

ROUND TABLE ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION EDUCATION
Thursday 18th June, 11:00-13:00
"AM I SAFE?"

Context and Scope

Disasters have a major impact on children and education systems. Studies of disaster trends and the likely consequences of climate change suggest that each year 175 million children are likely to be affected by climate-related disasters alone¹. The 2001 Gujarat earthquake in India is estimated to have damaged or destroyed 13,500 schools and killed more than 1,000 children. During the Sichuan earthquake in May 2008, some 10,000 children were crushed in their classrooms and more than 7,000 schoolrooms collapsed. Hurricane Katrina in the United States (2005) destroyed 56 schools and damaged 1,162 more. 700 schools were closed and 372,000 children displaced. \$2.8 billion USD was spent to educate displaced students for a year. Disasters can be said therefore to have the following impacts on children and on their education:

- Disasters have PHYSICAL impact destroying human lives and schools infrastructures when schools are not built to be disaster-resilient.
- Disasters have EDUCATIONAL impact – the educational cycle is disrupted due to teachers' death, school destruction, or the use of schools as shelter without any educational continuity planned.
- Disasters have ECONOMIC impact costing more to repair than to build safely. By exacerbating poverty, children are forced to drop out permanently from school.
- Disasters have PSYCHOSOCIAL impact when resiliency has not been built in through disaster prevention knowledge and education

By destroying their school infrastructure and taking away the lives of teachers – and needless to say those of children and adults themselves, boys, girls, women and men are denied access to one of the most fundamental basic human rights: education.

The Hyogo Framework for Action (2005 – 2015) is organised around five 'Priorities for Action'. The third priority highlights the particular importance of education: "Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels". Simple risk reduction measures such as school preparedness plans, the inclusion of disaster risk reduction in the school curriculum and the provision of 'child friendly spaces' in emergencies have been developed and have proven to work.

The UN Decade for Education and Sustainable Development (2005 – 2014) is designed to promote four fundamental values, two of which are linked to disaster risk reduction:

- Respect for human rights of future generations and a commitment to intergenerational responsibility;
- Respect and care for the greater community of life in all its diversity, which involves the protection and restoration of the Earth's ecosystems.

¹ In the Face of Disaster, Save the Children, UK, 2008

Despite these two major commitments and growing recognition of the importance and value of disaster risk reduction, progress by Ministries of Education to integrate disaster risk reduction into the school curricula, to make schools safe and to use education facilities to promote safety and resilience at the local level has been slow. Moreover, while some headway has been made in having national and local disaster management actors provide the leadership and resources to ensure children enjoy their right to education *during* emergencies, much more can, and must, be done.

Prioritising the education and the agency of young people is an essential feature in any society's capacity to manage risk and to achieve sustainable development. The threats that disasters bring emphasises the need to recognize the wide range of risks inherent in development. It is not about 'mainstreaming risk into' development but rather recognizing that development is risk management. Good development is about unpacking that risk, making it visible and transparent, and ensuring that all households, and all societies, especially their children, have sufficient information to take decisions on how much risk they will accept and how they will manage it. An informed and motivated citizenry will ensure good governance for managing risks, and good governance will thrive on the input of proactive citizens, including children.

This round table will draw on range of panellists and their experience to identify the constraints preventing consider these issues, to identify the best ways forward and to make commitments so that children can positively reply to the question: "Am I safe?"

Expected Results

- A shared recognition of the overall impacts that disasters exact on child vulnerability, their education and therefore on sustainable development; and on how both education and disaster management actors have a critical role to play in reducing these unacceptable levels of disaster risk.
- A shared understanding of key lessons, derived from the identification of success stories, incentives and constraints, in making disaster risk reduction an integral part of the education agenda.
- A shared identification of key elements, steps and processes that will enable a significant scaling up of investment in disaster risk reduction measures in the education sector.

Organizing partners

UNICEF together with UN-ISDR and Plan International.

List of roundtable participants

Co-chairs:

Ms. Margareta Wahlström, Assistant Secretary-General for DRR, UN-ISDR Secretariat
Mr. Louis-Georges Arsenault, Director, Emergencies Division, UNICEF

Moderator:

Mr. Martin Bell, UNICEF UK Ambassador for Humanitarian Emergencies

Panellists:

Ms. Guadalupe Valdez, Deputy Minister of Education, Dominican Republic, Minister of Education, Dominican Republic

Mr. Luis Riera Figueras Policy/Thematic Issues, Directorate DG Development, European Commission,

Ms. Mia Horn, Deputy Director General, Swedish International Development Aid

Mr. Nigel Chapman, Chief Executive Officer, Plan International

Ms. Sae Kani, ASB (Civil Society leader, Indonesia)

Children/Youth representation:

Mr. Rhee, La Paz School, Philippines

Caroline Shaw, Youth environmental protection movement activist, USA/India

Rapporteur:

Lucy Johnson, Climate Change Project Manager, UNICEF, United Kingdom

Draft Scenario (total of 120 minutes)

1. Welcome and introduction of panellists, by Mr. Martin Bell (5 minutes)
2. Introductory remarks, by co-chairs: Ms. Margareta Wahlström, Assistant Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction (5 minutes); Mr. Louis-Georges Arsenault, Director, Emergencies Division, UNICEF (5 minutes)
3. Video illustrating children's role in disaster risk reduction and the merit of disaster risk reduction and education (5 minutes)
4. Sharing of experience from Rhee and message from Caroline Howe for policy makers (5 minutes each)
5. Panel discussion
 - Teaching disaster risk reduction to disabled children, by Ms. Sae Kani, ASB, Indonesia (7 minutes)
 - Educating children improves delivery of the Hyogo Framework for Action, Mr. Nigel Chapman, Chief Executive Officer, Plan International (7 minutes)
 - Policy recommendations on disaster risk reduction and school safety, by Ms. Guadalupe Valdez, Deputy Minister of Education, Dominican Republic (7 minutes)
 - European Commission's support to Disaster Risk Reduction and Education, by Mr. Luis Riera Figueras, European Commission, Brussels (7 minutes)
 - Education and School Safety - A Donor's perspective, by Ms. Mia Horn, Deputy Director General, Swedish International Development Aid (SIDA) (7 minutes)
6. Discussion with the audience and panel (25 minutes)

Having heard the experience and position of the panellists, Mr. Martin Bell will then engage both panellists and the audience by posing the following question: *"What do we collectively need to do, or to do differently, to significantly scale up the good practice we have heard about today? What is stopping us roll out more of this tomorrow?"*

7. Wrap-up and closing by Mr. Louis-Georges Arsenault (10 minutes)