

# Norwegian Refugee Council

## Terms of Reference – Greening Schools: Climate Adaptation Practices and Participatory Approaches

July 2025

---

### 1. Introduction and background

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) is an independent, humanitarian, non-profit organization that provides protection and durable solutions to displacement-affected populations. As a global leader in Shelter and Settlements (S&S), NRC is recognized for its expertise in emergency and transitional shelter, long-term housing, and community infrastructure, including school construction. Our approach combines technical excellence with participatory methods, recognizing that shelter is a process—not just a product. By integrating “software” components such as community engagement and inclusive design, we aim to deliver safe, sustainable, and dignified learning environments that contribute to broader outcomes in education, health, safety, and resilience.

NRC global strategy is committed to **Integrating Climate and Environment in NRC Response** (Sub-Objective 3). In recent years, climate adaptation (CA) and “greening” initiatives have emerged in schools across our operations, often involving S&S, WASH, and Education teams. However, these efforts are frequently fragmented, lacking coordination, quality assurance, and participatory design—especially in hard-to-reach areas.

To address this, NRC is launching a remote consultancy to consolidate existing best practices into a visual, user-friendly tip sheet and a catalogue of climate adaptation activities, and to curate/develop a practical toolkit with simplified participatory tools for greening schools. This work will contribute to the **Better Learning Spaces Guidance** and the **Climate Adaptation Toolkit**, supporting global and regional efforts to strengthen climate-responsive programming.

Regionally, the consultancy will focus on Central and West Africa (CWA) and East and Southern Africa (ESA), aiming to harmonize approaches, enhance program quality, and foster cross-country learning across core competencies—particularly in shelter, WASH, and education in schools.

---

### 1.1.1 Objective and scope of work

The objective of this consultancy is to review and enhance NRC's climate adaptation practices in schools across CWA and ESA regions. The Consultant will work remotely on the following scope of work:

- Map Climate Adaptation/greening activities across our core competences and how they are integrated in schools across 6 countries, assessing technical quality, sustainability, and level of community participation.
- Consolidate a visual tip sheet and catalogue of activities based on best practices, including budget guidance and when to engage technical expertise (RACI)
- Develop/Curate a toolkit of simplified participatory methods suitable for hard to-access areas based on PASSA and CVA. and validated against inclusion and gender considerations.
  - Support a dissemination event to share the outputs

### Methodology

The consultant will apply a mixed-methods approach, combining desk research, stakeholder engagement, and practical tool development. The methodology will include:

- **Desk Review:** Review relevant NRC climate and environmental objectives, internal toolkits on greening and participatory approaches, and external resources that reflect best practices in climate adaptation in schools. Identify and document gaps in current NRC guidance and propose alignment with global frameworks on Nature-based Solutions (NbS).
- **Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussions:** Conduct interviews and discussions with NRC staff across six selected countries in CWA and ESA. The aim is to map existing greening activities led by Shelter, WASH, and Education teams, and to understand the level of integration and collaboration among them. Additionally, to validate whether participatory methods used are context-appropriate, inclusive, and feasible in low-access settings.
- **Development of a Greening Schools Tip Sheet:** Based on the mapping and consultations, draft a practical tip sheet outlining best practices, budget considerations, and tools for designing and implementing greening activities in schools.
- **Toolkit for Participatory Approaches:** Design a user-friendly toolkit for implementing participatory greening approaches in hard-to-reach areas. This will draw on existing tools such as PASSA, VCA, and NRC's Community Engagement Toolbox, adapted to school settings.
- **Dissemination Events:** Support the organization and delivery of a dissemination event (e.g., webinar or workshop) to present the findings and tools to NRC's Shelter Community of Practice, Education COP and other relevant stakeholders.

### Geographical Scope

The consultant will work remotely and will not be required to conduct field visits. Engagement will take place with global staff and a selected group of country teams across NRC's Central and West Africa (CWA) and East and South Africa (ESA) regions. The final selection of six

countries will be based on the presence of active Shelter and Education greening initiatives. These are expected to include: **Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Mali, Uganda, Somalia, and South Sudan.**

### Management arrangements

The consultant will report to the **Global Climate & Environment Adviser**, with close collaboration from the **Global Shelter and Settlement Advisers**, relevant **Head of Programme** staff, and **Technical Specialists**. At the country level, engagement will be coordinated through the **Head of Programme, Area Managers**, and **technical teams**, who may delegate responsibilities to programme implementation staff as needed. NRC will own the intellectual property rights to all materials submitted by the consultants under the contract. The consultants must therefore ensure that they have possession of any materials provided to NRC as a part of the deliverable. The rights to reproduce the reports will fall to NRC and its contracted agents. NRC will be free to reproduce the materials at will and to grant reproduction rights.

## 2. Critical Interfaces

### Head Office

- Global Lead on Climate and Environment.
- Global Climate & Environment Adviser
- Global Shelter and Settlement Advisers for ESA and CWA
- Global Education Advisors ESA and CWA
- Global WASH Advisors ESA and CWA

### Country Office

- Head of Programme
- Technical Specialists/Programme Development Managers.
- Area Managers.
- Programme implementation staff (PMs, PCs as needed).

## 3. Expected timeline

The consultancy is expected to begin on in September 2025 and includes an **estimated 48 working days** up to 11th December 2025. The Consultant is expected to work in accordance with the timeline described below.

<b>1. Desk Review on climate adaptation developments in schools</b>	September
Review of NRC's climate and environmental objectives and strategic documents	4

Analyze internal toolkits and provide guidance on greening and participatory approaches.	5
Identify and summarize relevant external best practices and resources.	3
<b>1. Key Informant Interviews &amp; FGDs</b>	September
Coordinate with NRC country teams to identify key informants and schedule interviews.	2
Conduct interviews and focus group discussions across six selected countries.	6
Synthesize findings to map current greening activities and inter-sectoral collaboration.	3
<b>2. Tip Sheet Development</b>	October
Draft a practical tip sheet based on mapping and consultation findings.	3
Integrate guidance on budgeting, planning, and implementation of greening activities.	3
Circulate draft for feedback from technical teams and revise accordingly.	2
<b>3. Toolkit for participatory approaches for greening schools</b>	November
Review and adapt existing tools (e.g., PASSA, VCA, NRC's Community Engagement Toolbox).	2
Design/Curate simplified participatory tools tailored to school settings in hard-to-reach areas.	7
Compile tools into a structured, user-friendly implementation guide.	2
Include 2 short Case studies to ground recommendations in field practice	3
<b>5. Dissemination Event</b>	December
Design the format and agenda for a webinar or workshop.	1
Present key findings, tools, and case studies to NRC's Shelter Community of Practice and separate session for wider Programmes team.	1
Gather feedback and finalize all deliverables for submission.	1

#### **i. Expected outputs**

- 1 visual best practice tip sheet with diagrams and budget ranges.

- 1 catalogue of greening activities including RACI matrix and when to seek technical expertise.
- 1 summary of KIs and FG discussions
- 1 toolkit on participatory approaches adapted for hard-to-reach areas translated into English and French. (Support can be provided for translation if necessary)
- At least 2-3 case studies from ESA and CWA to ground recommendations in field practice (case study template to be provided).
- 2 dissemination events

#### **i. Skills/Qualifications**

NRC seeks expressions of interest from consultants and/or consulting teams with the following skills/qualifications and expertise:

- Proven experience in climate adaptation and environmental programming in humanitarian settings,
- Experience in school programming (shelter. Wash and education)
- Strong coordination and communication skills across technical sectors.
- Experience developing tools, guidance, and information products.
- Strong writing, analytical, and organizational skills.
- Understanding of international aid and development contexts.
- Fluency in written and spoken English and French
- Strong oral and written communications skills
- Excellent writing, communication skills flexibility and good organizational skills
- Understanding of international aid and development

#### **ii. Application Requirements**

Interested applicants are invited to submit the following materials:

- CV of the consultant (and team members, if applicable), highlighting relevant experience.
- Example(s) of similar work, preferably related to operational tool development or impact measurement in humanitarian or development settings.
- A brief proposal (max 2 pages) outlining the consultant's understanding of the task, proposed methodology, relevant tools or frameworks and an indicative timeline showing how the 25 working days will be structured across key phases.
- Financial proposal, including a breakdown of consultancy fees and any anticipated expenses.

**Closing Date: Thursday 14th August 2025 COB**

Send applications to: [julie.gassien@nrc.no](mailto:julie.gassien@nrc.no)

**Work anticipated to be done between September and December 2025.**