



# UN Major Group for **Children and Youth** childrenyouth.org

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Geneva Switzerland

## STATEMENT

United Nation Major Group for Children & Youth

### **First Open-ended Informal Consultations Major Groups and Member States;**

*The Pre-Zero Draft of the Post 2015 Framework on DRR*

Thank you for this opportunity to speak as the Major Group for Children & Youth on behalf of children, youth and future generations who will inherit this new framework on disaster risk reduction as the beneficiaries and implementers of the priorities and policies created. We seek a dynamic and robust framework that is ready to tackle challenges well into the future, based upon ambitious goals and commitments we set today.

How we plan for, reduce and manage disasters will to a large extent determine how resilient our societies are, what sustainable development goals are fulfilled and who gets left behind. In our collective work in building resilience, we call for your support in implementing previous commitments and mutually agreed outcomes in the Report from 2013 Global Platform Consultations: Post-2015 Framework for DRR (HFA2):

- giving special attention to the vulnerability of children, ensuring them a voice where appropriate and including them in disaster risk reduction plans at all times.
- recognising youth within the Post-2015 Framework for DRR, who with their drive, activism and connections are no longer as dependent as children, in all deliberations about disaster risk reduction planning and implementation.
- providing each group, children and youth, a place in the framework, since they most strongly represent the future and give a human face to the HFA2.

Following, we will elaborate on the Principles we would like to see embedded into the Framework and encourage discussion around areas articulated as:

**Meaningful youth engagement** - In all decision-making functions related to planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this framework. This is the bare minimum requirement for the framework to effectively deliver on its mandate of being inclusive and representative of the needs of the people it is seeking to protect.

Historically, children and youth have not been seen as a demographic important enough to engage with. This can no longer be the case in this new framework. We are too many, too vulnerable in the case of children, and too desirous of a good future. We will not be excluded. We are not just victims of ill-conceived policies, but part of the solution.



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We know we will have to continue to work hard to ensure young people and children, in all our diversity, are represented within the process going forward until and beyond Sendai, and trust that we have your commitment to ensuring our full and inclusive participation. If you disagree with us, we would like to hear your concerns.

**A Human Rights Approach** - Being safe from disasters and receiving proper treatment during disasters is a basic human right, and not just a privilege for a few. Everyone irrespective of any status and income level should be entitled to this right. All people of all ages and all abilities everywhere matter. A strong focus on access will determine the success of this framework.

On the topic of human-induced disasters we call for the full implementation of the *Polluter Pays principle*. Private interests directly feeding into causing disasters cannot be beyond the purview of this framework. All stakeholders should productively contribute to the framework, but doing so also means owning up errors and negative externalities.

**A focus on comprehensive security** - We welcome the current address of security in the Pre-Zero Draft, though we believe it needs further attention. We would like to see explicit reference to protection of people and social service - including health and education - by strengthening the linkages between DRR, social protection, ecosystems management and thereby assuring social, economic and environmental resilience. In particular, special attention is needed for women, girls and boys, from violence and abuse, resulting from disaster events being drivers of vulnerability and risk. A framework fails if children and teachers cannot be safe in schools during disasters. This is also true for patients and medical practitioners in hospitals who perish.

Further, we would not limit (15.A) strengthening of resilience to economic resilience alone; we suggest also addressing the social determinants of resilience.

Finally, we wish to state the importance that the Post-2015 Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction enhance its scope in order to address **all disasters, including biological and technological hazards, slow onset disasters and conflict**. In the last year man-made disasters resulted in more human injuries than all the natural disasters put together. It is crucial that measures which strengthen peace and implement international health regulations are enhanced in order to create a resilient society.

Children and youth are here, ready and willing to continue to take our responsibilities of reducing the risk we face to disasters. We want to move from aspirational policy development to on-the-ground practices, and evaluation of the shared practices that work and to promote proven disaster outcomes. As partners for change, this is our next step in the Post-2015 dialogue on disaster risk reduction.