisal and how these were addressed. The explanation should include: i) any adjustments made to the plan, ii) where applicable, any medium- or long-term follow-up actions decided upon, and iii) any other outstanding issues related to the plan.

The Pacific Regional Education Framework (PacREF) has established a new organizing framework for regional education support in the Pacific setting out agreed policy objectives, strategies and outcomes for regional education between 2019 and 2030. Its purpose is to ‘raise the quality of education across the Pacific, to enhance learners’ education outcomes, and to produce high quality graduates who are able to contribute economically and socially to their communities.’ The PacREF is aligned to the global goals of Education for All, the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG4, and Education 2030. It also responds to the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, the Pacific Leaders’ Declaration on Gender Equality, and the Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

It is a ***Regional Plan*** that responds to the challenges that Pacific Island countries face by providing an organizing mechanism that promotes an aligned and coordinated use of regional resources. The first phase of PacREF (2019-23) focuses on the development of regional tools and services (RGs) that can be contextualized at a country level. This will be done through partnerships and collaborations, both between countries and with regional and international education organizations. Importantly, the PacREF also provides a centralized mechanism for monitoring education progress across the region and building an evidence base for interventions.

As a regional plan, the policy levers available to the participating parties are very different to those at a national level. The usual tools of sector budgets and national legislative or regulatory change are not applicable at a region-wide level. The PacREF’s Impact on learner outcomes will therefore be one step-removed from national sector planning, and its key interventions reflect this: the PacREF’s design and the use of system and service delivery strengthening activities and the development of tested tools -- the regional goods, services, and standards (RGS) -- takes a practicable approach to addressing region-wide educational challenges, which are well-evidenced and recognised.

Leadership and Participation. There was consistent and clear leadership during the development of the PacREF, with a Small Working Group (SWG) identified by the Pacific Heads of Education Systems (PHES) charged to lead the process. The foundations of the PacREF were collectively developed by the PHES and its members were engaged at key points throughout the development process to provide both input and approval of the strategic direction and content of the document. A Steering Committee (SC) of PHES members guides implementation.

At an operational level, the development of the Implementation Rolling Implementation Plan (IRP) and the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plan have been developed by the Implementing Agencies (IAs) which will deliver the PacREF Programme’s activities and RGs with facilitation support from the Programme Facilitation Unit (PFU). The IAs include: (i) the University of the South Pacific’s (USP) School of Education (SoE), Institute of Education (IoE), Technical and Further Education (TAFE); (ii) the Secretariat of the Pacific Community’s (SPC) Education Quality and Assessment Program (EQAP); (iii) UNESCO; (iv) UNICEF ;and the (v) Australia Pacific Training Coalition (APTC) who will be directly funded by Australian DFAT. Participating countries have been engaged in the development process, both through the relevant governance processes under the regional architecture, and more in-depth attention through the SWG. Data to inform the development of PacREF was widely and openly shared with country participants. In-country stakeholders were consulted as part of the sector diagnosis development. Consultations did not extend down to provincial or school level, reflecting the regional and high-level nature of the PacREF.

Evidence-based. Recent analyses have informed the development of the PacREF: including a Pacific Education for All Review (2015), a review of the previous regional framework (2017) and a Status of Pacific Education completed in 2018 that was updated in 2020 – the 2020 update paying particular attention the six GPE eligible countries. Region-wide education data gathered and disseminated by UNESCO’s UIS and EQAP, including Pacific Island Literacy and Numeracy (PILNA) data, informed the status of education reports. It should be noted that the quality and comprehensiveness of regional data is improving from a relatively low base.

Relevance of Policies and Programs. The policies and priorities in PacREF reflect both the evidence gathered to inform its development and the expressed educational agendas of the participating countries. PacREF contains an explicit causal chain of strengthening Pacific regionalism, through new ways of regional education agencies working together to deliver priority outcomes to support national systems’ development and outcomes. By design, national systems opt into those parts of the PacREF Programme that match their priorities.

Phase 1 of the IRP spans 2019-2023 and reflects the most pressing needs identified and agreed by PHES, and particularly those areas where economies of scale and efficiencies can be gained by a regional approach. The plan recognises that the tools and services which the regional agencies will provide through the initial phases of PacREF will not be sufficient to achieve the full range of objectives intended, and that member states’ ownership and participation will be critical for this. As such, the PacREF is complementary to participating countries’ own national plans and strategies. Its strategies and interventions are designed to address specific common issues in education sectors across the region in a way that minimizes the impact of the constraints faced by Pacific education systems and draws on nations’ limited financial resources as little as possible.

Soundness of the Financial Framework. PacREF is designed to address limitations faced by Pacific countries under fiscal pressures, enabling longer-term reform activities to occur which often would not be able to be funded in contexts where the vast majority of education budgets are committed to recurring costs. As a regional framework, PacREF does not include a macro-economic financial model or scenario planning. Although individual country economies will have an impact on the overall achievement of PacREF high level outcomes, the implementation of the framework itself is not reliant on the fiscal or economic situation of countries. The model of an externally financed PacREF Programme broadly reflects considerations of member state fiscal limitations and a growing donor appetite for continued/increased funding levels to deliver better quality education across the Pacific.

Equity and Efficiency. At a policy level, issues of equity, efficiency and learning are explicitly contained in the framework. The IRP gives meaning to these across two key dimensions: the first of these is equitable access of the participating countries to the tools, services and frameworks (the RGs) developed under the PacREF. The second relates to the issue of inclusion and gender mainstreaming through the activities under the IRP. The primary issue of efficiency addressed by the PacREF relates to scale – offering the opportunity for countries to access services and products that they would either have to develop separately at their own expense, or not have access to. The PacREF provides an overarching strategy for donors and partners to make coordinated contributions to a clear education agenda for the Pacific.

Change strategies The PacREF Programme is designed to create steady and incremental change in regional approaches to education development, supporting and enabling change at a country level, which may be incremental or transformational depending on the level of uptake and political will. The PacREF and its IRP’s outputs, short, mid and long-term outcomes make logical and credible contributions to solving the problems that the evidence has identified. The primary innovation that the PacREF contributes to is the ability to address educational problems at a regional scale. The PacREF is, in itself, a change strategy that is seeking to enhance the way that countries and regional/international partners work together to deliver on education outcomes through improved coordination and collaboration. Educational change at a regional level is complex and this is reflected in the IRP. The PFU has been established to support the management and coordination of these activities across the IAs. This coordination and collaboration is a critical aspect of delivering the desired level of change that the PacREF is seeking and is a key element of resourcing and monitoring.

Financial feasibility Noting that the PacREF is intended to be almost entirely donor funded, the IRP can be scaled according to available funding and thus what is anticipated presented represents a medium level of ambition as development partner contributions are only quantified for the short term, 2019-2023, recognizing that PacREF will only be able to deliver over the longer term if it can attract further funding based on its short-term performance. Development partners' alignment with the PacREF is clearly defined. There is deliberate alignment and coordination between the roles of the IAs, and the space for further development partners to align their regional (and to a lesser extent) national support to the PacREF and Rolling Plan. Bilateral support based on country-to-country relationships will continue in the region separate to the PacREF, although key DPs are already aligning bilateral programs with the PacREF agenda.

System capacity. Working through regional implementing agencies is a sustainable way to build capacity that is local and embedded in the region. South-south cooperation is strengthened through the PacREF and its IRP. PacREF, through the IRP, explicitly addresses capacity and capability weaknesses at the national education system level, which are persistent features of Pacific education systems. The causes include small scale, isolation, skills gaps, resource shortages and lack of access to training and development. The use of regional tools and services to address these challenges, particularly insofar as they relate to Ministries of Education, has been shown to be an appropriate and effective way to manage some of these constraints.

Governance and accountability. Governance systems and processes in the PacREF are clear and aligned to existing structures and enhance regionalism and country ownership through the Forum Education Ministers Meeting and the PHES (supported by their Steering Committee). These are supported by coordination and facilities mechanisms with identified accountabilities back through the system.

Appraisal Conclusion

The PacREF demonstrates a commitment by Pacific Island countries to strengthening regionalism and working collaboratively to address common challenges in the sector as a way of addressing the constraints that they face individually. Building on lessons of previous regional strategies, the PacREF and its Implementation Rolling Plan will strengthen south-south collaboration and embedded regional institutions and make achievable and realistic contributions to solving long-standing education challenges. The appraisal demonstrates that the policy settings and strategies of PacREF are sound.

Note: The above summary draws exclusively on the Independent Appraisal of the PacREF commissioned by New Zealand MFAT

II.2 Requirement 2: Commitment to finance the endorsed plan

Please use the table below to provide information on financial commitments made by development partners for the implementation of the regional plan. Indicate if you are using fiscal or calendar year, and if the former please state when (the month) the fiscal year begins and ends. Also include, where applicable, the sources of all data.

Using the template for Domestic Financing Matrix available on the GPE website via [this link](#),² provide the latest evidence of domestic resource mobilization for each GPE member state that is participating in this application. Attach the completed template to this application.

TABLE 1 | Evidence of external resource mobilization

Actual value for three years			Target values for the period of the Program				
Data for the past three years (indicate years as relevant)			Data for the relevant duration of the program (indicate years as relevant)				
2018	20219	2020	2021	2022	2023	Overall Total 2021 to 2023	
Resources for regional education plan (the PacREF Programme)							
Regional education plan cost (USD)							
N/A	N/A	TBC	5,923,533	6,108,977	7,105,662	19,138,171	
Total financing from participating governments (USD)							
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	See note below
Total Financing from regional organization, e.g. OECS (USD)							
N/A	N/A	TBC	2,035,008	292,329	320,310	2,647,647	
Total external funding from development partners (USD) – excluding GPE funds incl MFAT contribution							
N/A	N/A	TBC	2,037,726	0	0	2,037,726	
Funding gap as recorded in the ESP (USD)							
N/A	N/A	\$0.00	1,850,799	5,816,648	6,785,352	14,452,799	
GPE support (USD)							
\$14,452,799 (excluding ADB's management and supervision costs)							
<u>\$14,997,510</u> (inclusive of ADB's management and supervision costs of \$544,711)							

Funding from Participation Governments

While the PacREF Programme is designed as an externally funded programme, it is important to recognize that the Pacific's governments directly finance the SPC and USP and contribute in-country staff time to UNICEF's and UNESCO's regional

² This Excel template is the same as the domestic financing spreadsheet – with tabs for each GPE member state – that was submitted during the Quality Assurance Review (QAR) process. It is also available on GPE website: <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/domestic-financing-matrix-template-regional-grants>. Should you have any question about this section of the application form, please send an email to the GPE Secretariat at gpe_grant_submission@globalpartnership.org.

programmes (these are the four regional organizations referred to in the table above). Only the technical assistance portion of the developing, testing, contextualizing and embedding of the Regional Goods (RGs) produced by the PacREF Programme are included in the Programme’s activity costs (USD 19,138, 171) In addition, Pacific governments will contribute to the costs of adjusting their systems to take full advantage of the RGs that they have assisted to develop and that have been contextualized for their systems. These costs will include staff and teacher training, assessment costs, EMIs development costs and other development and recurrent costs associated with in putting into action the new policies, practices and procedures in the four policy areas that the governments have designed the PacREF Programme to develop.

TABLE 2 Major interventions of development partners			
Donor name	Major interventions	Financial scale (amount)	Years covered
<i>Please see Programme Document Part 2 Annex 5: Development Partner Activity across the Pacific</i>			

II.3. Requirement 3: Availability of critical data, or a strategy to use and produce data

This requirement concerning the availability of data or alternatively a strategy to produce and use data is divided into three sub-components as indicated below

II.3.1 A recent education sector analysis (ESA)

Note: while a full ESA is not required for a regional education plan, there should be an evidence-base backing the selected strategies or thematic areas covered by the plan.

- Provide information and dates on the most recent education sector analysis, including a list of which analytic elements are included (e.g. demographic analysis, analysis of existing policies, costs and financing, system performance and system capacity). Note that either a current ESA for each GPE member state or some other type of regional situation analysis, diagnostic, or study conducted no more than three years prior to this grant application will suffice.
- Indicate how vulnerability and equity, particularly the situation of education for marginalized groups, including girls and children with disabilities, have been addressed.³

The most recent **education sector analysis** was “The Status of Pacific Education: 2020 Special Edition” of April 2020. The report was produced the SPC’s EQAP. The report has been shared with GPE. That analysis looked specifically at education in the six Pacific island countries that are GPE eligible (Kiribati, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu (the G6). The report drew heavily of data from UNESCO’s UIS and from data provided by the six counties. Where data was available, aspects (and tables) that were covered/included in the report included, for each of the six countries:

- System overview and enrolments
 - Enrolments in ECE, primary and secondary education
- Participation and Completion
 - Out of school rates
 - Participation rates in ECE
 - Completion rates in primary and secondary education
- Literacy and numeracy

³ Reference can be made to the assessment made in the GPE Funding Model Requirements Readiness Matrix (Quality Assurance Review Phase I Matrix), with this paragraph limited to an update on progress vis-à-vis identified gaps; alternatively, if the analysis exists in another document, this section can simply reference that document, which should then be attached.

- Primary students achieving proficiency in literacy
- Primary students achieving proficiency in numeracy
- Teachers
 - Trained teachers in primary and secondary education

In addition, the report presented:

(i) a comparative perspective that looked at data from across the Pacific on the following measures:

- Participation and completion
- Out of school rates
- ECE adjusted NER
- Primary gross intake rate into the last grade
- Proficiency in literacy and numeracy (grade 6)
- Trained teachers

(ii) data that compared the Pacific with other developing regions; and

(iii) recurrent education expenditures in the G6.

Vulnerability and Equity. Pacific people have vibrant cultures and diverse social structures and a history of resilience that draws on their understanding of the Pacific environment and on their tradition of sustainable use of resources. Unfortunately, the very nature of Pacific island life is one of vulnerability: to climate change and disasters, and to the social and economic challenges associated with small populations in remote locations. The dynamic international economic and political environment presents a challenging context for Pacific development as global events influence the Pacific’s socio-economic and political landscape and affect the rates of economic growth across the region. Life expectancy in many areas of the Pacific has increased and infant mortality rates have declined in all countries. However, gender inequity, increasing inequality and poverty, water and food insecurity, youth unemployment and shortages of skilled labour remain challenges. There have been successes in reducing the incidence of infectious disease across the region, but the high prevalence of non-communicable diseases is putting new strain on public health systems and finances. Ensuring that all Pacific children have access to high-quality ECE, primary and secondary education continues to be a challenge. Although the full impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on the Pacific will not be known for some time, it has already severely impacted the tourism and trade sectors and has caused school closures and a degree of additional unemployment.

Continually responding to challenges has strained and slowed development progress, affecting the region’s capacity to alleviate and prevent poverty, achieve sustainable development and to help its people realize their potential. The most meaningful and sustained responses to region-wide challenges have been informed by country needs and priorities and have required an understanding of context, Pacific regionalism, local political and technical leadership and, importantly, the effective alignment of DP support with national and regional efforts.

The PacREF rises to these challenges by specifically targeting (i) the most vulnerable of Pacific nations (those with a low HDI score and those that are very small and at high risk to external shocks), and (ii) both girls and boys that are not accessing a quality ECE and primary education and those whose school systems are only able to producing low student outcomes. While assistance outside the PacREF mechanism will help Pacific Countries address the impact of Covid-19, the PacREF Programme will, where appropriate and feasible, align its interventions to support that assistance.

Further detail is provided in the Programme Document.

II.3.2 Basic financial and education data

Basic financial and education data (including EMIS and Household surveys) are expected to be disaggregated by gender and socio-economic status. Please provide a summary of whether or not these data

are available and disaggregated accordingly to monitor the implementation of the regional plan for each of the GPE member states.

Also, for each of the GPE member states:

- Provide date of last submission of data to UIS and highlight any areas where data was not provided;
- Highlight any gaps in national data (such as data quality issues, disaggregation by gender, availability of data on marginalized groups, financial data, etc.); and
- Provide summary of strategies to address these, including how the implementation of data strategies will be financed and whether they are part of the endorsed regional education plan.⁴

In all Pacific countries, EMIS data and household survey statistics on student enrolments and completions are routinely disaggregated by gender, but not socio-economic status. However, it is possible in household income and expenditure surveys (HIES) to disaggregate education statistics by wealth index using survey microdata. SPC maintains a microdata repository of population censuses and household surveys of Pacific countries which, with appropriate permissions, can be used to derive additional disaggregated education statistics for monitoring the PacREF.

While only Samoa and Tuvalu have submitted data to UIS for the 2019 school year, Kiribati, Marshall Islands and Solomon Islands are expected to submit data by the end of this month (June 2020). SPC (EQAP) is collaborating with UIS to strengthen the capacity of Pacific countries by providing technical assistance and training to Ministries of Education to enable the reporting of quality education data to UIS in the annual Survey of Formal Education. In addition, SPC is supporting Pacific countries to implement data quality improvement plans following the SPC/UIS assessments of education data quality using the DQAF. These are key activities of the SPC Educational Quality and Assessment Programme funded by the Australian DFAT and New Zealand MFAT and endorsed by the Pacific countries in the Pacific Regional Education Framework.

Data Availability and Gaps:

Country	Year of Last UIS Q/A	Data not in UIS Q/A	Data not in UIS Q/B, Q/C	EMIS Data Gaps	Household Surveys
Kiribati	2018	ECE, U/SEC, TVET	FIN, TER	School Facilities, Teachers, Graduates	MICS 2018-19 HIES 2019
Marshall Is.	2016	TVET	FIN, TER	Disability, Graduates	HIES 2019
Samoa	2019	TVET	FIN	Finance	MICS-DHS 2019
Solomon Is.	2018	U/SEC, TVET	FIN, TER	Disability	HIES 2020
Tonga	2015		FIN, TER	Disability, Finance, Graduates	MICS 2019 HIES 2020
Tuvalu	2019	TVET	TER		MICS 2019

II.3.3 A system or mechanisms to monitor learning outcomes

- Indicate whether there is a system for measuring learning outcomes regionally and at national levels (in GPE member states), and if so, describe briefly; and
- Highlight any gaps and provide a summary of strategies to address these, including how the implementation of the strategies will be financed.⁵

⁴ If these strategies are included in the endorsed plan, this paragraph should be limited to a list of the strategies and their financing source and a reference to the relevant section in the regional education plan.

⁵ If the system or strategy to develop one are included in the endorsed plan, this section should be limited to a brief statement and a reference to the relevant section in the plan.

Learning outcomes are measured regionally in reading, writing and numeracy using the Pacific Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (PILNA). The PILNA provides information on student proficiency in each of these domains measured against a common regional metric. The basis for the measurement is the Pacific Regional Benchmarks for Literacy and Numeracy, which captured the minimum expected proficiencies for students at the end of Year 2, Year 4, Year 6 and Year 8. PILNA is administered to a regionally and nationally representative sample of students at the end of 4 and 6 years of formal education. Each assessment cycle includes approximately 20,000 students across 15 countries and territories in the Pacific, inclusive of all 14 PacREF countries as well as Tokelau.

At national levels, countries have their own large-scale assessments based on their national learning outcomes. These are typically administered annually or bi-annually, depending on the country, and are most frequently census assessments. The table below captures the information regarding national large-scale assessments for the 6 GPE member states whose funding allocation is contributing to the PacREF. Other countries also have national assessments along similar lines, but those have not been captured here.

Country	Assessment	Year Levels	Frequency of Administration	Sample or Census
Samoa	Samoa Primary Education Literacy Levels (SPELL)	4 and 6	Annual	Census
Solomon Islands	Solomon Island Standardised Test of Achievement (SISTA)	4 & 6	2 years	Sample
Tonga	Standardised Test of Achievement for Tonga (STAT)	4 & 6	3 years	Census
Tuvalu	Tuvalu Standardised Test of Achievement (TUSTA)	4 & 6	3 years	Census
RMI	Marshall Islands Standard Assessment Test (MISAT)	5 & 7	Annual	Census
Kiribati	Standardised Test of Achievement for Kiribati (STAKI)	4&6	2 years	Census

The regional and national assessments focus mainly on primary levels, and the gap that has been noted across the region is the lack of comparable measures at the lower secondary measures. That gap has been identified in the PacREF under the Outcomes and Wellbeing policy theme and there is a series of actions and outputs leading to development of lower secondary measures and measurement tools for use at national and regional levels. The funding for this is being requested as part of the PacREF, beginning with development funding coming from the MFAT allocation in the first part of Phase 1 followed by funding for widespread trials and implementation from the GPE funding in the later part of Phase 1.

III. COUNTRY INFORMATION

(Include the sources of population and GDP data in footnotes)

Country 1: Samoa

Total population:	197,097 (UNPD Est.)
GDP Per Capita (USD):	\$4,392
School year runs from (month to month):	January – December (UIS)
Budget cycle runs from (month to month):	1 July - 30 June (IMF)

Country 2: Solomon Islands

Total population:	669,823 (UNPD Est.)
GDP Per Capita (USD):	\$2,163

School year runs from (month to month):	January – December (UIS)
Budget cycle runs from (month to month):	1 January – 31 December IIMF)
Country 3: Republic of Marshall Islands	
Total population:	58.791 (UNPD Est.)
GDP Per Capita (USD):	\$3,621
School year runs from (month to month):	September – June (UIS)
Budget cycle runs from (month to month):	1 October - 30 September (IMF)
Country 4: Tuvalu	
Total population:	11.646 (UNPD Est.)
GDP Per Capita (USD):	\$3,701
School year runs from (month to month):	January - November (UIS)
Budget cycle runs from (month to month):	1 January - 31 December (IMF)
Country 5: Kiribati	
Total population:	117.606 (UNPD Est.)
GDP Per Capita (USD):	\$1,625
School year runs from (month to month):	January – December (UIS)
Budget cycle runs from (month to month):	1 January - 31 December (IMF)
Country 6: Tonga	
Total population:	104.494 (UNPD Est.)
GDP Per Capita (USD):	\$4,364
School year runs from (month to month):	February – December (UIS)
Budget cycle runs from (month to month):	1 July - 30 June (IMF)

IV. PROGRAM

IV.1 Program description (extracted from program document)

Provide below the location (page numbers) in the program document where a description of the program can be found. This includes information on program objectives, and related expected outcomes, and in the case of project modalities, the components and sub-components with financing amounts.

OR:

In 1,500 words or less (maximum 3 pages), please:

- Provide a narrative of the Program in summary form, describing overall program objectives and related expected outcomes, and the components and sub-components with financing amounts.
- Indicate as relevant GPE's anticipated share by components and sub-components if this is a co-financed project.

NOTE: it is highly encouraged that a summary of the program description is provided.

The PacREF is a regional policy designed to equitably raise the quality of schooling and student outcomes across the Pacific. This will be achieved through a twelve-year programme that expands and improves the support provided to the region's school systems by the Pacific's regionally-based education agencies. The PacREF focuses on four Policy Areas:

1. Quality and Relevance
2. Learning Pathways
3. Student Wellbeing and Outcomes

4. The Teaching Profession

The PacREF Programme (the Programme) operationalizes the PacREF policy through a series of activities that design, test, contextualize and embed demand-responsive regional goods, services and standards (RGs) that will assist national education systems to sustainably raise the quality of their services and establish, over time, upward trends in learning outcomes.

Implementation of the Programme's activities are led by five regional agencies (IAs): (i) The Pacific Community's Education Quality Assessment Programme (EQAP); (ii) the University of the South Pacific's School of Education (SoE), Institute of Education (IoE) and Technical and Further Education (TAFE); (iii) UNICEF; (iv) UNESCO; and (v) the Australia Pacific Training Coalition (APTC) which is directly funded by the Australian Government. All Programme activities are clearly articulated in an annually updated Implementation Rolling Plan (IRP). The first annual update of the IRP (the 2020 IRP) and the associated PacREF Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan (MEL Plan) were shared with GPE in June 2020.

Annex 5 to the Programme Document is a table that shows all planned Programme activities, the outputs and regional goods that each contributes to, the countries that are participating in those activities, when they are participating and the implementing agencies responsible for each activity.

The PacREF Programme satisfies three regional objectives:

1. Providing Pacific island countries with well-targeted, demand responsive Regional Goods (see below) that will assist in improving their systems' performance;
2. Strengthening regional agencies' ability to provide high-quality tools and professional services, including research, in order that the Regional Goods developed through the PacREF Programme are well-supported and effective; and
3. Supporting analyses of issues and constraints that influence the quality of schooling across the region and the addressing those challenges.

Vision

To equitably raise the quality of schooling and student outcomes across the Pacific.

Goals

- Establishing upward trends in the percentage of preschool children that are assessed as school-ready when they enter primary school and achieving age appropriate levels of literacy and numeracy at the primary level.
- Laying the foundations necessary to ensure that upward trends can be established in the numbers of well-prepared and appropriately qualified secondary and post-secondary graduates.
- Improving inclusiveness, student wellbeing and the maintenance of Pacific languages, values and traditions.

Policy Area Objectives and Intended Policy Outcomes (determined by the region's Ministers of Education and the Heads of the Pacific's Education Systems)

Quality and Relevance

- Objective: High quality, relevant programmes are provided for learners at all levels of education.
- Intended Outcome: All learners are provided with a safe and supportive environment, within which they are offered high quality learning opportunities that are meaningful, valuable, inclusive and future-focused.

Learning Pathways

- Objective: Learners' needs are met through a broad range of programmes and delivery modalities.
- Intended Outcome: All learners have equal access to multiple and seamless pathways and modalities of learning that will allow them to meet their full potential.

Student Outcomes and Wellbeing

- Objective: Learners at all levels of education achieve their full potential.

- **Intended Outcome:** All learners acquire the knowledge, skills, values and attributes to enable them to contribute to their families, communities and to nation building.

Teacher Professionalism

- **Objective:** The teaching profession is supported and empowered through opportunities for continuous development, shared understanding and accountability.
- **Intended Outcome:** Competent, qualified and certified teachers and school leaders who are current in their professional knowledge and practice. Teachers are supported, engaged, effective and committed to the holistic development of their students.

Implementation Modalities

- Providing robust tools, mechanisms and support structures to assist national efforts to improve student learning outcomes and wellbeing.
- Establishing a strong system of regional minimum service standards and performance monitoring.
- Institutionalizing country-to-country (South-South) cooperation as a region-wide approach to improving policy and practice.

The key products of the PacREF Programme are the design/upgrading/strengthening/ of **an integrated set of Regional Goods, Services and Standards** (RGs – see below) that are (i) tested and contextualized to reflect the prevailing circumstances in each participating country’s education system, and (ii) subsequently embedded in those systems routine practices. Note, testing and contextualized in *situ* will ensure their ‘fit’ with existing national policies, and embedded.

Regional Goods, Services and Standard to be progressed in PacREF Phase 1

Policy Area 1: Quality and Relevance

- Regionally identified and agreed definition of non-cognitive skills
- Regional needs assessment on the status of quality of school learning environment in the Pacific region
- Quality Assurance Frameworks for quality school learning environments are in place.

Policy Area 2: Learning Pathways

- Regional policy guidelines for the development of quality ECE
- Regional tools for the governance, management, quality assurance, financing and programme development of ECE
- Regional framework for the domains of home to school transition
- Regional tools and processes to identify ways to improve home to school transitions
- Regional framework identifying learning pathways from ECE to adulthood
- Pacific Skills Portal
- Regional Pacific Skills Dialogue/Summit

Policy Area 3: Student Outcomes and Wellbeing

- Waka Learning Hub is utilized by in-service teachers to improve literacy and numeracy instruction
- Pacific Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (primary)
- Regional assessment at lower secondary aligned to SDG4.1.1

Policy Area 4: Teacher Professionalism

- Regional teacher competency standards
- Regional accreditation and recognition of teacher education programmes
- Regional standards and qualifications in school leadership
- Regional framework for continuous professional development

Funding Contribution to the PacREF Implementation Plan from key partners 2020-21 to 2022-23 as follows:

Key Partners	Total 2021 to 2023	% contribution
Regional IAs (SPC-EQAP, USP, UNICEF, UNESCO)	\$2,647,647	13.8
Development Partners (NZ MFAT)	\$2,037,726	10.6
GPE	\$14,452,799	75.5
OVERALL TOTAL	\$19,138,171	100.0

Please define the event or activity that will mark the start of the program and which will take place by the expected start date:

Programme is ongoing – but will ramp up considerably once MFAT funds (in 4th quarter of 2020) and then GPE funds (in 2nd quarter of 2021) are dispersed.

IV.2 Expected Outputs⁶ (extracted from program document)

Please complete the table below, extracting relevant information from the detailed program document. If the program plans to purchase and distribute textbooks, train teachers, or build or rehabilitate classrooms, please use the following indicators⁷ (GPE Strategic Plan 2016-2020):

- Number of textbooks purchased and distributed
- Number of teachers trained
- Number of classrooms built or rehabilitated

NOTE: These indicators are NOT compulsory. They are therefore applicable only when the program plans to implement these activities. In case of sector-pooled funds and budget support programs, indicate numbers planned at sector level. Replace Year 1, Year 2, etc., with the actual year (for example, 2022, 2023, etc). Annual targets are non-cumulative.

TABLE 3 | Target outputs per year

Indicate if calendar year or implementation year ⁸ : Click here to enter text.	Baseline (Year 0)	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
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Please see the Results Frameworks in Programme Document Annex 9: Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

IV.3 Financial overview

Please complete the table below, indicating program disbursement by year as applicable, based on information extracted from the program document. If it is a co-financed modality, indicate estimates for the expected disbursements of GPE funds by year.

TABLE 4 | Program costs and expected disbursements by year

Indicate years (e.g., 2023):	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26	Total
Total program disbursements per implementation year ⁹	\$6,586,274	\$7,104,880	\$761,645	N/A	N/A	\$14,452,799

⁶ For sector-wide financing (through budget support or pooled funds), a reference could be made to the results framework of the plan.

⁷ See Annex 1 for definitions of these indicators.

⁸ Implementation year begins with grant effectiveness/ signing of grant agreement.

⁹ Implementation year runs by 12-month cycle beginning with grant effectiveness/ signing of grant agreement. For example, if the grant start date or grant signing is expected to occur in July 2020 then the implementation year is July 2020 to June 2021, and July 2020 should be entered as Year 1. The program costs per calendar year for 2020 should reflect the estimated costs for the July – December 2020 period.

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
<i>Estimated</i> program disbursements per calendar year Price contingency of USD 547, 201 not included (see table 6 below)	1,850,799	\$5,816,648	\$6,785,352	N/A	N/A	\$14,452,799

Please complete the table below, listing the proposed interventions/components, and indicating the expected disbursement by year (e.g., 2024) and total cost for each component, as well as their respective percentage of the total grant.

If it is a co-financed program indicate estimates for the expected disbursements of GPE funds by year.

➔ *Extend and adapt the table to the number of components that fits the program, by copying/pasting or erasing rows as relevant.*

TABLE 5 | Program costs and expected disbursement by Implementing Agency – in USD

Components	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total	%
SPC-EQAP	0	1,604,636	1,973,789	N/A	N/A	3,578,425	24.8%
UNICEF	225,703	2,152,978	1,769,535	N/A	N/A	4,148,216	28.7%
UNESCO	1,625,096	0	1,059,725	N/A	N/A	2,684,821	18.6%
USP – Pacific TAFE	0	0	83,950	N/A	N/A	83,950	0.6%
USP - SOE	0	569,810	460,579	N/A	N/A	1,030,389	7.1%
USP - IOE	0	816,647	753,414	N/A	N/A	1,570,061	10.9%
USP - PFU	0	672,577	684,360	N/A	N/A	1,356,936	9.4%
TOTAL	\$1,850,799	\$5,816,648	\$6,785,352	N/A	N/A	\$14,452,799	100%

IV.4 Grant Agent role and cost

Describe below the specific roles the grant agent will perform in the implementation and/or oversight of the grant.

ADB will uphold the standard stipulated areas of responsibilities for GPE Grant agents and as articulated in the Amended and Restated Financial Procedures Agreement between ADB and the GPE and the IBRD as acting trustee of the GPE. The Grant agent responsibilities pertain to the areas of financial management and accounting systems, institutional capacity, transparency, investigative powers and anticorruption measures. ADB will ensure these are upheld through the course of its regular management and oversight of the technical assistance, including regular communication from the PACREF through the PACREF's own Facilitating Unit and semi-annual reports and annual work program reviews with development partners and the regional architecture.

TABLE 6 | Supplemental program cost (Other grant agent costs & general agency fees, US\$)¹⁰

Indicate years (e.g., 2024):	2021	2022	2023	2024	year 5	Total
General agency fees (in addition to MCA):	25,000	375,000	350,000			750,000

¹⁰ See *ESPIG Guidelines* for the explanations of other grant agent costs and general agency fees.

Other grant agent costs (part of MCA), including for supervision, country office, etc.:	31,890	251,666	261,155			544,711
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IV.5 Use of other grant agent costs, including for supervision, country office, etc.

In 300 words, indicate how *other grant agent costs*, including for supervision, country office, etc. will be utilized.

ADB's administered management and programme supervision costs - This is ADB's directly managed consultant budget for the PacREF (including consultant support in regular Programme oversight and preparation of the Programme Completion Report) and ADB's own supervision budget.

V. INCLUSIVE APPROACH

V.1 Development Partners

Please include a list of the development partners in the regional equivalent of the local education group (LEG) that were consulted in the development of this application.

Development Partner	Role
Australia: Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade (DFAT)	As a member of the CROP Human Resources Development Working Group
New Zealand: Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade (MFAT)	As a member of the CROP Human Resources Development Working Group
World Bank	Conduct of Research under PacREF
UNICEF	As an implementing agency and member of CROP HRD WG
UNESCO	As an implementing agency and member of CROP HRDWG
Secretariat of the Pacific Community - EQAP	As an implementing agency and member of the CROP HRD WG
University of the South Pacific	As an implementing agency and member of the CROP HRD WG

VI.2 Sign-off

Please scan this page after the signatures and include it as an attached file to the submission

Signature of applicant ministry representative

The below signatory endorses this application on behalf of the government.

Country:	
Name of signatory:	Click here to enter text.
Job title/ ministry:	Click here to enter text.
Email:	Click here to enter text.
Phone:	Click here to enter text.
Date:	Click here to enter a date.
Signature:	

Signature of applicant ministry representative

The below signatory endorses this application on behalf of the government.	
Country:	
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Job title/ ministry:	Click here to enter text.
Email:	Click here to enter text.
Phone:	Click here to enter text.
Date:	Click here to enter a date.
Signature:	

Signature of the grant agent representative (Country Director of agency)

The below signatory endorses this application on behalf of the grant agent agency or organization.

Name of signatory:	Click here to enter text.
Job title/ agency:	Click here to enter text.
Email:	Click here to enter text.
Phone:	Click here to enter text.
Date:	Click here to enter a date.
Signature:	

Signature of the coordinating agency representative

The below signatory endorses this application on behalf of the development partner group.

Name of signatory:	Click here to enter text.
Job title/ agency:	Click here to enter text.
Email:	Click here to enter text.
Phone:	Click here to enter text.
Date:	Click here to enter a date.
Signature:	

Submission: The coordinating agency submits the full ESPIG application package (see Regional ESPIG Guidelines for details) on behalf of the government and the local education group via email at gpe_grant_submission@globalpartnership.org, with copy to the grant agent, the applicant countries' ministry focal points and the country lead within the Secretariat. See page 2 for information on disclosure of ESPIG documents.

Annex I:

DEFINITIONS	
The definitions below explain how certain terms used in the template should be understood within the context of the ESPIG:	
Relating to funding modalities	
Budget support	This modality is fully aligned with country Public Financial Management Systems and the funding is indistinguishable from the domestic resources in the National Budget.
Sector Pooled	This refers to a scenario of diverse group of grant or credit modalities with varying instruments and mechanisms. The specificity for sector pooled funds is that multiple contributing partners deliver funds in a coordinated fashion to support implementation of the national education plan, or specific parts thereof. Under this modality, country systems are normally used for procurement, financial management, M&E and reporting.
Project pooled / Co-financed	This refers to a scenario where the funding mechanism is made up of different source agency funds to support a common project.
Project/ Stand-alone	This refers to a scenario where the funding mechanism is unilateral, or in other words, not pooled with any other sources of financing.
Relating to key indicators	
Number of textbooks purchased and distributed	This indicator tracks the number of school textbooks that were purchased and distributed through the Program during the reporting period. Textbooks are books designed for instructing pupils in specific subject areas. The requested data should include textbooks that have been distributed to schools and have either been distributed to pupils on loan or kept in schools for use in the classroom. The data on textbooks should exclude books in school libraries as well as novels and books for use by teachers (such as curriculum guides, syllabi and teacher guides). The data of textbooks can include textbooks in stock but not currently in use by pupils and should include all languages of instruction.
Number of teachers trained	This indicator tracks the number of teachers who received and completed formal training, according to national standards, through the Program during the reporting period. The requested data refers to formal teacher training (pre- or in-service) designed to equip teachers with the knowledge, attitude, behavior, and skills required for teaching at the relevant level and perform their tasks effectively. Teachers are comprised of professional teaching/instructional personnel who are directly involved in teaching students. They include classroom teachers; special education teachers; and other teachers who work with students as a class in a classroom, in small groups in a resource room, or in one-to-one teaching inside or outside a regular classroom. Teaching/ instructional staff excludes non-professional personnel who support teachers in providing instruction to students, such as teachers' aides and other paraprofessional personnel.
Number of classrooms built or rehabilitated	This indicator tracks the number of classrooms that were built and/or rehabilitated through the Program during this reporting period. Data on classrooms should be reported upon completion of the building or rehabilitation during the reporting period. Classrooms comprise rooms in which teaching or learning activities can take place. They are semi-permanent or permanent physical structures and may be located in a school.