

# Education Sector Position Paper

A contribution by the United Nations to the consultation leading to  
the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction



## Background

Disasters have a major impact on children, youth and education systems. Since adoption of the HFA in 2005, disasters have destroyed classrooms and killed students and teachers in schools in more than 15 countries in most continents. It has been estimated that the cumulative impacts of smaller 'extensive' and hidden disasters has increased.

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 alone up from 65 million per year in the 1990s. Disasters prevent children from going to school, affecting their education and exacerbating their vulnerability.

In Haiti in January 2010, among the tens of thousands of deaths, 4,000 students and 7000 teachers are estimated to have died in schools. The Ministry of Education offices were destroyed along with 4,000 schools (close to 80% of educational establishments in the Port-au-Prince area). Two years later 600,000 children remained out of school. During the Sichuan earthquake in May 2008, approximately 10,000 students were crushed in their classrooms and more than 7,000 school rooms collapsed. But this only accounts for part of the loss. Smaller scale but recurring disasters such as annually recurring floods cut-short the school year. Frequent extreme weather forces schools to close down because of damage to the school and transport infrastructure. Protracted crises such as food insecurity, conflict, and chronic poverty also have a profound impact on the education sector and render children increasingly vulnerable to forced employment, harmful traditional practices and are frequently taken out of school by parents in favor of work.

While education systems are greatly affected by disasters, they are also a means to quality education that addresses risk reduction and resilience, providing life-saving and life-sustaining information and skills. Through these systems, risk is reduced and people are protected during and after emergencies and disasters, thus promoting resilience and recovery.

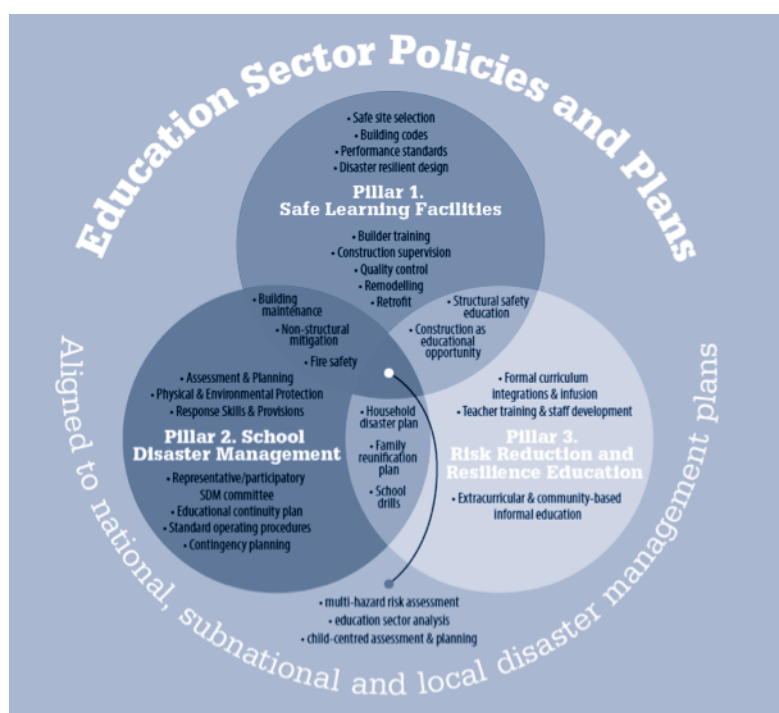
Risk reduction and resilience in education equips people with knowledge and skills so that hazards cause the least possible loss of human life, as little damage and destruction as possible, and cause only minimum disruption to economic, social and cultural activities. It strengthens individual's and community's resilience to hazards, while enhancing the education system's preparedness for and responses to disasters. It thus ensures that schooling continues after a hazard strikes and limits damages to the education sector.

As an integral part of education for sustainable development, preparing the education system includes conducting a multi-hazard risk assessment, drafting plans and policies to address threats, and implementing those plans sustainably. Embedding risk reduction and resilience in education policy is critical for its application and sustainability. The policies and plans need to address risk reduction and resilience in teaching and learning, school safety and disaster management, and the provision of safe school environments. Moreover, wherever possible teachers and learners need to fully participate in the process.

## Comprehensive Framework for School Safety

The main policy drivers of risk reduction and resilience education are children's dual rights for protection and participation, including education on preventing and reducing disaster risk. More specifically, a Comprehensive Framework for School Safety has been articulated and agreed upon to underpin a joint approach by leading UN agencies and INGOs working together to counter the risks to these rights. The framework identifies three overlapping pillars: Safe Learning Facilities, School Disaster Management, and Risk Reduction and Resilience Education – with the following goals:

- To protect learners and education workers from physical harm in schools;
- To assure educational continuity when faced with hazards;
- To safeguard education sector investments;
- To strengthen climate-smart disaster resilience through education



Similarly, the 2011 Children's Charter: An Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction for Children By Children was developed through consultations with more than 600 children in 21 countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America with the aim of raising awareness of the importance of placing children at the heart of efforts to reduce disaster risk. The five priority areas identified by children are: safe and continued access to school; child protection during and after disasters; meaningful child participation; reaching the most vulnerable; safe community infrastructure and community-based risk reduction and resilience initiatives.

## Status of mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction in formal education

There are several publications that represent milestones in terms of both progress and guidance in risk reduction and resilience education.

The report published by UNESCO and UNICEF, "Disaster Risk Reduction in School Curriculum: Case Studies from Thirty Countries" highlights the progress that has been made toward integrating risk reduction and resilience as well as some of the challenges. Documented progress has been achieved across all major areas including in policy and implementation, curriculum and training, research and evaluation. The advances provide a platform for enhanced gains in the next 10-15 years.

Subsequently, the report "Towards a Learning Culture of Safety and Resilience: Technical Guidance for Integrating Disaster Risk Reduction in the School Curriculum provides initial guidance on the key approaches to mainstreaming DRR in the curriculum by planning the national curriculum development cycle, establishing partnerships between Ministry of Education and National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), adopting a consultative process and linking with other education sector programs

and processes. The report provides indicative examples of the progression of learning outcomes (in terms of knowledge and understanding, skills, attitudes and dispositions) across early and late primary and upper and lower secondary levels.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies published Public Awareness and Public Education: a Guide (2011) and Public Awareness and Public Education: Key Messages (2012). The first volume presents the wide range of approaches and good practices to public education in general. The second volume documents the evidence-based, consensus-based, and action-oriented key messages for household and families for all-hazards and specific hazards, globally. This has in turn been used as a template in several countries for adaptation and adoption of a set of nationally agreed upon messages that form a cornerstone for integration into formal and non-formal education.

Regarding multi-hazard risk assessments, UNESCO with the scientific support of the Laboratory SPRINT (Safety and Protection Inter-sectoral laboratory), has developed a methodology called VISUS (Visual Inspection for defining Safety Upgrading Strategies) which provides decision makers and the educational community with tools for assessing the risks affecting the education sector. Pilots of this methodology are under development in El Salvador, Indonesia and Laos, in close coordination with members of the Global Alliance for DRR and Resilience in the Education Sector (GAD3RES).

## Measuring Risk Reduction and Resilience Education

A significant amount of progress towards integrating risk reduction and resilience into the education sector has been made globally. Documented progress has been reported across all major areas such as in policy and implementation, curriculum and training, research and evaluation. This progress provides a platform for enhanced gains in the next 10-15 years and include the following:

- Over half of reporting countries report DRR included in the national curriculum at one or more levels (primary, secondary, university, professional programs);
- Increased prominence of risk reduction and resilience curriculum and training in national policy across an increasing number of countries;
- Development of guidance related to curriculum frameworks;
- Through the promising development of the GAD3RES, the development of a whole-of-school framework and related sets of indicators<sup>2</sup>;
  - a. Comprehensive School Safety Framework (CSS) based on three interconnected pillars namely, Safe Learning Facilities, School Disaster Management and Risk Reduction and Resilience Education;
  - b. CSS and its three Pillars and a hierarchical set of proposed indicators;
- Increased proliferation of risk reduction and resilience education in school curriculum in many countries which although at present are largely project focused, there are efforts being made toward longer-term, wide-reach, sustainable implementation;
- Published evaluations of child-centred risk reduction and resilience education programs have increased by 34% since 2000 and have typically found positive increases in knowledge, risk perceptions, child and family interactions and preparedness activities and reductions in children's disaster-related fears and other improvements;
- Attempts for larger scale implementation of features of DRR curricula/CSS initiatives for example in Cambodia (Year 8), Iran (drills), New Zealand (primary school all hazards), Turkey (CSS Pillar 2 and 3) and attempts at larger-reach teacher training (for example Turkey DREAMS project; Mozambique masters-level teacher training program).

## The HFA and the Post-2015 framework for Disaster Risk Reduction

The 2013 Global Platform Consultations on HFA2 resulted on the proposal for a series of interventions which touched on issues such as community engagement, the role of children and youth, cross-sectoral linkages, private sector investment and governance. The role of education was also highlighted as key to the realization of the HFA2 goals. It was noted that risk sensitive education should be included as a priority at all levels of the school system and needs to be incorporated in curricula beginning in the earliest school grades, continuing through secondary and higher education. Beyond the classroom, education is also a tool for ensuring wider community engagement and knowledge sharing.

Building on the success of the HFA, the post-2015 framework for DRR along with the Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development and with the support from the Global Partnership for Education, is well placed to promote not only the protection of education systems and learners but to create a culture of safety and resilience through formal and non-formal

education. Moreover, the cross-cutting nature of knowledge and education, means that this will be also critical in terms of delivering on other components of the future framework. This includes community empowerment, risk assessment, early warning and early action as well as the critical sectors of health, water, food security and nutrition.

Ensuring that risk reduction and resilience is integrated into the post-2015 frameworks will be critical to safeguarding international support and momentum behind the HFA2, as well as guaranteeing that international financial flows are prioritized for risk reduction and resilience across the board. The HFA2 in turn offers a way to operationalize post-2015 development agenda.

### **Regional and international policy frameworks and initiatives within “sector” to be targeted (other than HFA2)**

In addition to the Hyogo Framework for Action 2, efforts should be made to ensure the inclusion of risk reduction and resilience in various education regional and policy frameworks currently under development including (but not limited to):

**The Sustainable Development Goals/post-2015 agenda** - meant to build upon the Millennium Development Goals and converge with the post-2015 development agenda, the development of the SDGs were one of the main outcomes of Rio +20 endorsed by the member States. It is widely understood that a risk-sensitive approach to the SDGs is required to ensure their accelerated achievement and sustainability and specific elements reflecting the role of risk reduction and resilience are being proposed.

**The Education for All Goals** – an international initiative first launched in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990 with input from a broad coalition of national governments, civil society groups, and development agencies such as UNESCO and the World Bank committed to achieving six specific education goals. The world recommitted to these goals in 2000 in Dakar and was recognized as inextricably linked to the achievement of the MDGs and are reflected in the SDGs.

**Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)**– originally developed by UNESCO, ESD is not a particular programme or project but an umbrella for many forms of education that already exist and means integrating key sustainable development issues into teaching and learning; for example, climate change, disaster risk reduction, biodiversity and poverty reduction. ESD and risk reduction and resilience include many overlapping areas of concern focused on strengthening links with local communities<sup>3</sup>.

List of agencies contributing and description of institutional commitment

The Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector (GAD3RES) is a multi-stakeholder mechanism composed of UN agencies, international organizations and international NGOs, and regional networks or coalitions for school safety. The Alliance advocates for and promotes a comprehensive approach to school safety based on a three-pillar definition combining 1) Safe Learning Facilities, 2) School Disaster Management and 3) Risk Reduction and Resilience Education in support of “safe schools”. For the Global Alliance, education policies, plans and programmes must be crisis-sensitive and address the risks of disaster and conflict. Furthermore education sector policies and plans should be aligned with disaster management at national, regional, district and local school site levels. Crisis-sensitive education sector policies and plans lay the foundation for the effective implementation of programmes in these three areas.

### **Key documents/source of additional information**

1. Bastidas, Pedro & Marla Petal, **Assessing School Safety from Disasters: A Global Baseline Report**, 2012
2. Cabot Venton, Courtenay, **Children in a Changing Climate: Children in a Post 2015 DR Framework**.
3. GADRRR-ESS\*<sup>4</sup>, **Comprehensive School Safety Framework**, 2014. [http://www.preventionweb.net/files/31059\\_31059\\_comprehensiveschoolsafetyframe.pdf](http://www.preventionweb.net/files/31059_31059_comprehensiveschoolsafetyframe.pdf)
4. International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies 2012. Public awareness and public education for disaster risk reduction: key messages
5. International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies 2011. Public awareness and public education for disaster risk reduction: a guide
6. Overseas Development Institute, **The future framework for disaster risk reduction: A guide for decision-makers**. June 2014.
7. Ronan, Kevin R. Many Advances, Continuing Challenges towards HFA2 and Post-2015: Policy, Practice, Research Summary and Recommendations for Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 (commissioned by UNESCO and UNICEF)
8. UNESCO and UNICEF, 2013. **Towards A Learning Culture of Safety and Resilience**: Technical Guidance for Integrating Disaster Risk Reduction in the School Curriculum.

9. UNESCO and UNICEF, 2012. *Disaster Risk Reduction in School Curricula: Case Studies from Thirty Countries*.
10. UNESCO Bangkok, *DRR in Education: An Imperative for Education Policy Makers*. 2014.  
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002139/213925e.pdf>

## ANNEX I

### Interpreting the Hyogo Framework for Action for the Education Sector

The work of the Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector has identified that in order to address school safety in a comprehensive manner, all five priorities of the HFA must be addressed within the education sector. Therefore it has prioritized the interpretation of these priorities, and related indicators for the education sector, in order to operationalize DRR within the one universal institution that exists to serve children's development.

Priorities for Action	Indicators for the Education Sector
<b>1. Ensure that disaster risk reduction and resilience are priorities with a strong institutional basis with education authorities nationwide.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Policy and legal framework for disaster risk reduction exists with decentralized responsibilities and capacities in the education sector at all levels.</li> <li>2. Dedicated and adequate resources are available to implement disaster risk reduction plans and activities at all administrative levels.</li> <li>3. Community participation and decentralization are ensured through the delegation of authority and resources to education authorities at the local level.</li> <li>4. A national multi-stakeholder platform for disaster risk reduction is functioning in the education sector.</li> </ol>
<b>2. Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and threats to schools and enhance early warning for all learning environments.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. National and local risk assessments based on hazard data and vulnerability information are available to education authorities and schools.</li> <li>2. Systems are in place to monitor, archive and disseminate changing data on school structural, infrastructural and environmental vulnerabilities.</li> <li>3. Early warning systems for major and local hazards reach schools, and schools have the opportunity to participate in early warning systems.</li> </ol>
<b>3. Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience through curricular and co-curricular activities in schools and communities.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Educational materials on risk reduction and resilience (including climate change adaptation and learning to live together) are shared internationally, and available for localization and contextualization.</li> <li>2. School curricula is holistically-infused to include disaster risk reduction, resilience and recovery concepts and practices.</li> <li>3. Research methods and tools for multi-risk assessments and cost-benefit analysis are developed and strengthened for the education sector.</li> <li>4. Countrywide public awareness strategy to stimulate a culture of risk reduction and resilience, with outreach to urban and rural communities, includes child centered and child-led elements.</li> </ol>



Priorities for Action	Indicators for the Education Sector
<b>4. Reduce the underlying risk factors.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Risk reduction and resilience-building are an integral objective of site selection, design, construction, and maintenance of schools.</li> <li>2. School disaster and emergency management policies and plans are implemented to reduce the vulnerability of children in and out of school.</li> <li>3. Educational continuity plans are in place to reduce disruption of the school year, and protect individual attainment of educational goals.</li> <li>4. Planning and management of schools facilities incorporates all-hazards awareness, risk reduction elements (including eg. enforcement of building codes).</li> <li>5. Risk reduction and resilience measures are integrated into post-disaster and chronic crisis recovery and rehabilitation processes in the education sector.</li> <li>6. Procedures are in place to assure that every new school is a safe school.</li> </ol>
<b>5. Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response in learning environments.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strong policy, technical and institutional capacities and mechanisms for disaster risk management, with a risk reduction and resilience perspective are in place in the education sector.</li> <li>2. Disaster and emergency plans are in place at all administrative levels in the education sector and regular training drills and rehearsals are held to test and develop disaster and emergency response capacity at all levels.</li> <li>3. Insurance and contingency mechanisms are in place to support effective response and recovery when required.</li> <li>4. Procedures are in place to exchange relevant information about impacts on schools, during hazard events, disasters, and emergencies and to undertake post-event reviews.</li> </ol>

This estimate is based on data from the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies World Disasters Report 2006. "Legacy of disasters - The impact of climate change on children" Save the Children.

<sup>1</sup> Most of the information in this brief comes from: the background paper prepared for the Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction 2015: MANY ADVANCES, CONTINUING CHALLENGES TOWARDS HFA2 AND POST-2015: POLICY-PRACTICE-RESEARCH SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS, commissioned by UNESCO AND UNICEF and authored by Dr. KEVIN R. RONAN; the paper has been reviewed by Members of the Global Alliance for DRR and Resilience in the Education Sector

<sup>2</sup> Indicators such as: Number of countries that include DRR education in their curricula; % of safe school facilities etc

<sup>3</sup> In 2002, through its Resolution 57/254, the United Nations General Assembly declares the period from 2005 – 2014 as the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable and tasks UNESCO with the role of coordinating and leading this Decade. UNESCO, in consultation with Member States and other relevant stakeholders developed the Global Action Programme on ESD (GAP), the follow-up to the Decade, which will be launched at the ESD World Conference in Japan November 2014.

The overall goal of the GAP is to generate and scale up action at all levels and areas of education and learning to accelerate progress towards sustainable development.

The GAP will focus on five priority action areas: (1) Advancing policy and integrate ESD into international and national policies; (2) Integrating sustainability practices into education and training environments (whole-institution approaches); (3) Increasing the capacity of educators and trainers; (4) Empowering and mobilizing youth; (5) Encouraging local communities and municipal authorities to develop community-based ESD programmes.

<sup>4</sup> Members include: UNESCO, UNICEF, UNISDR, World Bank-GFDRR, IFRC, INEE, Plan International, Save the Children, World Vision. Additional members are part of Asia-Pacific, Latin America and Caribbean, and other regional coalitions.

**About the UN Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience:** The UN Plan of Action, endorsed by the UN Secretary-General and the Executives Heads of UN Specialized Agencies, Funds and Programmes, includes a commitment for the UN system to work together to ensure disaster risk reduction is a key component of the post-2015 development agenda supported by a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction (HFA2). The UN Plan of Action improves system-wide coordinated actions and coherence, as well as increased effectiveness and collaboration in the support to Member States on disaster risk reduction.

**UN High Level Programmes Committee Senior Managers Group on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience (HLCP/SMG):** Members of the HLCP/SMG that oversees the implementation of the UN plan of Action are FAO, IAEA, IFAD, IFRC, ILO, IMO, IOM, ITU, UNAIDS, UNCCD, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHABITAT, UNHCHR, UNICEF, UNISDR, UNOCHA, UNOPS, UNOOSA, UNWOMEN, UNWTO, UPU, WFP, WHO and the World Bank.



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