



Research Report



Child Rights and Climate Change Adaptation: **Voices from Kenya and Cambodia**

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Foreword

'Approaches to adaptation should recognise the highly differentiated nature of adaptive capacity across households, ages, geographic locations, gender, and ethnicity and not prescribe 'one-size-fits-all' solutions.

Children in many developing countries are critically exposed to the impacts of climate change. The effects of longer and more intense droughts, repeated floods and shifting seasons are severely hampering their education and creating community pressures that result in children being more at risk from economic and sexual exploitation. Consequently, climate change is causing child rights to become even more difficult to safeguard, as adults, communities and governments do not fully appreciate the threats to their children's future or are increasingly powerless to fulfil their responsibilities to protect them. This combination forces us to consider the question: How can countries and communities adapt effectively to the impacts of climate change while simultaneously creating an environment in which children can realise their rights?

Johan Schaar

Director, Commission on Climate Change and Development

Commission on Climate Change and Development (CCCCD, p31)



Contents

Acronyms	5
Glossary	6
Executive Summary	7
1. Introduction	9
2. What has climate change adaptation got to do with child rights?	10
3. Child rights and climate change in context: voices from Cambodia and Kenya	14
3.1. 'The drought is violating all our rights' (Kenya)	17
3.2. 'Our Right to Education' (Cambodia)	18
3.3. 'Our Right to Protection' (Cambodia and Kenya)	20
3.4. 'Our Right to Participate' (Cambodia and Kenya)	22
3.5. Recognising and supporting child participation in adaptation locally	23
4. Integrating child rights and national adaptation agendas	30
4.1. Embedding child rights in national adaptation	30
4.2. Integrating climate change into child rights policy processes	33
5. Conclusions	35
6. Recommendations	36
Annex 1	38
References	39

Acronyms

ALRMP	Arid Lands Resource Management Programme
ASAL	Arid and Semi-Arid Lands
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CC	Climate Change
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CCCD	Commission on Climate Change and Development
CDM	Clean Development Mechanisms
CCDM	Commune Committee for Disaster Management
CPE	Child Peer Educator
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRP	Child Rights Programming
CVCA	Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Networks
KACCAL	Kenya Adaptation to Climate Change in Arid Lands Project
LDC	Least Developed Country
LCDF	Least Developed Country Fund (managed by the Global Environmental Facility)
MoE	Ministry of Environment (Cambodia)
NAPA	National Adaptation Programme of Action
NCCC	National Climate Change Committee (Cambodia)
NCCO	National Climate Change Office (Cambodia)
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NSDP	National Strategic Development Plan
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PV	Participatory Video
PVCA	Participatory Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Glossary

Definitions of **Adaptation** set out in IPCC fourth assessment report (IPCC 2007)

Adaptation – Adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities. Various types of adaptation can be distinguished, including anticipatory, autonomous and planned adaptation:

Anticipatory adaptation – Adaptation that takes place before impacts of climate change are observed. Also referred to as proactive adaptation.

Autonomous adaptation – Adaptation that does not constitute a conscious response to climatic stimuli but is triggered by ecological changes in natural systems and by market or welfare changes in human systems. Also referred to as spontaneous adaptation.

Planned adaptation – Adaptation that is the result of a deliberate policy decision, based on an awareness that conditions have changed or are about to change and that action is required to return to, maintain, or achieve a desired state.

Adaptive capacity – The ability of a system to adjust to climate change (including climate variability and extremes) to moderate potential damages, to take advantage of opportunities, or to cope with the consequences.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) – The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is an international human rights convention ratified by 193 countries. Typically, the convention is discussed in terms of its four main principles which reflect all the articles in the convention. These are: survival and development; non-discrimination; child participation; the best interests of the child. State Parties are obliged to submit a progress report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child every five years.

Child Rights Programming (CRP) – CRP provides the framework for the implementation of a distinctly child-focused rights-based approach to development. At its core is the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The key starting point for CRP is a child rights situational analysis. It retains the core aspects of a rights-based approach, including a focus on empowerment of children and their families, and strengthening accountability of adult and government actors.

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) – The systematic development and application of policies, strategies and practices to minimise vulnerabilities, hazards and the unfolding of disaster impacts throughout a society, in the broad context of sustainable development (UNDP-BCRP 2004).

Resilience – System or community resilience can be understood as:

- capacity to minimise and absorb stress or destructive forces through resistance or adaptation
- capacity to manage, or maintain certain basic functions and structures, during disastrous events
- capacity to recover or ‘bounce back’ after an event

‘Resilience’ is generally seen as a broader concept than ‘capacity’ because it goes beyond the specific behaviour, strategies and measures for risk reduction and management that are normally understood as capacities (Twigg 2007).

Vulnerability – The degree to which a system is susceptible to, or unable to cope with, adverse effects of climate change, including climate variability and extremes. Vulnerability is a function of the character, magnitude, and rate of climate variation to which a system is exposed, its sensitivity, and its adaptive capacity (IPCC 2001).

Executive Summary

In 2009, research with children, adults, and policymakers took place in drought and flood prone regions of Kenya and Cambodia to see how children saw their rights being linked to changing climatic conditions. This report presents evidence of children's capacities to analyse, articulate and claim their rights.

The most urgent task for safeguarding child rights in a changing climate is an effective internationally binding global deal on emissions reductions. However, primary responsibility for adaptation planning and delivery and for implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child rests with national governments. This report focuses on the potential for national adaptation planning to be made in the best interests of the child, and how a rights-based perspective on climate change adaptation must transform national adaptation planning.

The children who took part in the research are involved in a programme implemented by Plan International to reduce risk of disasters and had received non-formal education on child rights. At the time of the research, children in Kenya were experiencing their third consecutive year of failed rains. Cambodian children had seen their families' crops devastated by unseasonal rains. They clearly articulated the links between worsening drought and erratic rainfall and violations of their rights as established under the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). They prioritised:

- **Lack of access to water and irrigation infrastructure** threatening their agriculture-based livelihoods, causing a decline in food availability and income. Children recognise that their right to food and therefore **their rights to survival and development** are being undermined.
- **Insecure livelihoods** requiring them to spend more time farming or generating income and thereby constraining their access to education alongside increased hunger and illness. **Physical access** to school in times of flood is a further priority concern. Denial of their **right to education** undermines their **rights to survival and development, to non-discrimination and to protection** in the case of physical safety when travelling to school.
- **Insecurity associated with risks of abuse** they are exposed to when in search of increasingly scarce food and/or migrating because there is not work where they live and they need to support their families. Children recognise their **right to protection** and ways in which climate change is undermining their safety.
- **Lack of voice or power to stop further environmental degradation.** Children see how poor natural resource management contributes to violations of their rights by increasing hazards and limiting agricultural productivity, and therefore increasing their vulnerability to climate change. They meet many constraints on their **right to participate** in environmental management and to take action to change behaviour in their communities and nationally. In turn, this is violating their **rights to survival and development.**

Evidence gathered from the children participating in this research demonstrated their aptitude for absorbing new information; proposing adaptation strategies; acting on future visions and the needs of future generations; and taking action for the benefit of their communities; prioritising sustainable management of natural resources and environmental concerns.

This report proposes that fulfilling child rights in a changing climate requires a two-track approach: (1) integrating child rights into national climate change responses and (2) integrating climate change into national child rights agendas.

Applying elements of Child Rights Programming to adaptation policy development would mean that adaptation would need to: address violations of children's rights brought about by climate change; strengthen institutional and policy mechanisms for responding to climate change so that children are not hurt and their adaptive capacity strengthened; and strengthen communities and civil society's capacity to support children's rights under the conditions that climate change presents.

Adaptation planning and delivery should include:

- Climate vulnerability and capacity analysis disaggregated by age, gender, urban and rural.
- Engagement with and support for participatory spaces created by, with, and for children.
- Child-centred resilience projects and programmes with dedicated support and resources (dealing particularly with underlying causes of vulnerability).
- Child rights-based indicators for monitoring and evaluation.

Strengthening local institutions and tackling gender inequality are two further dimensions of adaptation policy and programming that are particularly relevant to increasing the adaptive capacity of children and their communities.

The CRC reporting mechanism also provides an established channel to influence national policy where a child-centred climate resilience agenda can be advanced. It is important to raise awareness on the impact climate change has on children and their rights amongst child rights networks and other actors involved in the CRC reporting, so that this perspective is included in the agenda of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Governments and NGOs will be influenced to conduct CRC reporting in the context of the latest information on climate change and children's vulnerability and capacity to adapt and ensure that all government and private development interventions safeguard rights and don't increase vulnerability to climate change.

Realising child rights in a changing climate needs action at every level, and this action must be guided by children's own analysis of their situations as well as what we know about safeguarding the rights of children in vulnerable situations. A broad set of recommendations is provided for governments, donors and civil society.

1.0

Introduction

'Many people are not resilient to extreme weather patterns and climate variability. They are unable to protect their families, livelihoods and food supply from negative impacts of seasonal rainfall leading to floods or water scarcity during extended droughts. Climate change is multiplying these risks.'

Global Humanitarian Forum 2009, p2

Children are particularly affected by climate change, for example, many of the main threats to child survival like malaria, diarrhoea and undernutrition are highly sensitive to climatic conditions and these are expected to worsen as a result of climate change (UNICEF 2008). Children's unique conditions of physical, cognitive and physiological immaturity mean they can be more at risk from intense drought, recurring floods, the impact of climate variability on livelihoods and other weather related disasters. (ibid. p4; Save the Children 2009)

Children are least responsible for historic carbon emissions. Yet children are barely visible in international or national adaptation debates, both in terms of recognition of their particular rights, needs and capabilities and in terms of their physical participation. Where children feature in adaptation strategy documents, it is connected with their vulnerability rather than their agency.

The most urgent task for safeguarding child rights in a changing climate is an effective internationally binding global deal on emissions reductions. However, with primary responsibility for adaptation planning and delivery and for implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) resting with national governments, this report focuses on the potential for national adaptation planning to be made in the best interests of the child.

The CRC is designed to protect children both in times of normality and in disasters (Mitchell et al. 2009). Chapter 2 describes the relevance of the CRC to a changing climate. In particular, it takes the position that national climate change policy responses must be guided by human rights, prioritising attention to the most vulnerable and principles of non-discrimination. This requires child rights analysis. Such analysis includes the extent to which children's perspectives and experiences of climate change are visible and influential in policy and programming.

The report presents research that took place in 2009 with children, adults, and policymakers in drought and flood prone regions of Kenya and Cambodia to see how children saw their rights being linked to changing climatic conditions (Chapter 3) and the constraints they face. The children who participated in the research are part of a programme implemented by Plan International to reduce risk of disasters and had received non-formal education on child rights. Chapter 3 presents evidence of children's capacities to analyse, articulate and claim their rights, and examples of how they are being supported in doing so.

Frameworks for delivering adaptation are under rapid development in many countries. Chapter 4 sets out how this research conducted with children forms a component of Child Rights Programming approaches that can help shape the delivery of adaptation. It also discusses CRC reporting as another national policy space to be considered. Chapter 5 presents conclusions and Chapter 6 presents recommendations.

2.0

What has climate change adaptation got to do with child rights?

'What has child rights got to do with climate change?'

Climate change policymaker, Kenya

The basic premise of the CRC is that children (all human beings below the age of 18), like all human beings, are born with fundamental freedoms and the inherent human rights. Many governments have enacted legislation, created mechanisms and put into place a range of creative measures to ensure the protection and realisation of the rights of those under the age of 18. Each government must also report back on children's rights in their country.

The Convention is often discussed in terms of its four main principles: non-discrimination (Article 2); best interests of the child (Article 3); survival and development (Article 6); and child participation (Article 12). These principles are mutually reinforcing, interrelated and indivisible and should be reflected in the interpretation of all other articles. The Preamble emphasises that all rights have equal significance.

193 States have ratified the Convention. Yet millions of children exist without even their most basic rights to survival secured. Conditions of child poverty mean that children are even less well equipped to cope with and adapt to the changes brought about by climate change. In this sense, securing child rights is an essential element of adaptation.

Climate change is projected to increase the number of malnourished children in Africa by 10 million to 52 million in the next 40 years (IFPRI 2009). With a third of all child and infant mortality induced by child malnutrition (50 per cent in Sub-Saharan Africa) (Sumner et al. 2009) children's basic survival is at stake. This provides evidence that climate change is undermining children's rights to life, health and an adequate standard of living for survival and development, as enshrined most explicitly in Articles 6, 24, and 27:

Article 6 (I) States Parties recognize that every child has the inherent right to life.

Article 24 (I) States Parties recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health.

Article 27 (I) States Parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.

A focus on health is critical to ensure that resourcing for health services under climate change is mobilised, and services are reoriented where necessary. However, the Convention comprises 54 Articles extending child rights well beyond these three.

A number of other Articles are also particularly pertinent to a changing climate:

Climate induced migration, and displacement caused by extreme events also hit children particularly hard. Their right to shelter¹ or parental care (Article 7) can be taken away in an instant. In the case of slower onset disasters and stresses, it is well established that when family livelihoods suffer and asset bases are eroded, children become the risk management strategy – they may be increasingly absent from school or drop out altogether to increase their role in domestic tasks or income generation. Article 28 deals with the Right to Education and Article 29 with the substance of education provision. Article 29(e) enshrines the right to development of respect for the natural environment, which is directly relevant to the concerns expressed by children in the next chapter.

Female children may also have to leave their families either through early marriage or labour migration, with direct relevance to non-discrimination rights (Article 2). Migration, displacement, disasters, increased child labour and increased exposure to risk of sexual abuse (resulting from conditions of poverty and the need for children to work in isolation) impact directly on children's safety. A child's right to protection is enshrined throughout the Preamble and many Articles of the Convention.

Children have a right to be heard in all matters affecting them (Articles 12 and 13).² This applies to all responses to climate change. Participatory rights are echoed throughout climate change adaptation literature which emphasises the inherently local nature of autonomous adaptation (see Glossary, this paper and IPCC 2001), the need for strong local formal and informal institutions, and for social inclusion in externally driven interventions. Yet typically children are still seen as passive bystanders in climate change responses, and the proliferation of top-down interventions and the dominance of 'climate science' reinforces the need to investigate and emphasise a child's right to participate.

State Parties to the CRC are the primary duty-bearers for the protection, promotion and fulfilment of child rights. All adaptation policymakers have a duty to contribute to the fulfilment of child rights. As a starting point, key questions can be asked of adaptation planning processes with regards to the four general principles (Table 2.1). Child rights situation analysis should build upon the information, views and opinions of children themselves, parents and caregivers, stakeholders such as community leaders, and duty-bearers.

¹ The Right to Shelter is also enshrined in Article 27 in the obligations of duty-bearers to see to children's need for housing. Individual Constitutions may be more explicit about the Child's Right to Shelter such as the South African Constitution Article 28 (1)(c). See Brand and Heyns (2005)

² CCC (2008) sets out the case for greater participation of children in adaptation to climate change with examples of children taking a leading role at different levels.

Table 2.1: Linking the CRC Principles with Climate Change Adaptation

General Principles of the CRC	Relevance to Climate Change Adaptation	Key Questions for Adaptation Planning
Non-discrimination	Child rights apply to all children; Adaptation policies and programme responses should be inclusive to marginalized groups and designed in a way that does not discriminate against any children. ³ Short-term coping which discriminates along gender lines (e.g. decreased access to school for girls) must be addressed through adaptation.	Are some children particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts? Where are children invisible or excluded in policy spaces and programmes?
Best interests of the child	States and other duty-bearers must ensure that the best interests of the child are a primary consideration in climate change policy and programme responses. Urgent action must be taken on climate change to ensure children are not harmed.	What tools ensure that the rights of the child are respected in adaptation, development, and disaster risk reduction programmes and policies? How can 'one-size-fits-all' approaches be avoided so that the unique interests of all children are considered?
The right to life, survival and development	Adaptation assistance needs to prioritise access to basic services for children to secure their right to an adequate standard of living and conditions in which they can develop.	What are the greatest challenges to child survival and to children fulfilling their full potential in a changing climate in each locality? What opportunities exist for breaking cycles of poverty and to build adaptive capacity of children?
Respect for the views of the child	Children must have a voice in all responses to climate change, given the impacts the changes are having and will have on their lives.	How can children's voices in adaptation and disaster risk reduction programmes be better supported? How can they be better supported to engage, and how can their perspectives have influence?

³ States Parties have obligations to realise the rights of all children, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.

'Of course we can talk about children and climate change, just like we talk about gender and climate change, but what does it mean in practice?'

Government representative, Cambodia
Climate Change Office

Many national climate change policymakers are not considering children specifically

During the initial phase of adaptation efforts, the framing of climate change assessment as an environmental and forecasting issue resulted in national coordinating units commonly being based in environmental or sometimes meteorology departments. More recently, there has been greater attention to recognising the vulnerability of different groups and the need for integration of climate change into development and poverty reduction planning. However, the prioritisation of children and child rights analysis does not feature strongly in national adaptation plans. National climate change policy actors may be aware of the likely impacts on children who are already experiencing conditions of poverty, yet they are less aware of children's adaptive capacity, and how adaptation policies and programmes can be child sensitive, for both safeguarding child rights and for effective climate-resilient development.

Many Child Rights actors are not considering the implications of climate change

The domestication of the CRC into national legislation in countries that have ratified the Convention aims to strengthen national institutions for children, ensure resources are allocated for children's welfare, and increase children's involvement in decision-making processes. Climate change is likely to put pressure on all of these processes. However many national actors are not yet familiar with the web of implications of climate change for social stability and children's welfare (UNICEF 2008, pp10).

This report proposes that the linkages set out above demand both child rights analysis of climate change policy responses and integrating an understanding of climate change vulnerability and adaptation into child rights analysis and the processes by which individual States are implementing the CRC.

Box 2.1

NAPAs and Child Rights

National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs) have been prepared by 43 Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to analyse climate vulnerability and identify priority urgent and immediate adaptation projects for accessing international finance. Many NAPAs make a few scattered references to children as being amongst the most vulnerable, but very few target children explicitly in their priority adaptation projects. No references reflect children's agency to contribute to adaptation. It cannot be assumed that projects targeting particular sectors, environmental management or food security will help secure child rights.

3.0

Child rights and climate change in context: voices from Cambodia and Kenya

'We are getting to a time when our children will grow up without knowing what rain is.'

Elder, Mazola Village, Kenya

This section presents voices and analysis from Cambodia and Kenya. This research started from the premise that adaptation assistance will only be effective if framed by children's own analysis of their rights to climate change. Table 3.1. summarises the concerns of children in both countries.

Table 3.1: Children's primary concerns associated with climate change impacts

Key concerns	Key impacts and rights affected
Lack of access to water and irrigation infrastructure causing a decline in food availability and income.	Hunger is the greatest challenge to their health, wellbeing and development. Children want to be able to contribute to building their families' livelihoods; however, they recognise that their rights to survival and development are being undermined by both climate impacts and lack of appropriate infrastructure.
Insecure livelihoods requiring them to spend more time/priority concern, generating income, constraining their access to education , alongside increased hunger and illness.	Physical access to school in times of flood is a further constraint. These constraints are gendered and while there have been improvements in the enrolment and attendance of girls in schools, they are still the most likely to drop out or be absent. Denial of their right to education undermines their right to survival and development , to non-discrimination and to protection in the case of physical safety when travelling to school.
Insecurity associated with risks of abuse they are exposed to, when going in search of increasingly scarce food and/or migrating because there is not work where they live and they need to support their families.	This is gendered, and was particularly voiced amongst Kenyan children who feel girls are particularly at risk when carrying out domestic tasks alone, early or late in the day. Girls may be forced into early marriages or exposed to sexual exploitation in return for food. Children recognise their right to protection and ways in which climate change is undermining their safety.
Increasing vulnerability from local environmental degradation impacting on income and immediate survival.	Children see how poor natural resource management increases hazards and limits agricultural productivity, increasing their vulnerability to climate change, and therefore violating all rights, particularly survival and development .
Lack of voice or power to stop further environmental degradation.	Children in Kenya in particular are very aware of the impacts of forest destruction, charcoal burning and sand harvesting on their local environment. Children are motivated to take considerable action to change behaviour and ensure policies are enforced, yet they meet many constraints on their right to participate .

Box 3.1

Where are children in National Adaptation Policy Arenas? Overview of Cambodia and Kenya

Cambodia

Vulnerability to climate change

High levels of poverty, natural resource-dependent livelihoods, weak governance, and food insecurity leave the country extremely vulnerable to the effects of climate change (see MFA Denmark 2008, p34; Oxfam GB 2007). Cambodia already has the highest fatality from malaria in Asia. (WHO n.d.) Unpredictable or unseasonal flooding, drought and high temperatures are all reportedly impacting agriculture production, health, transportation, livelihoods, and access to education. Severe floods from 2000–02 affected 3.4 million people and destroyed 7,086 houses (wikiADAPT 2009). Whilst not attributable directly to climate change, this indicates the widespread social impact of extreme climatic events.

Coordinating institutions and policy processes for Adaptation

The Government of Cambodia has established the National Climate Change Coordinating Committee (comprising 19 Government ministries and agencies)⁴ supported by a National Climate Change Office based in the Ministry of Environment. Cambodia completed its National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) in 2005, presenting 39 priority projects. Cambodia is receiving finance from the Least Developed Country Fund (LCDF)⁵ for a climate resilient water management and agricultural practice project led by the UNDP in rural Cambodia. Cambodia is also a recipient country of the World Bank financed Pilot Programme on Climate Resilience being delivered through the Ministry of Economy and Finance and the European Commission's pilot Global Climate Change Alliance supporting capacity development and aid coordination on climate change. In October 2009, Cambodia's first major multi-stakeholder National Climate Change Forum took place.

How visible are children?

A small number of projects in the NAPA are directly relevant to children, such as a disaster risk reduction in schools initiative (medium priority) and malaria control programmes. The priority projects on water resources management and agriculture production are also highly relevant to realising child rights. However, overall, the document does not consider children in any depth nor prioritise children, and they were not involved in its formulation. The NAPA process involved community level vulnerability assessments consulting men and women. The data, however, is not disaggregated by sex or age.

There is some cross-referencing between the NAPA and the current National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP), and more consideration of climate change is expected in the next NSDP (2009-2013) providing scope for climate proofing of child poverty reduction strategies. However, there is a reported lack of technical capacity of relevant staff on climate change adaptation (Mony and Chea 2007) in general and limited climate information availability (wikiADAPT 2009) which could jeopardise the potential for child rights to be prioritised in national adaptation planning.

⁴ The NCCO's mandate is 'to prepare, coordinate and monitor the implementation of policies, strategies, legal instruments, plans and programmes of the Royal Government to address climate change issues' (Navan 2009)

⁵ The LCDF is a fund entrusted to the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) to provide finance for the development of NAPAs

Kenya

Vulnerability to climate change

Increasing persistent drought and failed rains over the past decade, and El Niño rains have had devastating impacts on already degraded lands. These conditions and dependency on rain-fed agriculture leaves a majority of citizens highly vulnerable to climate change. In a food security briefing from August 2009, 3.8 million Kenyans required urgent humanitarian food assistance and 1.5 million primary school children in drought-affected areas required food assistance (Government of Kenya 2009). Drought and poverty-induced absenteeism from school particularly amongst girls, and drop-out rates due to early marriages and teenage pregnancies are well documented (IRIN 2009).

Coordinating institutions and policy processes for Adaptation

The Government of Kenya has established a National Climate Change Coordination Unit in the Office of the Prime Minister. A National Climate Change Response Strategy is due to be completed in November 2009. Several major national initiatives exist, including the World Bank funded Kenya Adaptation to Climate Change in Arid Lands Project.

How visible are children?

The Arid Lands Resource Management Programme (ALRMP), which operates out of the Office of the Prime Minister, includes significant work on food security, education, health and sustainable natural resource management in the research locations with intended benefits for child survival and development. Other major Government initiatives exist across Kenya to address the impacts of extreme drought on children.⁶ Children are also considered in the current draft disaster management policy. Overall, however, children are not explicitly considered in a way which recognises their rights, capacities and agency. A longer-term approach to drought management is needed to reduce risks and the need for emergency relief. Involvement of children in drought risk reduction needs strengthening.

Children identified key climate-related hazards in their community, and how these impacted them. The children then linked particular impacts of climate change or mechanisms taken by their families to cope with climate change, with violations of their rights. The timing of the research meant that the primary concern in Kenya was drought. In Cambodia, erratic rainfall and unpredictable seasons meant that flood, drought and high temperatures were all considered significant. None of the research locations in either country had recently experienced fast onset extreme events. Neither had they faced displacement or relocation in recent years. This context is reflected in their priority concerns and reinforces the necessity of local and participatory assessments.

⁶ For example, Njaa Marufuku, Kenya <http://www.fao.org/spfs/national-programmes-spfs/success-npfs/kenya/en/> (accessed 29 January 2010)

3.1. 'The drought is violating all our rights' (Kenya)

The Rights of the Child are interrelated and indivisible (CRC 1989). Children recognise that livelihood security for their families underpins all their opportunities. Children, well-versed in their rights through non-formal child rights education, living in severely drought-prone regions of Kenya, were able to clearly articulate the links between worsening drought and violations of their rights. As they study and discuss their rights, worsening climatic conditions are simultaneously undermining progress towards realising their rights:

- Children discussed their 'right to life survival and development', alongside reporting how climate change is increasing the need to go without breakfast, borrow food from their relatives, or wait for food aid to arrive, which in some cases is delivered but lasts just a week;
- Children discussed their 'right to education' alongside reporting how severe droughts and floods force them to drop out of, or be absent from school to work domestically and earn income for their families;
- Children discussed their 'right to protection', alongside reporting how hunger and food insecurity is increasing the need for girls to go in search of food and income, putting them at greater risk of abuse.

In Kenya, the arrival of food aid in communities was expressed as a significant change for children, alongside the decline in farming work of their families, and the shift from harvesting maize to having to purchase maize.

'We used to have white maize flour, but now we get yellow flour. Now our parents are buying it. We didn't know you could buy maize flour before.'

Female student, Grade 4 Mazola School, Kwale, Kenya

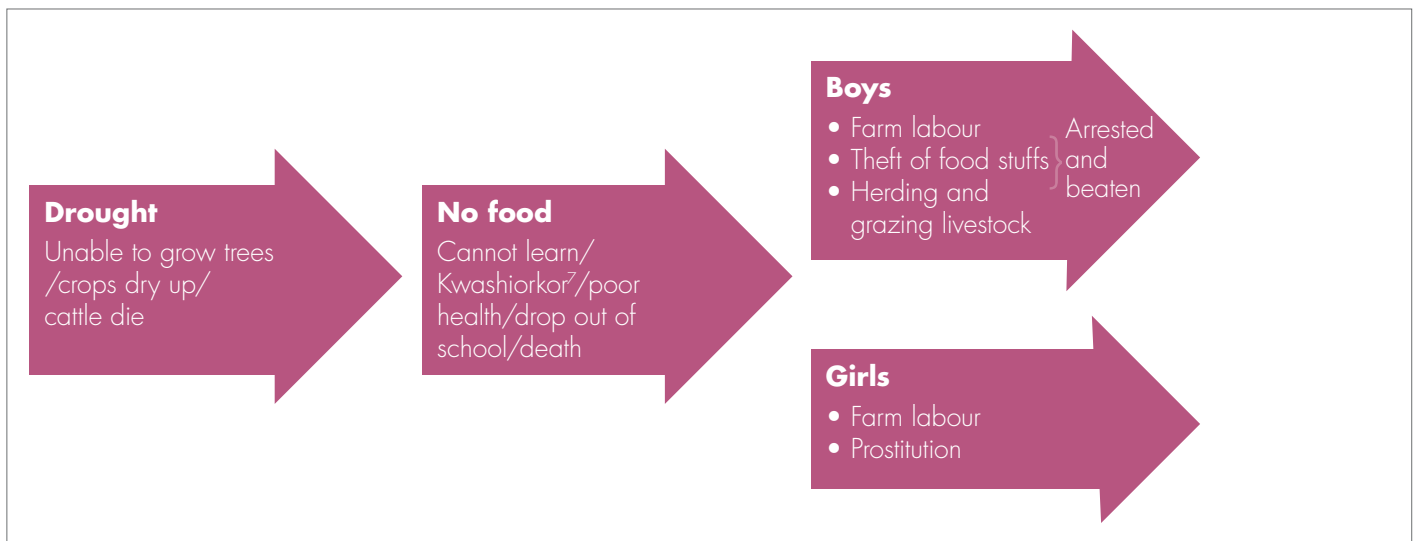
'We used to see parents going to the farm – but now children just see them sitting and making charcoal.'

Female student, Mazola School, Kwale Kenya

Children are very aware of the downward spiralling implications of increased poverty and hunger brought about by drought. This includes awareness of impacts for both boys and girls. Girls are more likely to drop out of school. Figure 3.1 shows how children feel climate change has the potential to impact their aspirations of a good future.



Figure 3.1 An example of implications of drought on children's futures, identified by children in Kenya.



Children understood the implications of short-term coping strategies such as charcoal burning, sand harvesting and child labour for their futures. Annex 1 shows in more detail the different impacts and coping strategies children identified.

The most common topics of discussion for children were:

- hunger (the decline in food availability and reliance on food aid and school feeding);
- multiple limitations on access to education (including: hunger, illness, income generation responsibilities, human-wildlife conflict);
- protection issues primarily associated with having to go in search of food or income;
- lack of voice or power to stop further degradation through charcoal burning.

3.2. 'Our Right to Education' (Cambodia)

For children in rural Cambodia, access to school is limited by many factors. However, the livelihood impacts of erratic rainfall causing extreme floods and extended drought presents a major limitation to the fulfilment of their right to education. Increased prevalence of drought is seen as the greatest hazard in the majority of districts where Plan is implementing its child-focused Disaster Risk Reduction programme. In bad years, severe droughts have destroyed up to 90 per cent of crops (Plan International 2009).

In regions where up to 80 per cent rely upon small-scale agriculture, crop failure and poor harvests are having lasting impacts on children's development.

'Since the climate has changed, our studies have been badly affected. We have to spend more time helping our family in farming and non-farming activities. We don't have much time to study. Hot weather and drought means our family needs to pump water for our rice fields from sources further away than before which our parents cannot manage by themselves. When the situation is urgent we have to miss school to help them out.'

CPE, Seda Commune, Cambodia

⁷ Kwashiorkor is a protein deficiency related form of malnutrition

Declining or insecure livelihoods are seen as the greatest barrier to attending school. But physical barriers such as distance and poor infrastructure mean that absenteeism is high during flooding. Some families are forced to relocate during the flood seasons, with even greater need for food, fuel, transportation, and basic supplies (ibid.)

Our school is far from the village and the floods cause many difficulties for the community. Especially for children. The roads get cut off and the bridges collapse and the majority of children cannot get to school!

Child narrator, participatory video script, Neang Teut Commune, Kampong Cham, Cambodia

Adults reported that during floods, they faced the difficult choice of keeping children at home or allowing them to travel by boat to school when many of them cannot swim. Furthermore parents stated that they don't always have confidence in the teaching provision, which makes them less inclined to prioritise school over domestic work or farming. Children have to travel long distances to reach school, where they may find teachers have not appeared, or are not providing the required amount of instruction.

Children were emphatic about their desire to study and to reach higher levels of education. They are determined to work hard and study against the odds, for themselves, their families and their communities. Children discussed their desire to seek further education to increase their chances of a profession not solely dependent on farming, but also see their role in helping the family as important. Some children do small-scale trading to support their studies.

Progress in free primary education programmes has increased enrolment in Cambodia, particularly for girls. In some areas in Cambodia, children only study half days, freeing time for domestic tasks or other activities. The opening of high schools has also created some new opportunities for students to reach higher grades, but many children are frustrated by the livelihood and food insecurity constraints they face to accessing and continuing their education.





3.3. 'Our Right to Protection' (Cambodia and Kenya)

Besides the impacts on access to education, children in Kenya and Cambodia reported being at risk from ill-health and exploitation from some coping strategies. They see drought-induced child labour and the seeking of food and income, as being directly related to their right to protection. Kenyan children in Matuu District work on coffee plantations and as domestic helps, amongst other forms of employment. In Cambodia, children are employed extensively in the cultivation and processing of cassava, which is physically demanding. For both girls and boys, when earning income on other peoples' farms or in homes interactions with employers can be difficult, and some children reported that they do not feel safe.

'My parents really need me to help even during my school hours since our family face insufficient income. We need to work in Cassava plantation to earn income to help our parents. Sometimes, we get sick since we work under very hot temperature and we cannot go to school.'

CPE, Seda Commune, Kampong Cham, Cambodia

Children discussed the risks associated with fetching water or travelling alone to market places. In Kenya in particular, children talked about the physical exhaustion of fetching water early in the morning before school, or after a long day at school. They were aware that travelling far from the school or village put them, particularly girls, at risk of attack or sexual abuse, particularly if they have to travel in the dark. Very young children in Kenya have to endure the physical burden of carrying water to school each day; the water required for school nurseries.

For children in Kwale District in Kenya, another major concern associated with the

drought is the risk of encounters with elephants. Drought is driving elephants out of the National Park in search of water often closer to human settlements. As well as the devastation caused to crops they pose a physical danger for children. Children are forced to try and make their journeys earlier in the morning and evening, so that they are not stopped from reaching school.

Sensitisation programmes by Plan have led to greater confidence in discussing issues of child protection. The children that Plan work with in Kenya are able to discuss openly the risks girls are put at when going to the towns to sell goods. Hunger is making girls more vulnerable to sexual exploitation. This risk of sexual exploitation was a commonly cited hazard and a major concern of children in Kenya, alongside the increased risks of early marriages and pregnancies. In Cambodia discussion of violence or sexual exploitation of children is sensitive and, whilst indicated as an issue related to climate impacts on livelihoods, risks to girls were not openly discussed during the research. An early study stated that coping mechanisms such as 'gambling, becoming sex workers and how migration affects children's education' should be further investigated over time if sufficient rapport exists with researchers (ibid.)

Migration is a common risk management strategy in both countries for different members of the family. It can expose children to greater risks of abuse. In Cambodia, since 1996, floods and droughts have frequently damaged rice production. As a consequence, people have had to sell their labour or send children to work outside their village to earn income. In Siem Reap Province, household approaches to migration include both moving to work on the Thai-Cambodia border, and sending children to work in garment factories or construction sites.



3.4. 'Our Right to Participate' (Cambodia and Kenya)

Tree planting campaigns across Kenya have inspired children to engage in the management of their natural resources. Schools play a key role in mobilising children to plant trees, as well as school-based agriculture programmes in some cases. Children are knowledgeable on reforestation, agroforestry and drought management techniques for agriculture including drought resistant crops, water conservation and irrigation techniques. Children were emphatic about the urgent need to control the cutting of trees for charcoal burning.

The greatest sense of frustration expressed by children related to their concern for the environment (principally deforestation, but also, in Kenya, overgrazing and sand harvesting), as it relates to the degradation of agricultural land and access to resources, and now increasingly erratic rainfall. For them, this is climate change. However, they continue to witness the devastation of their remaining forests and degradation of lands by adults. Kenyan children, in particular, feel they are being given mixed messages, and are frustrated at the lack of action by their community and authorities, both on charcoal burning and sand harvesting. They believe regulation should be more strictly enforced – including arresting those responsible. It is a highly sensitive issue in the home, given the burden on adults to provide food. Children therefore recognise the need to take action both in tree planting and in mobilising themselves to demand action from their Chief directly.

'CC is affecting us and in the future if we are not involved, we will live in desert, so we have to do something now so that we prevent our land from becoming a desert. The rivers have dried up and sand mining has increased, this has caused many children to drop out of school to work in mines in the rivers in loading the vehicles.'

[When I grow up] I would like to be an agriculture officer, so as to give free seedlings to plant trees, so that we can prevent our land becoming desert. Now it's the start of the drought and animals are dying. People do not have enough food. People are eating the animals after they die which is causing diseases.'

Our chief or MP has to tell people to plant trees and abolish the mining of sands, because it's the only river which we depend on. The sand has been mined leaving it looking ugly, and it will decrease the water retention of the river.'

Samuel, 14, Machakos, Kenya



In Cambodia, children saw a variety of benefits for participating in Peer Educator Programmes, through which they can be involved in disaster risk reduction, and decision-making. These included:

- contributing to the community and supporting their parents;
- supporting other children;
- tackling diverse issues in their villages;
- increasing their confidence and building respect between children and between adults;
- learning and increasing their opportunities to access higher levels of education.

However, unless supported, children lack power and resources to realise their desires in environment and development initiatives. In Kenya, they face major barriers in transforming their classroom learning on agriculture and environmental protection, into actual implementation in their homes and community.

Box 3.2

Challenges faced by children implementing tree planting campaigns

Kenyan children reporting their parent's responses to their tree planting work:

They will tell us not to be silly.

They will ask 'Who will water them?' as we are in school.

They will ask 'How will it help us?'

They say 'Do not create a forest here, it will bring the elephants.'

Adults too agreed that it was not easy to challenge:

Not just children, but mothers are told what to do. If anyone is told to cut a tree she will simply do it. If a woman or child refuses to obey the orders she is told to go and look for food by herself.

Adult participant, Kithyoko Village, Kenya

3.5 Recognising and supporting child participation in adaptation locally

When asked about child welfare in relation to climate change impacts, adult participants typically focused on health impacts. The previous sections show the diversity of issues children relate to climate change. Children face multiple challenges to claiming their rights, some because their ideas are not taken seriously, some because they contradict traditional roles, and often because most issues present complex dilemmas for parents and adults with responsibilities for providing food and care.

3.5.1 Children's analytical and adaptive capacity

For decades, populations in the research locations in Cambodia and Kenya have experienced cycles of drought and floods, and have coped with and adapted to extreme climatic conditions through their own actions, as individuals, households and as communities – often with little or no government or external support. Children are as much a part of these autonomous adaptation processes as adults. Children are also capable of contributing to the identification of community-based adaptation strategies. Table 3.2 shows the drought management strategies identified by children in Kenya.

Table 3.2: Kenyan children's livelihood security strategies

Tree/Forest Management	Agriculture	Water Conservation and Irrigation	Awareness-Raising information access	Alternative livelihoods
Enforce bans on tree cutting and charcoal burning	Good agricultural practices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irrigation • Using manure • Crop rotation • Cover crops • Drought resistant crops • Fast maturing crops 	Rain water harvesting, especially in schools, and build iron sheet roofed houses.	Sensitisation campaigns to change people's attitudes including to types of food ⁸	E.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fish farming • Bee keeping • Goat rearing • Poultry farming
Plant more trees, including fruit trees and drought resistant varieties (e.g. Gravelia Robusta)	Plant sisal or aloe vera (for income generation)	Sinking boreholes	Integrating environmental education in primary and secondary school	Small businesses, petty trading small kiosks, bicycle and motorcycle taxis
Plant trees to prevent erosion. When there is no rain (and return to farming when rains come)	Good livestock management	For Irrigation: Zai Pits, dams, small-scale irrigation techniques	Involvement of children in decision-making	Learning new skills to diversify income from farming alone
'Cut one, plant two'	Selling of animals during droughts and re-stocking after droughts		Improving status and knowledge of traditional early warning systems from the Kaya elders and get climate information from the radio	
Education on the importance of trees	Controlled grazing (reducing livestock, and keeping in paddocks)			
	Seasonal migration of animals to where there are pastures			
	School agriculture programmes			

⁸ This refers to enabling a shift from maize as the main food crop through increasing acceptability of other crops presently deemed less tasty.



Children in Cambodia showed a similar understanding of opportunities and priorities through a participatory vulnerability and capacity assessment (PVCA). Plan provide seed funding to support DRR activities proposed by the children and supported by adults through wider consultation. In Neang Teut Commune Child Peer Educators (CPEs) suggested the following activities, some of which children will lead on, others they will advocate to parents, elders and local authorities to fulfil their roles:

- reserving food for use during the drought season;
- reserving drought-resistant rice seed and growing drought-resistant rice;
- digging canals and ponds for irrigation;
- growing vegetables like cabbages and morning glory;
- increasing income generating activities;
- pig raising;
- tree planting;
- awareness-raising on environmental protection.

3.5.2 Aspirations and Enthusiasm

Persistent unpredictable seasons and insufficient rain, are forcing farming communities in both countries to consider fundamental changes they may need to make to survive uncertain climate conditions. In Kenya, increasing recognition that climate variability and prolonged drought is the norm, is forcing farmers, authorities and development agencies to take seriously the need to shift from a dependency on maize as the primary food crop, in favour of more drought-resistant crops, including the revival of indigenous crops. Anecdotally, children appear much more enthusiastic and ready to make such fundamental changes, driven by their aspirations for a better future and less ingrained perspectives on the social and cultural significance of different food types.

Children grasp fully the implications of inaction today on their lives and their future families. They hold convictions about working hard to build a better future and are inspired to overcome livelihood challenges to realise change. Table 3.3 gives examples of children's aspirations that drive their engagement and action in community development and livelihood improvement strategies



Table 3.3: Children’s aspirations for a better future

Kenya	Cambodia
Our Paradise: peaceful and beautiful, including lots of crops, many trees, plenty of timber, lots of water, plenty of food, and with leaders who care about the environment.	We don’t need to be very rich but have just enough to have medium living standards with sufficient supply of food and some basic needs.
(Msingi Bora Club, Nzambani)	(CPE, female, Seda Commune)

The children hold strong beliefs in their ability to effect change themselves – to be part of the solutions. They see much to gain in coming together as a group to learn and take action, and see a strong role for themselves in communicating information to others, although they recognise that this is not without its challenges. This is in contrast to adults in the same communities who recognise the need for action and for change but often showed signs of losing hope.

‘We are just struggling to survive. We need to come together and look at these issues in more detail. We are struggling to adjust, but we are getting nowhere. We have tried many things but many are not working. Some are planting different seeds, others are digging for underground water. We are trying to do so much to adjust, but don’t know what we are adjusting to. Some of the options aren’t working – the effects of the drought are getting worse and worse.’

CBO secretary, Nzambani Village

Children’s reported aspirations and enthusiasm for increasing productivity and sustainable environmental management tells us they are an important force for change and therefore adaptation.

Evidence gathered from the children participating in this research demonstrated their:

- capacity to absorb new information about their environment and climate change and to analyse its impacts;
- capacity to propose adaptation strategies that are comparable to those identified by adults;
- capacity and motivation to consider and act on future visions and the needs of future generations;
- desire to collaborate and enthusiasm to take action for the benefit of their communities;
- desire to prioritise sustainable management of natural resources;
- insistence that environment and climate change should be a leading priority of today’s and future leaders.

3.5.3 Local strategies for sustaining participation

Children must not bear the burden of adapting to climate change and the impacts of environmental degradation. However, their rights must be respected. Child-centred DRR initiatives are supporting children to be at the centre of community risk reduction (CCC 2009; Save the Children 2009). Strong evidence is mounting on the importance of involving children, particularly in the reduction of risks from extreme events.⁹ Children's role in slower onset climate change is currently less understood, but their rights remain the same and a number of approaches have the potential to increase the visibility and role of children in adaptation in their communities in the long-term.

School Clubs in Kenya are instrumental in providing an organised avenue for children to claim their rights, and in particular for fulfilling Article 29(e) of the CRC (development of respect for the natural environment). Through clubs, children are empowered to collaborate and are informed of mandates of different actors enabling children to be engaged citizens who can demand their voices are heard by relevant authorities or organisations up to national and international levels.

⁹ Emergencia en El Salvador <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SmesBo54Vh8> (accessed December 15th 2009)

Box 3.3

The role of school clubs in Kenya

Through clubs children have received sustained support for tree planting, water harvesting and agricultural projects. Club members made clear statements as to who should be providing them with seedlings, fertilisers and other materials (Ministry of Forestry, NGOs, their Chief, the Green Belt Movement) so that they can establish more nurseries. They felt parents could contribute by digging dams, and that elders have a role in mobilising the community to pull in more resources. The conflict between children's awareness of and desire to stop deforestation and their parent's involvement in cutting for fuel and income has led them to identify local authority actors as more appropriate targets for their demands and proposals.

Consistency in support to such groups has a major bearing on the confidence and knowledge of children. School clubs that are supported by enthusiastic and committed teachers as well as resources make a significant difference to empowering children to claim their rights in multiple ways; to be active citizens in their communities, not just to carry the burden of reforestation and agricultural productivity.



Box 3.4

Nzambani School: Visionary teachers support change from the school upwards

Nzambani School is in many ways a model school, with new classrooms and committed teachers. The school is facing severe water shortages and the school tap is firmly locked. There is a rainwater harvesting system, but this is prioritised for sanitation not for nurseries. Children carry water from home each day for watering their trees. But the teachers and school committee are doing what they can. The school grounds include a maize plot and many saplings which the children take care of. There is a very active Msingi Bora (Firm Foundations) club. The patron of the club has been running it for many years. He is very knowledgeable in agroforestry, and is keen to share his expertise and enthusiasm to encourage children to practice agroforestry for environmental and livelihood security. The head teacher has big visions for the school and is now trying to raise funds for a Play Pump.¹⁰

Box 3.5

Cambodian Commune Disaster Management Committees welcome children

Commune Committee for Disaster Management Committees (CCDM) in Cambodia are the lowest level of government authority with a disaster management mandate. They currently operate with few resources and remain largely focused on disaster response and relief efforts. CCDMs across Kampong Cham and Siem Reap recognise differentiated vulnerability across their communes. Wealth, gender and geographic location were initially seen as the key determinants of vulnerability to climate change and age was not identified as a key factor. When child rights were raised with the Committees it was agreed children also needed special attention, particularly in relation to health. Plan have been working with the Committees on child rights-based governance and risk reduction. Some Committee members now see children as having a legitimate voice in decision-making and are generally receptive to child representation on the committee. In particular their literacy abilities are seen as the key asset. It is unclear how much of a voice children will have, but dialogue between children and local authorities is increasing.

¹⁰ Play Pumps are designed to pump water as children play as a group.

Box 3.6

Tools for demonstrating effectiveness – the role of Participatory Video

Demonstrating effectiveness of child-centred projects is critical for increasing recognition of children's capacities amongst commune officials and higher levels of authority. In Nepal the use of Participatory Video resulted in the NAPA formulation team giving greater consideration to Child Rights. Participatory Video (PV) is a participatory research and advocacy process that can put children at the centre of community debates and decision-making. In Cambodia, children participating in this research produced films on the impacts of floods and droughts on their lives. This brought community members together to discuss critical issues such as adaptation priorities and the feasibility of different proposals which they will take to local decision-makers.

In light of the analysis conducted with children, the following section revisits the challenge of integrating local child rights perspectives on adaptation, into national adaptation planning.



4.0

Integrating child rights and national adaptation agendas

The cases of Cambodia and Kenya show the myriad of struggles governments are facing in responding to climate change. Both countries have made significant advances in developing national level institutions and strategies, including multi-stakeholder consultation processes for adaptation. Both show weaknesses in linking with the responsibilities of governments to make policies in the best interests of children.

For the purposes of clarity, this report proposes that fulfilling child rights in a changing climate requires a two-track approach: (1) integrating child rights into national climate change responses and (2) integrating climate change into national child rights agendas.

4.1. Embedding child rights in national adaptation

Planning documents such as NAPAs and national climate change strategies or adaptation programmes, need analysing from a child rights perspective. This requires increased capacity for conducting child rights analysis, and therefore greater involvement of child rights experts in adaptation planning. The CRC provides the legal framework and an analytical tool to realize child rights; child rights analysis and rights-based programming guides can be applied to the climate change context.

Applying the Three Pillars Model developed by Save the Children (2002) for Child Rights Programming would mean that adaptation would need to:

- address gaps and violations of children's rights brought about by climate change;
- strengthen institutional and policy mechanisms for responding to climate change so that children were not hurt and their adaptive capacity strengthened;
- strengthen communities, and civil society's capacity to support children's rights under the conditions that climate change presents.

To apply child rights to the adaptation policy or programme cycle, a detailed interrogation is required that tells us: what the gaps and violations are; their underlying causes; who is responsible; who has the capacity to respond; to what extent are adequate resources allocated to strengthening children's adaptive capacity; and is adaptation being monitored in a way that puts children at the centre of measuring success? Critically, a rights-based approach to adaptation ensures that stakeholders at all levels participate and that children's perspectives are taken into account (Save the Children 2002).

Adaptation and development linkages mean that experience of integrating child rights into national development strategies can be drawn upon. A study on Ethiopia's National Poverty Reduction Strategy presents the following components as central to mainstreaming children in national plans: Conceptualising poverty (to develop understanding of why we need to mainstream children); Child focused Policies, Programmes and Indicators; and Participatory Spaces for Children (Jones et al. 2005). Child agencies' experiences of engaging with Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) processes demonstrated that children's engagement can indeed be influential in orienting national development and poverty reduction strategies towards child rights (O'Malley 2004). Box 4.1 shows how this experience can guide adaptation planning.

Box 4.1 Child sensitive adaptation planning

Adaptation planning should include:

- **Climate vulnerability and capacity analysis disaggregated by age, gender, urban and rural.** This would include analysis of children's knowledge and capacity relating to risk reduction and adaptation. Tools such as participatory vulnerability and capacity assessments can be oriented towards children and climate change (CARE International 2009).
- **Participatory spaces** created by, with, and for children locally and nationally. Children are part of civil society and different platforms for children's voice to be heard in any policymaking that affects them will strengthen adaptation planning.
- **Child-centred resilience projects and programmes** with dedicated support and resources (dealing particularly with underlying causes of vulnerability). This could involve delivering targeted assistance that has incorporated likely climate scenarios.
- **Child rights-based indicators for monitoring and evaluation** – both for broad 'enabling environment' frameworks and more targeted programmes. A degree of participatory monitoring and evaluation is essential, and inclusion of process indicators to assess children's empowerment and participatory governance.

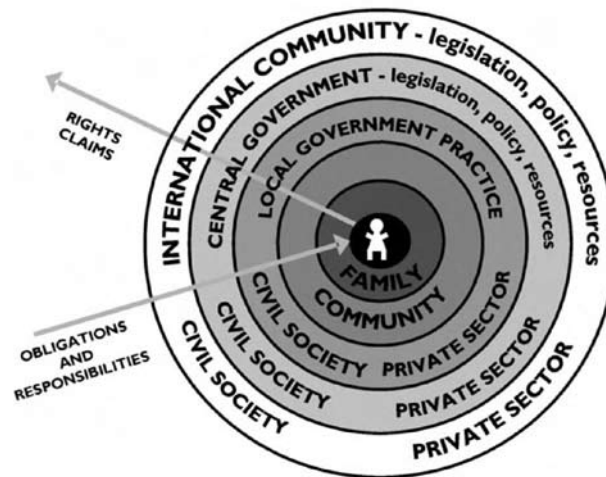
Child rights-based adaptation does not demand entirely new programmes but requires that child poverty reduction programmes are fully responsive to climatic changes and future scenarios. Targeted assistance can be instrumental in some cases in reducing child malnutrition and increasing school enrolment. These mechanisms need to be responsive to climatic changes and sustained by securing state financing over time. Children's right to benefit from climate risk insurance as a Social Security measure is also enshrined in the CRC:

Article 26: States Parties shall recognize for every child the right to benefit from social security, including social insurance, and shall take the necessary measures to achieve the full realization of this right in accordance with their national law.

4.1.1 Linking across levels of governance

Local government in Kenya and Cambodia have a major role to play in reducing climate and disaster risk, but frequently lack resources, technical capacity or access to information. The Commission on Climate Change and Development asserted that local institutions and knowledge are critical for adaptation (CCCD 2009). In order to support the mainstreaming of child rights, national frameworks for adaptation should include strengthening linkages across levels of governance, and ensure capacity to deliver at every level. CARE's Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment tool (CVCA) provides an example of a tool for linking community analysis upwards in the development of adaptation strategies. This dimension of adaptation delivery is in keeping with the need to engage every actor at every level in the realisation of child rights as set out by Save the Children (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 Engaging every actor at every level in the realisation of child rights



Source: Save the Children, 2002, pp38

Linking child rights and adaptation across scales would include:

- strengthening the role and capacity of sub-national government actors to access adaptation funds and be responsive to tackling children's underlying vulnerabilities to climate change;
- strengthening flows of accessible climate information – children can benefit from access to both traditional knowledge that is being increasingly eroded, and access to externally generated climate 'science' through forecasts or curriculum;
- strengthening children's regional or national advocacy networks to increase the chances of children's engagement at the national level reflecting local realities, experiences and demands.

4.1.2 Ensuring gender sensitivity

Conducting research with children revealed the gendered nature of vulnerability, climate impacts and short-term coping measures (Global Humanitarian Forum 2009, pp6). Male and female children move into different types of labour activities and all have particular implications for their health, safety and wellbeing. Girls are more likely to be absent from, or be forced to drop out of school, are put at risk, with denial of rights through early marriages and pregnancies, and more likely to experience sexual abuse. Whilst the CRC applies to all children, gender justice seeks to change structural inequalities that may favour boys over girls or vice versa. Reducing inequalities between girls and boys should contribute to adaptive capacity within households and across communities. Adaptation planning must therefore be gender sensitive as well as child sensitive.

4.2. Integrating climate change into child rights policy processes

The CRC reporting mechanism is a policy space in which a child-centred climate resilience agenda could be advanced. There is currently no consideration of the impacts of climate change in the initial and periodic reports submitted by State Parties to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Alternative reports submitted to the Committee by national coalitions have also yet to include references to climate change. However, evidence gathered to date on the potential impacts of climate change on child rights should be enough to engage all child rights actors.

Experience from a workshop with the NGO Committee on the CRC in Cambodia showed that awareness-raising of the significance of climate change amongst those working on child rights is needed. The network requested further guidance on including climate change in their future reporting and how to integrate climate change into their work. Making country specific information available and conducting collaborative research and analysis will help to achieve and build understanding of the implications of climate change for the work of child-centred agencies and of the short- and long-term changes and uncertainty that must be taken into account.

Child agencies and civil society have a role in ensuring that all governments and private development interventions (including climate change mitigation measures) are screened to ensure they are safeguarding child rights and not contributing to maladaptation and increased vulnerability.

Integration of climate change adaptation into the child rights agenda must be worked out through multi-stakeholder consultations and participatory analysis. However, there are a number of elements that should be considered:

- Analysis of quality of Education Rights needs to reflect: the need for a more holistic approach to education focused around sustainable development; availability of accessible climate information and information mechanisms for sharing adaptation strategies; integration of disaster risk reduction into the school curriculum.
- Analysis of Child Participation Rights should reflect progress in children's involvement in environmental stewardship and risk reduction, as well as local and national networks that enable children to be heard on matters identified by them as priority concerns.
- Analysis of Survival and Development Rights should reflect progress towards health services that can respond to changing disease profiles and strengthen children's physical and psychological capacities to cope in times of extreme climatic events.
- Analysis of Child Protection Rights needs to give particular attention to the underlying conditions of poverty or lack of access to basic services and natural resources such as water, which put children in vulnerable situations and at risk of abuse. This includes the structural inequalities that can put girls at greater risk.
- Where Social Protection programmes are in place, they must be analysed for their capacity to respond to the longer term changes resulting from global climate change and local degradation.

- Analysis of Social Security Rights needs to reflect the extent to which children are benefiting from forms of climate risk insurance and social safety nets designed to increase resilience to climate change.
- Where water governance, land tenure regimes, foreign investment in land and resource extraction, or other forms of economic development threaten to violate the rights of children to life, survival and development, and therefore their capacity to adapt, these must be exposed to the Committee in ways similar to the alternative reports on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.
- The extent to which child-centred adaptation strategies are prioritised in national development planning and climate change policy responses (and therefore backing by international financing for adaptation) should be reported on.

5.0

Conclusions

This report has illustrated the exposure children feel to the changing climate, and the ways in which they see their rights being violated. In all cases children prioritised:

- livelihood and food security;
- access to education;
- protection in the context of child labour, child migration, and exposure to sexual abuse;
- participation in decision-making and risk reduction activities.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child provides a legal framework and an analytical tool to safeguard all these concerns.

Policymakers and donors who dominate country-level climate change response programmes, particularly from the environment, meteorology and finance ministries, have yet to apply a child rights lens when planning for adaptation. Likewise, the CRC reporting mechanisms do not require States Parties to consider implications for safeguarding rights in the context of climate change. Embedding child rights in adaptation planning – and putting a climate lens on national child rights implementation – could increase the resilience of children and their families to shocks and stresses brought about by climate change.

Children are an integral part of household and community adaptation and are engaged citizens. Their identification of adaptation strategies is comparable to adults, and they often know clearly who is responsible for delivery. Evidence gathered from the children participating in this research demonstrated their aptitude for: absorbing new information; proposing adaptation strategies; acting on their future visions and the needs of future generations; taking action for the benefit of their community; and prioritising sustainable management of natural resources. Yet they face many barriers to participation.

Child rights analysis of adaptation policies and programmes is essential. In particular this should lead adaptation planning and delivery to include:

- climate vulnerability and capacity analysis disaggregated by age, gender, urban/rural, and physical disability;
- engagement with and support for platforms created by, with, and for children locally and national networks for children's voice to be heard;
- dedicated resources and support for child-centred resilience projects and programmes (dealing particularly with underlying causes of vulnerability);
- child rights-based indicators for monitoring and evaluation of adaptation.

The CRC reporting mechanism also provides an established channel to influence national policy where a child-centred climate resilience agenda can be advanced. Awareness-raising amongst child rights networks is required to make sure a climate change perspective is included in their agendas. Child agencies have a duty to ensure that all government and private development interventions safeguard rights and don't increase vulnerability to climate change.

6.0

Recommendations

As the primary duty-bearers, governments have a responsibility to ensure child rights are realised in general, and thereby also in a changing climate. Civil society organisations and donors have a role in facilitating these processes through engaging in strategic research and awareness-raising and processes aimed at holding governments, donors and private actors to account.

Embed child rights in national and sub-national adaptation

Governments, donors, civil society and other stakeholders should collaborate to:

- ensure that NAPAs and other local, national, regional and strategic plans on climate change protect and involve children.
- conduct child rights analysis of all adaptation policies, guidelines and strategies to ensure children are at the forefront and their rights are being respected.
- ensure all adaptation interventions are building on lessons from community-based adaptation approaches that value local knowledge, and in which children are able to participate.
- ensure that a proportion of adaptation financing is explicitly targeted to build children's capacity to adapt.
- ensure that local government are equipped to play a key role in delivering child sensitive adaptation in the long term.
- ensure that existing child welfare and poverty reduction programmes are made 'climate smart'.
- long-term support for access to quality education and include CCA and DRR in school curricula, in a way that empowers children as active citizens, and equips them with the relevant skills and knowledge to manage their environment and adapt to a changing climate.



Integrate climate change into national child rights agendas

- National child ministries and child rights agencies need to investigate implications for child rights and their work in their localities, and find a stronger voice in climate change debates.
- Governments and NGO CRC coalitions are urged to conduct CRC reporting in the context of the latest information on climate change and children's vulnerability and capacity to adapt.
- The Committee on the Rights of the Child should request information on how State Parties ensure a climate perspective is considered when implementing the CRC, and include this request in its Guidelines regarding periodic reports.
- The Committee should also dedicate a General Comment, preceded by a Day of General Discussion, on the issue of how children's rights are affected in a changing climate, and how States can act to take this into consideration when implementing the CRC, to encourage States to integrate child policy and National Adaptation to climate change and to raise awareness on how they interact and affect each other.
- Governments and other policymakers should acknowledge children as stakeholders, providing formal mechanisms for children to contribute to decision-making on climate change.

Annex 1

Kenyan children's identification of drought impacts and coping strategies

Direct Impacts and Impacts of Coping Strategies	Most cited Rights associated with impacts of prolonged drought
Lack of basic needs (food, water)Malnutrition	Right to Food
Lack of water and pasture for animals	Right to Education
Death of animals	Right to Protection
Encroachment of lands by other pastoralists*	(including love, parental care, security)
Removing house roofs to feed to cows	Right to 'be listened to'
Low concentration and poor performance in class	
Dropping out of school	
Absenteeism from school	
Migration (and becoming street kids)	
Child Labour	
Child Rape	
Early child prostitution	
Boys become thieves	
Conflict between communities	
Lack of security	
Increase in disease outbreaks (cholera, flu) – human and animal	
Elephants on roads to school – destroy crops and threaten children's safety	
No rest, play or leisure time due to long school hours and domestic duties	
Encroachment by outsiders puts them at greater risk of abuse	
Increased destruction from sand harvesting	
Trees being cut in the Kaya (sacred) forests	
Loss of wildlife	

*cases of conflict and one case of abuse reported as well as pressure on land

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Research Report

