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for every child

Every country protected – Every child resilient

UNICEF DRR in Action
Child-centred disaster risk reduction builds resilient communities and societies

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Raveena (14) and her friends in Gujarat, India, share their "stay home be safe" messaging at a UNICEF-supported adolescent meeting focused on child issues, including mental health, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Abbreviations

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CADRI	Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CCC	Children in a Changing Climate
CCDRR	Child-Centred DRR
CCRA	Child-Centred Risk Assessment
CCRI	Children's Climate Risk Index
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSS	Comprehensive School Safety
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DWSSP	Drinking-Water Safety and Security Planning
ECHO	European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
EWS	Early Warning System
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
GADRRRES	Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
HDP	Humanitarian Development and Peace
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
INEE	Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies

INFORM	Index for Risk Management
IRRM	Integrated Rapid Response Mechanism
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
PF4C	Public Finance for Children
PSEA	Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SPWS	Solar-powered Water System
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SWA	Sanitation and Water for All
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDRR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
SSCYG/MGCY	Sendai Stakeholders Children and Youth Group, the DRR working group of the Major Group for Children and Youth
UN OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UN SLG	United Nations Senior Leadership Group
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WCD	World Children's Day
WFP	World Food Programme

Foreword

Disasters and climate change are deeply inequitable. According to UNICEF's Children's Climate Risk Index (CCRI), approximately 1 billion children — nearly half the world's population of children — are considered at extremely high-risk to the impacts of climate-induced disasters and effects.

Many places in the world are exposed to recurrent hazards such as cyclones, earthquakes, landslides, floods, droughts, infectious disease, etc. Children, adolescents and youth face a deadly combination of exposure to multiple disasters and environmental shocks paired with a very high vulnerability due to inadequate or inaccessible essential services in areas of water and sanitation, healthcare and education. They might not be able to communicate necessary information or become separated from their parents and loved ones.

The Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY) DRR Working Group (DRR WG) is officially known as the Sendai Stakeholders Children and Youth Group (SSCYG). SSCYG/MGCY coordinates and facilitates coherence and exchange on youth engagement in disaster risk reduction-related processes, avenues and topics in the United Nations beyond national and local actions on DRR and climate change.

Around the world, young people from MGCY are working with states, development partners and UN agencies — including UNICEF — to recognize the growing and urgent need for disaster risk-informed and preparedness programmes. These must include practices and policies to build capacities, develop leadership and support children and youth with the technical and financial resources required for building a more resilient future. It is significant to invest in children and youth for a

better tomorrow, which can be only achieved through risk-informed development and meaningful engagement. In realizing the principles of "Nothing About Us, Without Us" and "Leave No Children and Youth Behind," support must ensure their representation and participation in all decision-making avenues concerning their lives.

SENDAI FRAMEWORK
FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION 2015-2030

The Sendai Framework for DRR 2015-2030, the Paris Agreement on climate and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development all call for the inclusion of children and youth to integrate their voices and concerns.

For example, the Sendai Framework states in section 36(ii):
"Children and youth are agents of change and should be given the space and modalities to contribute to disaster risk reduction, in accordance with legislation, national practice and educational curricula."

To improve children's and young people's access to key services and strengthen their ability to withstand disasters, climate change and other risks, we've teamed up with young scientists, advocates, practitioners and policymakers. We've come together with various organizations, UN agencies and networks to further amplify the efforts and impacts on children and young people. We act as a bridge between children and youth and the UN system to ensure that their right to meaningful participation is realized.

We have a duty to all children and youth to build a sustainable and resilient future. We need like-minded groups of people to execute, implement, monitor, follow-up and review sustainable practices and implementation of the Sendai Framework for DRR to mitigate disaster and climate impacts on children and youth for effective outcomes and deliverables.

We are hopeful this report will help practitioners, policymakers and researchers build and strengthen the resilient world children and youth want to see around them. We hope our voices are heard and reflected in all programmes aimed at creating a sustainable and resilient future. We at SSCYG/MGCY look forward to working closely with you for a disaster- and climate-resilient, sustainable world along the way.

Anish Shrestha, MGCY Global Focal Point

Jekulin Lipi Saikia, MGCY Asia Pacific Regional Focal Point

Sonika Poudel, MGCY Asia Pacific Regional Focal Point

On behalf of the Sendai Stakeholders Children and Youth Group (SSCYG), the DRR Working Group of the Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY)[1]

Meaningful engagement means to not only create opportunities for child voices, but to turn them into action. Here, as part of a 2021 World Children's Day ceremony in Djibouti, government members, parliamentarians, diplomatic corps and UN agency staff listened to children and adolescents expressing their views through poems, songs and sketches on priority issues, such as their right to education, protection and a healthy environment. The young people, the Prime Minister and the present Ministers discussed the issues and how to act on what they heard.
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Executive summary

The increasing frequency and severity of disaster events — exacerbated by an accelerating climate crisis, environmental degradation and lagging risk governance systems — means that children and young people need immediate action to build resilience. They are facing a child rights crisis underpinned by triple planetary crises in climate change/climate variability, nature (environmental sustainability of current and future socio-economic trajectories), and pollution (air, soil and water).

In response, UNICEF and its partners are committed to integrating child-centred DRR (CCDRR) into development and humanitarian efforts to strengthen resilience. UNICEF's DRR programmes work through a holistic vision for and with children and young people so they can gain skills, knowledge and resources to survive, grow and develop. In the 157 countries around the world with UNICEF programmes, its DRR programmes are often in remote, fragile, conflict-affected and risk-prone contexts, and partner with the most marginalized and at-risk children and young people.

This report highlights how UNICEF and its partners apply a multisectoral, systems-strengthening approach to DRR and recovery around the world. UNICEF's efforts are diverse. For example:

→ Engaging children and young people in disaster management committees as key stakeholders;
→ Promoting and carrying out Comprehensive School Safety (CSS);
→ Setting up systems and capacities for shock-responsive social protection, including cash transfer mechanisms;
→ Gathering evidence on disasters and gender-based violence;
→ Providing families with Covid-19 mental health support;
→ Brokering public-private partnerships; and
→ Other prevention, risk reduction and recovery activities.

UNICEF aims to build individual and societal resilience and advance the rights of every child; with special attention to those most vulnerable and disadvantaged in disaster contexts (e.g., girls, women, people with disabilities, children on the move). It does so through strong partnerships on a pathway to meet the targets of the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction* by 2030.

In today's volatile world, global efforts to limit the severe impact of disasters on children must rise to the level of crisis. Targeted, child-centred DRR efforts must be backed up by strategic investment and accelerated action to ensure our youngest generation can equally and equitably develop, grow and contribute to their communities.

Resilience

The ability of children, young people, households, communities and systems to anticipate, prevent, withstand, manage and overcome cumulative stresses and shocks (e.g., natural hazards, epidemics, socio-economic instability, conflict, climate change).

Paula (front) raises her hand during her elementary school class in Papua Province, Indonesia.

Every country protected; every child resilient

As disasters increase in number and severity around the world, children and young people — who constitute half the world's population — bear the greatest burdens that can last a lifetime (see box).

Disasters threaten the inherent rights guaranteed to them in the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* [2] to life, survival, protection, development and free expression; especially in low- to middle-income countries. Girls, women, people with disabilities and families living in poverty are particularly vulnerable.They are often impacted first and most severely by crisis in loss of life and on their education, livelihoods, health and well-being.

Child-centred DRR in both development and humanitarian settings strengthens individual and community resilience. Safer infrastructure, more resilient essential services and a population knowledgeable on disaster risk at all ages not only protects children, but also their families and their communities. If disaster does strike and in recovery, understanding and prioritizing child needs can benefit the wider society.

Building children's and young people's resilience and meeting the targets of the *Sendai Framework for DRR 2015-2030* — and those in other global agreements — is complex and urgent. Across multiple sectors, UNICEF is committed to working with partners to reduce the disproportional risks children face before and after a disaster. Leaving no child behind in increasingly frequent and severe disasters requires collaboration through strong partnerships with networks, governments, UN agencies, civil society, academia, the public and private sectors and, most critically, children and young people themselves.

$210 billion/USD
Global losses from >400 natural disasters in 2020[3]

2-7x more extreme weather events
Direct experience of a child born in 2020 compared to a child born in 1960 *(>2x more wildfires; >2.8x more exposure to crop failure; >2.6x more drought events; >2.8x more river floods; >6.8x more heatwaves)*[4]

1.6 billion
Learners in >190 countries affected by educational institution closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic (94% of global student population)[5]

Children and young people can be and already are proactive in making their world safer, ensuring solutions are age-appropriate and do no harm.

In today's volatile world, global efforts to limit the severe impact of disasters on children must rise to the level of crisis.

The Covid-19 pandemic starkly revealed the inequities that the most marginalized and vulnerable populations face in disasters and their aftermath. It also brought to light opportunities for children's and young people's resilience, innovation and agency to cope and adapt when provided with the tools, knowledge, resources and opportunities to participate and lead. They have unique capacities to adapt as well as to anticipate, prevent and manage cumulative stresses and shocks that help their peers, families and communities.[6]

As agents of change, children's and young people's own experiences are being used to create safer schools and more inclusive risk assessments and disaster management plans. Their innovative ideas are improving early warning systems, community-based risk reduction and national action plans. They are developing evacuation protocols and recovery plans that fit their unique needs, advocating for their rights in local to international disaster management policies, and raising awareness to reduce disaster risk in their communities and beyond.

Since 2018, UNICEF has invested more than **$250 million USD** in disaster risk reduction and recovery in more than **150 countries**. Its investments are growing as the need to prevent and recover from disaster grows more urgent year by year due to a changing climate.

Children and young people face multiple natural and human-made hazards:

→ **Climatological**
   wildfires, drought, extreme temperatures
→ **Meteorological**
   cyclones, storms, lightning strikes
→ **Hydrological**
   avalanches, floods, glacier lake overflows
→ **Geophysical**
   earthquakes, landslides, tsunamis, volcanos
→ **Biological**
   infestations, epidemics
→ **Technological/human-made**
   industrial accidents, chemical spills, transport accidents, famine, severe air pollution

Targeted, child-centred DRR efforts must be backed up by strategic investment and accelerated action to ensure our youngest generation can equally and equitably develop, grow and contribute to their communities.

What is child-centred DRR?

Rights-based
CCDRR puts the rights of children and young people at the forefront of efforts to identify, assess and reduce the potential loss of lives, health status, livelihoods, assets and services.

Inclusive
CCDRR prioritizes reaching and engaging the most marginalized and disadvantaged children and young people to address their specific hazard-exposure and vulnerabilities.

Holistic and multisectoral
CCDRR works both for and with children and young people through sector interventions for better prepared and more resilient individuals, households, communities and systems.

An inclusive approach to child-centred DRR

UNICEF's inclusive approach to CCDRR considers how to engage and support the most vulnerable children, young people and their families to reduce the disproportionately negative impacts of disasters.

In its programmes and policy development, it recognizes and accounts for their unique contexts and experiences related to gender, age, disability, ethnicity, poverty and socio-economic status, displacement, geography, etc. For example, across the disaster continuum:

→ **Inclusive, child-centred policies and plans must account for the unique circumstances of children and young people with disabilities.** This includes those with short-term injuries and long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments and limitations that may prevent their full participation.

It is also critical that DRR policy and action plans account and compensate for gender-based disadvantages, including measures to mitigate gender-based violence. For instance, in disasters:

→ **Gender inequality and compounding social inequalities are exacerbated** (e.g., ability, age, race/ethnicity, sexuality, socio-economic status, education level), triggering both direct and indirect negative impacts on marginalized groups. Girls and women are more likely to die from natural disasters and experience more negative mental health impacts.[7]

→ **Women** — including older female adolescents — also often have reduced access to health care (e.g., sexual and reproductive health [SRH]) and face higher rates of unemployment.[8]

Amal, age 9, has cerebral palsy and uses a wheelchair. She plays on the seesaw in the inclusive playground in her refugee camp school in Jordan.
© 2018 UNICEF/UN0251346/Christopher Herwig

UNICEF's strategic areas for reducing disaster risk

UNICEF's efforts aim to increase and improve child-sensitive policies and practice; expand age-inclusive multi-hazard risk assessments and reduction efforts; build safer, more resilient environments and services for children and young people; and accelerate all-of-society awareness, engagement and action in CCDRR.

Making environments safer and services more resilient for children and young people

→ Builds capacities in child-centred DRR and recovery planning, including costed recovery needs assessments for essential services.

→ Provides technical expertise and direct service provision for resilient infrastructure/services for safer schools and healthcare facilities, WASH, nutrition, social protection and child protection.

Supporting stakeholders at all levels to have capacities in disaster preparedness, response and recovery, including children and young people

→ Strengthens preparedness through stakeholder engagement and planning, including cross-sectoral and sector-specific impact scenarios and contingency plans and training/drills; and

→ Supports child-centred risk management and response planning to address multidimensional risks holistically (and to do no harm): disasters, climate change, environment, conflict, public health emergencies and other humanitarian and protracted crises.

Kyrgyzstan
Mainstreaming DRR in education

UNICEF Kyrgyzstan supported government ministries to develop a road map on DRR in educational institutions, based on evidence from helping 64,000 children in 119 schools learn safe behaviour and skills through school-based DRR emergency drills. The road map is being used to scale up child-centred DRR to 80% of Kyrgyzstan's schools; institutionalizing DRR in education facilities; and helping to keep children and young people safe at school, home and in their communities.

Iraq
Building preparedness capacities to improve child-centred response

UNICEF Iraq is working with the government to improve its capacity for child-centred response in case of crises, disaster and conflicts. For instance, it supported the development of a child-sensitive Internally Displaced Peoples (IDP) Response Plan National Preparedness framework; and is training authorities in resilience building, risk and vulnerability analysis and child rights. This includes in water, sanitation and hygiene bottleneck analysis[9] and climate change risk analysis (CCRA).

Ensuring DRR for and with children and young people are national and local priorities:

→ Supports the development of inclusive policies (multi-sectoral disaster or climate change policies and/or sector-specific policies), including for people with a disability and those most vulnerable.
→ Provides child-centred data, evidence and guiding frameworks.
→ Brokers private-public partnerships and investment.
→ Offers support to public finance processes for equitable funding in government spending.

Building awareness and capacities of partners and systems to identify and address disaster risks faced by children and young people:

→ Leads on child-centred risk assessments.
→ Promotes age-disaggregated data for tailored policies and programmes.
→ Provides technical guidance for inclusive decision-making that considers age, gender, disability, culture, ethnicity, language, migration and economic status.
→ Creates opportunities for children and young people participation in DRR efforts.

Cuba
Advancing DRR information and skills

UNICEF Cuba is incorporating gender and the inclusion of people with disabilities[10] into its adolescent and youth programming to reduce disaster risk in their schools, households and communities. In 2021, UNICEF developed the "Campaign My Action for the Planet" (*Mi acción por el Planeta*[11]), which promotes spaces and accessible materials for adolescent participation in environmental protection issues. The campaign reached 590,000 people with radio podcasts, spots and capsules with young environmental activists.[12]

From 2014-2019, UNICEF led trainings on DRR tools with more than 24,000 children and 1,400 teachers from 122 communities in five provinces. They will continue to work closely with the Ministry of Education to offer trainings in highly vulnerable communities until at least 2024.

Pakistan

Strengthening capacity, knowledge and engagement to manage disaster risk

UNICEF Pakistan is working closely with the National Disaster Management Authority on disaster risk management (DRM) capacity building, knowledge management and risk awareness raising. Together, they:

- Researched, developed, launched and scaling the Pakistan School Safety Framework across the country;
- Formed and supporting an active Parliamentarians Caucus on DRM;
- Created and shared DRR toolkits;
- Offered media consultation on risk reduction; and
- Regularly provided humanitarian preparedness and response support.

UNICEF's WASH programme also supported the Ministry of Climate Change in launching the Clean Green Pakistan[13] initiative at scale, garnering youth engagement and improved services across Pakistan.

The Pakistan National Disaster Management Authority and UNICEF worked together in formulating the Pakistan School Safety Framework. The framework guides stakeholders in ensuring safety and DRR in schools with a focus on child-centred disaster risk management. It promotes ways to create a safe learning environment, prepare schools against hazards, advance response mechanisms, raise DRR awareness and ensure child participation in building their resilience.
© UNICEF Pakistan/Asad Zaidi

Building resilience through both humanitarian and development action

UNICEF integrates elements of DRR into development programming and into humanitarian efforts. Across all its efforts, UNICEF supports a Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) nexus approach to reduce vulnerabilities and risk and prevent crises and conflicts before they materialize — particularly in fragile and conflict-affected settings. This includes adherence to the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) recommendation of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on the HDP nexus.[14]

UNICEF prioritizes partnerships in multisectoral (e.g., disaster management planning) and sectoral practices (e.g., education, heath, WASH, etc.) to accelerate collective impact through shared resources, activities, technical knowledge and expertise in programming and advocacy.

In early 2021, a child looks out over a flooded area of Kafr Losin Camp in northwest Syrian Arab Republic. The heavy rainfall from winter storms flooded tents and cut off roads leading to camps for internally displaced families.
© 2021 UNICEF/UN0405693/Khaled Akacha

Key Actions

Local Disaster Risk Reduction

UNICEF supports local governments and communities to strengthen their risk-reduction efforts and the local service delivery during and after crises

Urban Resilience

UNICEF works to make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable alongside governments, the public and private sectors, and local civil society groups—especially with and for children and young people from marginalized groups and neighborhoods

Work Across and Between Sectors

Education

UNICEF promotes DRR in teaching and learning, comprehensive school safety and disaster risk management

Health

UNICEF works in hazard-prone communities to strengthen the resilience of primary health care to deliver integrated preventive, promotive and curative services for child survival, health and well-being

Nutrition

UNICEF protects the nutritional status of young children and their mothers by integrating disaster risk into nutrition assessments and addressing additional health needs that may occur during a crisis

Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH)

UNICEF integrates resilience into WASH programmes to sustain systems and services — ensuring life-saving support and dignity before, during and after a crisis

Social Protection

UNICEF works with governments to strengthen shock-responsive social protection systems that support children, young people and their families, particularly through cash transfers

Child Protection

UNICEF supports activities to prevent, mitigate and respond to the protection risks for children, young people and women through supportive services and access to justice

Mental Health & Psychosocial Support

UNICEF integrates children and young people's mental health and well-being in DRR practices to increase their resilience and facilitate their recovery after shocks

Child & Young People Engagement

UNICEF supports and encourages the participation of children, adolescents and youth in DRR and resilience-building efforts

Private Sector Collaboration

UNICEF mobilizes financial resources from the private sector and leverages businesses so essential goods and services are accessible to all

Cross-sectoral

Multi-hazard risk assessment and analysis

Child-centered lens for national and subnational disaster risk management (DRM) policies and action plans; support to disaster preparedness and evidence-based contingency planning

Post-disaster needs assessments (PDNAs); greening recovery; and nature-based solutions for (NbS) DRR and/or climate change adaptation

Capacity development for government and in-country partners — directly or through inter-agency capacity development on DRR and/or climate change adaptation (e.g., CADRI)

Education

Disasters can deprive children their right to an education, lower educational outcomes, undermine children's mental health and well-being, and reduce their lifelong learning potential.
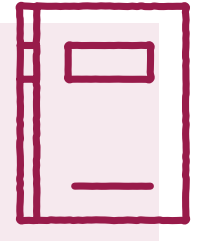
Ensuring children and young people are safe, prepared and able to access education even in times of crises is critical for society. UNICEF offers technical expertise to governments, local implementing partners and country office teams in areas of risk-informed programming, education for resilience, and preparedness and response in the face of multiple hazards faced by children, young people and education systems.

UNICEF partners with education ministries, administrators and teachers, parents, students and out-of-school children and young people to address risks and vulnerabilities. This includes risk-proofing learning facilities, emergency drills in schools, age-specific planning, risk mapping and localizing disaster curricula, enhancing learning continuity measures, and learning recovery following periods of educational disruption.

Comprehensive School Safety[15]

UNICEF promotes the CSS Framework on safe learning facilities, school disaster management, risk reduction and resilient education. The CSS Framework aims to provide a unified focus for child-centered and evidence-based efforts to promote DRR throughout the education sector and to assure universal access to quality education.

Albania
Integrating DRR into curricula and training

In Albania, UNICEF provided technical expertise on DRR and climate resilience to inform national school curricula and the National Strategy of Education 2021-2026. UNICEF, other UN agencies[16] and the National Agency for the Assurance of Education Quality in Preuniversity Education (AAQPUE) also collaborated to increase the knowledge and capacities of schools on DRR and climate. For instance, in 2020, they provided teachers and school personnel in 10 schools child-centered DRR and climate training, including on setting up DRR commissions in schools and developing school emergency plans.

During the COVID-19 response, UNICEF trained 600 school psychologists and social workers in techniques for working with children affected by disaster-induced trauma. UNICEF also provided educational support to nearly 403,000 children and young people in 2,100 schools with awareness materials and safety kits. Its digital, disability-friendly, interactive learning platform Akademi.al UNICEF[17] (for home learning during school closures) has more than 410,000 registered users.

Philippines
Reducing disaster risk through school-based DRR

In the Philippines, a 2012-2022 CCDRR programme mobilized and built the capacity of children and young people to play a significant role in DRR. It linked schools, villages and municipal governments to create an enabling environment for child-centred DRR in communities. More than 13,000 children and young people participated in DRR and climate change adaptation (CCA) activities. These mainly operated through schools to enlist the participation of students, teachers, parents and established groups (school and youth clubs, parent-teacher associations and programmes that reach out-of-school children and young people). Across the country, students:

- Participated in DRR school youth councils and community youth groups;

- Learned skills in advocacy, risk assessment, 3D hazard mapping, geotagging, evacuation planning and community organizing;

- Developed and led more than 50 community-based DRR/CCA activities (from first aid trainings to DRR/CCA awareness raising); and

- Reviewed and monitored School Improvement Plans and village and municipality DRR/CCA plans to ensure they are risk-informed and include child-centered programming.

In the Philippines, adolescents participate in 3D hazard mapping to identify greatest threats to them and their peers and ideas for reduce risk.
© Center for Disaster Preparedness/UNICEF Philippines

Health

Disasters are a direct threat to children and young people that can result in death, injury, disability, psychosocial problems and other health impacts, with consequences for short- and long-term physical, emotional, social and cognitive development.
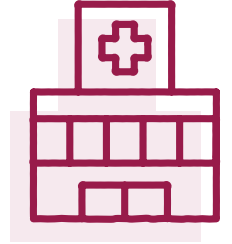
UNICEF's efforts aim to ensure essential primary health care services are risk informed, including those through community, school and digital platforms. To do so, UNICEF and its partners are:

→ Strengthening health systems to ensure reliable supply-chains, human resources and community engagement for continuity of essential services;
→ Risk-proofing healthcare centres through contingency planning, sustainable energy electrification and earthquake-ready (or other hazard) infrastructure; and
→ Implementing climate-resilient WASH programmes to reduce the risk of communicable diseases like acute respiratory illness and diarrhoea.[18] Disasters can, for example, disrupt or damage sanitation and sewer systems, resulting in water-borne, food-borne and vector-borne diseases.

Anshu (24) and Sonam (18) volunteer to unload ration kits for tribal villages and migrant workers in India during a Covid-19 outbreak.
© 2020 UNICEF/UNI339497/Dhiraj Singh

India
Expanding child-centred strategies in the Covid-19 response from the foundations of previous DRR efforts

In early 2020, India achieved a significant milestone for child rights with 100 percent of its DRM plans in states and districts inclusive of child-centred, risk-informed strategies, policies and programming. So, when the COVID-19 pandemic began, UNICEF was able to accelerate local and national child-centred risk management planning efforts to identify and address emerging health needs of the most vulnerable children, young people and women.

UNICEF built local capacities to adapt India's new child-centred DRM systems to the Covid-19 context, including at-scale investments in health systems strengthening to meet urgent healthcare and vaccination needs during the pandemic. It helped to institutionalize a state-level volunteer management system that engaged 31,000 people in the COVID-19 response and for other disasters. And it provided COVID-19 heath guidelines to support 'people-on-the-move' during the pandemic, including children and young people.

Ecuador
Supporting children's mental health through parenting groups

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, UNICEF and the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador (PUCE) launched a psychosocial intervention consisting of parent groups called 'Let's talk' to listen to and support parents during the crisis. The mental health initiative allowed them to share their experience of parenting during prolonged crisis, reorganize preconceived ideas, and generate self-evaluation free of external judgments. This resulted in many becoming closer to their children and being able to better support them during the pandemic.

Based on this work — and with the aim of consolidating a methodology for psychosocial interventions in parenting — UNICEF and PUCE created seven parenting guides[19] that reached more than 600,000 unique users through social media.
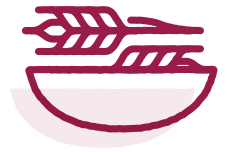
Nutrition

Good nutrition is the bedrock of child survival and development. Well-nourished infants, young children and adolescents are better able to grow, learn, play and participate in their communities. They are also more resilient in the face of crises.

In the 130 countries where UNICEF has nutrition programmes, they share a universal premise: Prevention of malnutrition comes first, in all contexts. Where prevention fails, treatment for life threatening forms of severe malnutrition is a must.

Humanitarian and protracted crises are often characterized by limited access to nutritious, affordable food and safe water; disruptions in essential health and nutrition services; and constraints to recommended infant and young child feeding, care and hygiene practices. For instance, the increased frequency and severity of climate-induced disasters is severely impacting agriculture production, with negative consequences on the quality and quantity of balanced and nutritious food, particularly impacting the most vulnerable and poor children and their families.

The greatest consequences are borne by the youngest children and women. UNICEF supports countries to lower malnutrition risk before and during disaster and maintain good nutrition during recovery — especially in fragile settings.

Viet Nam
Nutrition sector risk reduction and preparedness planning

Since 2018 in Viet Nam, UNICEF has worked alongside the government in the nutrition sector to build capacity in risk reduction, preparedness and humanitarian response. For instance, UNICEF supported the National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) - Ministry of Health (MOH) to formulate its 2018-2022 National Nutrition Preparedness Plan. In 2019, NIN and UNICEF established the Nutrition in Emergencies Working Group (NiE-WG), which they co-chair.

It includes UN agencies, non-government organizations, development partners and related MOH agencies in Viet Nam. The NiE-WG is formally guided by MOH's Department of Preventive Health and the Office for Disaster Prevention in Health. The MOH's involvement ensures nutrition risk reduction is incorporated into the MOH's overall risk management plan.

Each year, NiE-WG conducts a joint planning workshop for analysing risks, reviewing scenarios, defining intervention elements, developing the year's activities and updating emergency nutrition contingency plans for national and provincial use. Since 2020, an emergency planning process has also been institutionalized into all Nutrition subsector meetings. To improve nutrition awareness nationwide, NIE-WG created a dedicated Zalo messages group to share timely and accurate nutrition messaging before, during and after disaster.

South Sudan
Preventing food insecurity and supporting resilient nutrition during humanitarian crises

In 2021, 4.4 million South Sudanese children were identified as needing humanitarian assistance from multiple crises: flooding, drought, conflict and disease.[20] To prevent and address widespread food and nutrition insecurity, especially for children under age five, UNICEF and other UN agencies[21] deployed the Integrated Rapid Response Mechanism (IRRM)[22] to provide nutrition services and supplies in hard-to-reach areas, which contributed to preventing famine and the further deterioration of nutrition status.[23]

UNICEF also trained thousands of community health and nutrition workers on how to prevent, detect and treat childhood malnutrition — especially during or after disaster. Infants and children with severe wasting received therapeutic foods from outpatient therapeutic programme centres for home-based treatment; and those with medical complications were treated and cared for at inpatient stabilization centres.

At the UNICEF-supported Kimu Nutrition Center in Juba, South Sudan, Baby Levi Francis (7 months) received plummy nut and fortified cereals. His mother Lemia James (19) noticed he needed nutrients after floods wiped out their small kitchen garden. His health improved after two weeks at the center.
© 2021 UNICEF/UN0574054/Lisa Lynn Hill

Water

One in five children does not have enough water to meet everyday needs;[24] and climate change and environmental degradation are compounding water scarcity, especially for drinking.

Climate-related disasters can reduce access to, and functionality of, water services, directly impacting the quality and quantity of water available, and heightening the risk of death, malnutrition and disease from contaminated water.

Water-related disasters (e.g., droughts, floods, glacier lake overflows [GLOFs]) also threaten food security due to crop failures, nutrient and yield reductions, and livestock and agriculture land loss. Other potential impacts include livelihood loss, increased water collection time, gender-based violence and educational interruption.

In response, through Water Security for All initiatives,[25] UNICEF works to ensure that every child has access to sustainable and climate-resilient water services and to mobilize global resources, partnerships and innovation to hotspots where the need for safe, resilient and sustainable WASH services is greatest and most urgent. UNICEF is also implementing a nine-step shift towards climate-resilient WASH programming.[26] WASH can also support peacebuilding and social cohesion by addressing the causes and consequences of conflict and its linkages to economic crises and climate.[27]

Dreketi Primary School students in Fiji are unloading UNICEF WASH Kits as part of disaster recovery after Category five, Tropical Cyclone Yasa made landfall in December 2020. More than 2,700 WASH Kits, which include water containers, buckets, soap, sanitary pads and whistles, amongst other materials, were distributed to schools and families in the most affected areas, reaching over 15,000 people.
© 2021 UNICEF/UN0403407/Allan Stephen/Infinity Images

Fiji & Vanuatu:
Safeguarding vulnerable island water supplies

With predictions of more severe cyclones and rising sea levels in the Pacific Islands, UNICEF is collaborating with Fiji and Vanuatu Governments to improve water safety planning and Drinking-Water Safety and Security Planning (DWSSP). DWSSP places community members — including children and young people — at the centre of disaster planning to identify risk, define local priorities and prepare plans to improve water service delivery (e.g., risk-proofing schools, using solar energy to power healthcare facilitates, improving critical water infrastructure).

UNICEF and its partners work with communities to develop plans and gain skills in water system management, operations and maintenance. For instance, as of 2021, nearly 300 communities developed DWSSP plans in Vanuatu with the support of UNICEF, the Department of Water Resources (DoWR) and its partners.

In Vanuatu, UNICEF provided the DoWR with technical expertise to integrate climate resilient components into traditional water safety planning, helped formulate the National Implementation Plan for Safe and Secure Community Drinking Water and facilitated a Capital Assistance Program for donors and governments to support community DWSSPs.

In Fiji, UNICEF is supporting the Ministry of Health and Medical Services in DWSSP implementation through water committees in vulnerable communities. It is focused on protecting water sources through climate-resilient activities. To reinforce this approach, UNICEF is supporting the Department of Water and Sewerage in the implementation of Sanitation and Water for All (SWA)[28] activities, which includes strengthening policies for safeguarding water resources from the impacts of disasters and climate change.

Mozambique:
Building resilience through multi-use solar-powered water systems

During the 2016-2017 drought in Mozambique, groundwater levels fell below the pump intake levels of many handpumps, rendering them inoperable. In response, UNICEF conducted yield and water quality assessments of such boreholes. Where yield and quality were sufficient, UNICEF installed multi-use solar-powered water systems (SPWSs) on 54 boreholes and rehabilitated 98 boreholes, improving water access for more than 95,000 people in six provinces.

Owing to the lower depths of solar pumps, the systems provided water even during the peak of the drought. Where the borehole yields permitted, the systems enhanced drought resilience by increasing water production during the hottest months of the year when there is higher solar irradiation, greater water demand and lower groundwater levels. The SPWSs also reduced communities' vulnerabilities to other hazards — even cyclones.

In 2019, Cyclones Idai and Kenneth hit Mozambique, affecting more than one million children and interrupting the provision of basic services for months. The SPWSs continued to operate throughout the cyclone period, allowing some communities to return to impacted areas and to host neighbouring communities that lost safe water access due to flooding or electric grid power loss. Having functional systems also meant communities did not need expensive short-term emergency water interventions such as water trucking.

In Bangladesh, Jainuka Bibi (12), Sumaiya (10), Md. Kawser (9) and Md. Anas (8) collect safe water from a tap stand that receives supplies from a UNICEF-supported, solar-powered water supply distribution network. UNICEF is implementing solar-powered water supply systems to strengthen resilience to recurring disasters exacerbated by dense population and climate change. Energy can define a child's access to education, healthcare, water, clean air and safety — all of which are threatened by environmental degradation, disasters and a changing climate.

From 2018-2021, UNICEF and WASH programme partners constructed 54 solar-powered water networks in seven refugee camps in Bangladesh, currently benefiting 200,000 Rohingya refugees. Additionally, nearly 2,000 Rohingya volunteers (35% female and 65% male) from Water User Groups have been trained on basic operation and maintenance of these solar powered networks to enhance their sustainability.

Sanitation

Nearly half of the world's population lack safely managed sanitation services,[29] which puts them at risk of water- and sanitation-related diseases. Among other challenges, achieving universal access to safe sanitation is further threatened by disaster impacts that exacerbate public health risks.

Community-led total sanitation taskforce 2020 activities in Namibia

~213,000 people mobilised to improve hand-washing practices in their communities and reduce the risk of Covid-19 infections

15,500 child and adolescent learners reached by school-based hygiene promotion activities

Safe and accessible sanitation is foundational for a healthy, comfortable and dignified life. However, sanitation services, facilities and infrastructure are vulnerable to a wide range of natural hazards, particularly flooding. A lack of safe sanitation services before and after disaster can increase the risk of death, diseases and illnesses that disproportionately affect children (i.e., diarrhoea, worm infections and stunting) and adversely affect their education, especially for girls without adequate menstrual hygiene provisions.

UNICEF aims to provide disaster resilient and safe sanitation for the world's most vulnerable communities in rural and urban areas. This includes during and after disasters to provide urgent relief to communities and nations threatened by disrupted services and the risk of disease outbreak. UNICEF works with governments at national and sub-national levels and other relevant stakeholders to understand current and future disaster risks facing sanitation systems and develop clear strategies and technical solutions to address deficiencies, especially for children and young people.

UNICEF worked with students in Jordan to build their capacities on alternative water technologies and measures that could be taken to address water scarcity. They made an interactive board showing the linkages and water flow between installed solar-powered modified septic tank wastewater treatment systems installed at their schools. They also participated in workshops on the importance, operation and maintenance of the systems.
© 2019 UNICEF Jordan.

Namibia
Reducing disaster risk through child-centered sanitation

Good sanitation can make communities more resilient when a disaster hits. Namibia is faced with one of lowest levels of sanitation coverage in Africa, with only 34 percent of the country's population having access to basic sanitation facilities — and only 14 percent in the country's rural areas. Namibia is at the same time rapidly urbanising. Growing impoverished urban settlement populations and exacerbated exclusion and inequality prevents proper access to WASH services for the poorest and most marginalized children and their families. As a result, urban sanitation coverage is decreasing while open defecation is on the rise.[30]

In 2020, years of consecutive drought, protracted Hepatitis E outbreak and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic also weakened urban sanitation coverage. In response, UNICEF conducted risk assessments, ran targeted prevention communication and supported local engagement activities in high-risk schools and communities. UNICEF found the activities resulted in a decrease in risky behaviours due to the increased awareness and information on good hygiene practices.

Since 2019, UNICEF has established community-led total sanitation (CLTS) taskforces in high-risk communities and informal settlements to lower sanitation-related risks for children, young people and their families. After multiple CLTS interventions, nearly 4,500 people in informal settlements are now living in open defecation free communities. UNICEF also provided technical expertise in the development of Namibia's recent sanitation and hygiene strategy which calls for community involvement and participation and includes sanitation safety planning for children and young people.[31]

Jordan
Reducing water scarcity through school-based solar-powered wastewater treatment and reuse

Jordan is the world's fifth most water-scarce country, where climate change, population increase and rising water demands are exacerbating the water scarcity crisis. To address Jordan's water scarcity, insufficient wastewater treatment (WWT) and the resulting groundwater contamination, and energy shortages for more than 700 children in Irhab, two decentralized solar-powered modified septic tank WWT systems were installed across three schools. They included greywater reuse systems for toilet flushing and restricted irrigation, rainwater harvesting (RWH) and remote monitoring.

The WWT systems operate efficiently despite changes or interruptions in wastewater flow due to the balancing design of the systems' storage capacities and backwater flows which keep water levels stable. The solar systems meet 100 percent of the schools' energy needs.

To reduce operational costs for the school, excess power is sold back to the grid. The WWT and RWH systems also reduce maintenance needs and improve water and energy efficiency. Capacity building for system operators, students, and community and municipality participants include water conservation, the environmental impacts of WWT and the potential of renewable energy as a sustainable energy source. This sustainable integrated approach to decentralized WWT for Jordanian schools and communities shows promise for future expansion in water-scarce regions.

Shock-responsive social protection

When disaster occurs, effective social protection support can be a crucial factor in determining whether children and young people can quickly return to normality or their life paths will be permanently altered.

Child-centred social assistance, services, insurance and safety nets can reduce household vulnerabilities, break cycles of intergenerational poverty and make it easier for families to cope with economic and social risks throughout their lives.[32]

UNICEF works closely with government partners to ensure national social protection services have the flexibility to adjust to stresses and shocks, where they can rapidly expand services to those who urgently need support after a disaster. UNICEF primarily focuses on strengthening social transfers — especially cash transfers — in development settings and in humanitarian response.

Cash transfers

Regular, predictable payments of cash are an important social protection modality. Research shows that cash transfers promote economic empowerment, while decreasing poverty and food insecurity.

ASEAN Member States
Institutionalizing child-centred social protection in anticipation to shocks

Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are in one of the most disaster-prone regions in the world as they face frequent and severe typhoons, floods, drought, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. Urgent efforts are required to reduce the vulnerabilities of at-risk populations, strengthen their capacity to anticipate, respond to and recover from shocks, and thus enhance households' resilience to mitigate the effects of shocks and improve preparedness for further crises.

With this aim, UNICEF, the World Food Programme (WFP), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) have been supporting the ASEAN with financial aid from the European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid (ECHO) since 2017. The ultimate goal of the joint programme is to advance progressive institutionalization of anticipatory action approaches, including risk-informed and shock-responsive social protection for resilience in the ASEAN region.[33]

One of the achievements of the programme was the adoption in 2020 of the ASEAN Guidelines on Disaster Responsive Social Protection to Increase Resilience.[34] The joint programme has also been catalyst for making anticipatory action work a part of national preparedness and response systems, including building the shock responsiveness of national social protection systems in the region.

Mongolia

Using social policy to minimize COVID-19 shocks to household income

With thousands of households facing poverty due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Mongolian Government deployed a rapid and efficient shock-responsive social protection strategy that explicitly considered child needs. The deployment built on the existing Child Money Programme (CMP) implementation mechanism, its beneficiary database, payment and reporting systems, and national and local human resources; and used evidence and lessons from a 2019 government pilot implemented by UNICEF delivering shock-responsive cash transfers to mitigate climate risks.[35]

UNICEF also coordinated a rapid social impact assessment on social and protection services for children and families during school closures. The study recognized the challenges for vulnerable households to meet the food supply demand from children staying at home; coupled with the loss of family income from COVID-19 restriction measures. The UNICEF pilot and the impact assessment provided evidence for the government to top up benefit levels from the CMP fivefold — one of the highest increments in the world — to reach 1.2 million children (i.e., more than two thirds of households).

As of 2022, nearly all (96.6%) children of Mongolia were benefitting from the country's flagship Child Money Programme (CMP), which is universal for eligible children to receive MNT 20,000 (USD 7) a month. In response to COVID -19, the Government of Mongolia made an imperative decision to top-up the monthly child benefit by increasing the amount five-fold.
© 2018 UNICEF/UN0243370/Eric Portas Pasquall

Child protection

In disasters and other crises, children and young people often suffer first, the most and pay the highest price. Millions are vulnerable to malnutrition and multiple forms of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect.

Many are forced to flee their homes, and some separated from their parents and caregivers. In every crisis: the risk of child labor, child marriage and trafficking of girls is prevalent. For girls and women, the threat of gender-based violence (GBV) soars and remains a serious life-threatening problem. As well, children and young people often lack critical services for their safety and well-being.

Child protection efforts aim to prevent and respond to the abuse of rights of children and young people directly or indirectly, violence (including GBV and sexual exploitation and abuse [SEA]), exploitation and neglect, which can profoundly affect their emotional and physical well-being during and after disaster events. In preparing and responding to disaster, UNICEF works across its programme sectors, with partners (governments and non-governmental organizations) and with communities themselves. They aim to keep children and young people from harm, support those at risk, monitor grave violations and provide care and protection for children, young people and their families who have experienced abuse and violence.

Moho, a mother, shows how drought and sandstorms are killing her family cassava plantation field in the south of Madagascar. The disaster is causing children in the community to suffer from severe acute malnutrition as they struggle to access water for themselves and their land, which raises child protection concerns.
© 2021 UNICEF/UN0406726/Safidy Andrianantenaina

Belize
UNICEF strengthens child protection protocols in regional emergency response and recovery plans

UNICEF Belize and the UNICEF regional office, in collaboration with Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency and Caribbean governments, launched the Regional Protocol for the Integrated Protection of Children and Adolescents in Emergencies and Disaster Situations,[36] with UNICEF technical support. This was an important step towards developing child-centred risk management plans at subnational levels. The Protocol guides regional and national emergency units in placing the needs of children and adolescents at the center of emergency response strategies and programmes.

In Belize, the Protocol builds on present national strategies and programmes of line Ministries and the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO), as mandated under the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act in Belize. It also contributes to making project activities by other stakeholders more robust in its response and recovery mechanisms (e.g., humanitarian agencies such as the Belize Red Cross Society and non-governmental organizations in Belize specializing in DRR, health and education).

In 2021, UNICEF and NEMO trained 121 officers from 8 municipalities in Belize to implement activities in DRR plans. The training was a follow up from a nationwide launch of the National Protocol. The trained emergency actors have applied child-sensitive lens to preparedness plans developed for the hurricane season in 2021 and beyond.

Madagascar
Training, awareness and organizational commitment aim to keep girls and women safe during and after disaster

In 2021, the South of Madagascar faced its worst drought in decades, affecting more than 1.4 million people.[37] Widespread food insecurity and malnutrition — coupled with pre-existing gender inequalities, multidimensional poverty and a lack of livelihood opportunities — exacerbated risks for GBV and SEA for affected communities, as well as negative coping mechanisms among women and children (particularly girls). The situation has increased school drop out rates, as well as the number of children and women begging and foraging for food.

As part of its disaster preparedness, response and recovery plan, in 2021 UNICEF and its partners trained more than 300 humanitarian and government personnel on protection from GBV and SEA, and how to handle disclosures of GBV and SEA incidents. The training included social workers, referral services staff, security and armed forces and community mobilisers. UNICEF also supported partners and community-based support networks to scale up and promote safe access to GBV and SEA services for disclosing incidents and receiving information about available services and care. UNICEF and partners' promote protection too by requiring personnel[38] to sign a code of conduct to further protect women and children (particularly girls) from SEA.

Spotlight on Child-Centred DRR

Children and young people in Nepal participate in local risk governance[39]

Nepal is highly prone to a range of natural hazards that disproportionally impact its youngest generation — including floods, landslides and earthquakes. More than 500 disasters occur every year, leading to the destruction of physical infrastructures, loss of human life and disrupted livelihoods. When the 7.6 magnitude Gorkha earthquake struck Nepal in 2015, nearly 9,000 people were killed, approximately one-third of which were children.

As president of his school's child club in Nepal, Abhiram (middle) said the child-centred DRR trainings were very practical. "We explored and mapped what kind of disasters we should be most prepared for, learned basic search-and-rescue techniques and first aid treatment, and did several simulation exercises." The programme is funded by the Margaret A. Cargill Foundation.
© 2019 UNICEF Nepal/PShrestha

Beginning in 2013, UNICEF launched its **Child-Centred Disaster Risk Reduction programme in Nepal**[40] to:

→ Strengthen knowledge, skills and capacities for child-centred DRR by children, young people, communities and systems;

→ Increase child-centred DRR integration into district, regional and sectoral policies and plans; and

→ Improve the resilience and meaningful participation of children and young people in DRR and climate change adaptation decision-making.
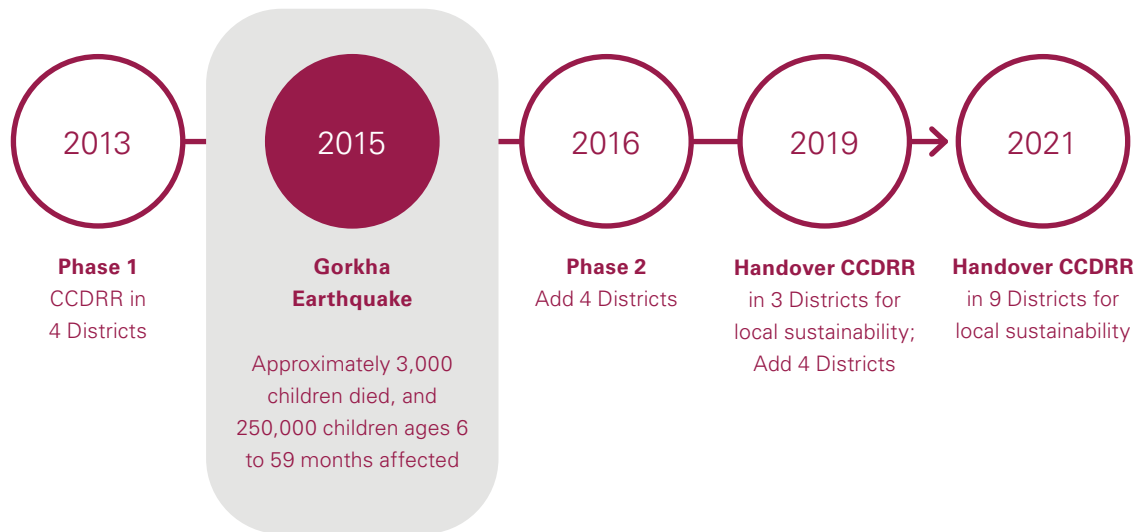
Nepal programming advances child-centred DRR

Between 2013 to 2021, UNICEF and its child-centred DRR programme partners[41] operated in 12 districts with high vulnerability and disaster risk, including two districts severely impacted by the Gorkha earthquake. As the programme expanded from 4 districts in 2013 to 12 districts overall:

→ The number of children and young people in decision-making increased with 107 child clubs and 136 school safety clubs operational in programme areas by the end of 2021;

→ The number of child-centred plans increased with 9 districts (20 municipalities) embedding child-centred DRR into municipality disaster management policies and plans; and

→ The access to DRR and CCA knowledge, skills and capacities grew, with the Nepal Department of Education (DoE) integrating DRR and CCA into national school curricula and teacher training.

CCDRR programme ensures long-term sustainability

For sustainability, on-going attention on CCDRR and child and young people participation in decision-making will be critical to make plans and policies child friendly and risk informed. To this end, UNICEF played an instrumental role in Nepal's Local Education Development Partner Group (LEDPG) in promoting and advocating for CCDRR and Comprehensive School Safety initiatives. It also promoted CCDRR activities and resources in schools in the government's School Sector Development Plan (SSDP),[42] including greater attention on the CSS Framework.

2013

Phase 1
CCDRR in
4 Districts

2015

Gorkha Earthquake

Approximately 3,000 children died, and 250,000 children ages 6 to 59 months affected

2016

Phase 2
Add 4 Districts

2019

Handover CCDRR
in 3 Districts for local sustainability;
Add 4 Districts

2021

Handover CCDRR
in 9 Districts for local sustainability

"Children are not just helpless bystanders in a disaster but can contribute to spreading awareness and even in responding to an emergency situation."
— Abhiram, age 14, Nepal

Spotlight on gender

## Eastern and Southern Africa: Gender-responsive disaster risk management

In Eastern and Southern Africa, evidence shows specific negative impacts of disasters on girls and women that are deeply rooted in gender inequality and discrimination patterns, including gender-based violence (GBV). In response, UNICEF and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies launched a partnership in 2020 to explore how disaster risk management legal and policy frameworks are gender responsive.

A young girl crosses floodwaters in Gatumba in Burundi. In early 2021, more than 1,500 people were internally displaced in the region due to rising floodwaters during the previous year. © 2021 UNICEF/ UN0436094/Karel Prinsloo

The *Gender-Responsive Disaster Risk Management*[43] study focused on Ethiopia, Burundi, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Somalia [including Puntland and Somaliland], South Sudan, Uganda and Zimbabwe. For each country, the report includes summary DRM country profiles.

The study defined gender-responsive DRM as having proactive intent to achieve gender-equitable results by identifying gender-related barriers, developing appropriate preparedness and responses planning, and establishing strong accountability frameworks for monitoring and review.
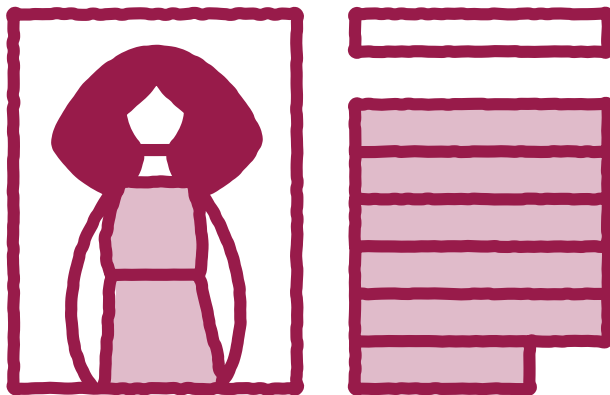
Key recommendations from the study include to:

→ Develop gender-responsive DRM frameworks that integrate GBV risk reduction, prevention and response;
→ Institutionalize gender-responsive DRM;
→ Ensure multisectoral, multilevel, all-hazard gender responsive DRM coordination;
→ Advance gender equality aligning with national and subnational gender equality movements and organizations;
→ Leverage regional bodies' leadership on gender-responsive DRM and relevant initiatives;
→ Identify opportunities to integrate DRM and CCA activities to advance gender equality and attention to GBV risk mitigation, prevention and response;
→ Generate guidance on developing gender-responsive DRM frameworks; and
→ Advocate for the Sendai Framework replacement instrument to be more gender responsive.

UNICEF and its partners — such as the International Federation of the Red Cross and Africa Risk Capacity — are actively working with governments to implement the recommendations.

Spotlight on public-private partnerships
Resilience is everyone's business

UNICEF's Business and Community Resilience (BCR) approach strengthens and builds public-private alliances that deliver humanitarian assistance and reduce impacts from shocks and stresses of recurrent disasters to children and their families. The approach harnesses the core expertise, operational capacities and networks of the business sector to mutually strengthen disaster-affected communities and the businesses that serve them. The approach — first piloted in Indonesia — builds on UNICEF's Core Commitments for Children[44] and is now underway in six countries across three regions.

Ngaisatul (age 7) washes her hands at a washstand provided by UNICEF along with sanitation and hygiene kits.
© 2020 UNICEF/UNI337403/Dinda Veska

In the Eastern Caribbean, Guatemala and Peru, UNICEF and partners have supported government to define the role of business in strategic plans, initiated interagency private sector working groups and collaborate with existing platforms, namely the Connecting Business Initiative (CBi), ARISE Global Network and other regionally specific joint initiatives that focus on leveraging private sector capacities.

UNICEF Peru recently concluded a landscape analysis of the private sector's role and sector-specific initiatives in humanitarian action and disaster resilience, while UNICEF is supporting the Guatemala Government in undertaking a more comprehensive national and district-level analysis to guide future engagement. National and regional authorities in the Caribbean, with the support of UNICEF and the regional Chamber of Commerce co-organized a regional forum in 2022 for private sector engagement in humanitarian action and resilience.

Public-private initiatives are also underway in Indonesia for disaster-resilient WASH, a critical area of humanitarian and development need. UNICEF and partners launched INCUBITS[45] to crowdsource disaster- and climate-resilient and affordable WASH ideas and established a WASH Innovation Hub to leverage business sector expertise in testing, iteration and showcasing promising solutions. An advocacy coalition, the Partnership for Handwashing with Soap (PPP-HWWS),[46] was also formed to promote HWWS investments and sustainable hygiene practices for increased disaster resilience and response capacity of communities. WASH4Work[47] initiatives contribute to strengthening business resilience to disasters and increasing climate risks through the provision of safe and sustainable WASH services in the workplace.

Throughout 2020- 2021, UNICEF and partners — namely the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and CBi — have also supported the development of a white paper towards the National Framework for Business Engagement in Disaster Resilience in Indonesia. The framework supports the Government of Indonesia's efforts towards establishing a policy and respective mechanisms to coordinate, manage and ensure the due diligence and child rights safeguarding of business sector engagement in disaster resilience.

Unlocking the potential of business and identifying synergistic opportunities remain at the core of this effort. UNICEF and its partners are committed to build resilience through this innovative and tested approach.

Reducing disaster risk and building resilience for and with children and young people

Additional DRR & resilience-building work by UNICEF*

Serbia
Supported the government to mainstream DRR and CCA into primary and secondary school curricula and education legal frameworks

Kazakhstan
Ran a school-based volunteering programme with 900 schools where young people first learned about reducing disaster risk, going plastic free and being green.

Viet Nam
Conducted technical reviews, analysed regional laws and synthesized UN reporting; leading to the government amending and approving the Law on Natural Disaster Prevention and Control

Mexico
Supported the installation of Casita Neta Cero Agua y Energía in up to 30 schools as playful and interactive spaces that use rainwater for activities and drinking water, and solar radiation to create clean and renewable energies to operate the hybrid system

North Macedonia
Developed localized DRR teaching manuals and trained 200 staff from 7 kindergartens and 4 primary schools in reducing disaster risk

Nepal
Strengthened and scaled helpline services to support the early identification of children at risk of violence, abuse and exploitation

Philippines
Established a School Hydro-Meteorological Information Network (SHINe) in island-based high schools to generate local weather information from the school

Pakistan
Supported the National Disaster Management Authority in the development of WASH humanitarian response Standard Operating Procedures

Honduras
Strengthened the capacities of national and municipal actors, including the Ministry of Education (MoE)

Barbados
Co-led trainings with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency Regional Training Centre (RTC) and CDEMA member states

Benin
Supported 45 of 77 municipalities to develop disaster contingency plans

Sri Lanka
Trained officials in child-centred DRR who worked with 1,600 adolescents

Burundi
Supported social protection programmes that reached approximately 5% of children (~300,000)

Myanmar
Used a child-centred risk assessment approach to support the development of risk-informed programming for climate-resilient WASH services

Indonesia
Used UNICEF's Adolescent Kit for Innovation and Expression to build adolescent competencies to identify disaster risk issues that affect them, and work in teams to develop community solutions

Lesotho
Provided technical expertise and strategic documentation to the Ministry of Social Development and the Disaster Management Authority on disaster preparedness

Madagascar
Supported the government in developing child-centred disaster management plans at the subnational level nationwide to reduce risks and impact from droughts, floods and other hazards

Pacific Islands
Supported a school-based DRR and resilience building programme in Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu to reach >1,040 school communities

* Mapped activities highlight additional examples of UNICEF's global reach in its DRR and recovery efforts and are representative of a much wider body of UNICEF DRR programming in 157 countries.

Barbados

Co-led trainings with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency Regional Training Centre (RTC) and CDEMA member states to improve their knowledge of shock-responsive social protection, education in emergencies, securing critical WASH supplies and child protection in emergencies.

Benin

Supported 45 of 77 municipalities to develop disaster contingency plans; all 12 regions have formulated civil security organization plans. Following a risk analysis in five municipalities, supported them in updating plans to be child sensitive.

Burundi

Supported social protection programmes that reached approximately 5 percent of children (~300,000), such as national cash transfers and an innovative shock-responsive intervention where participants contribute to micro loans and community investments. This includes to women solidarity groups who receive fiscal responsibility training, seed funding and support.

Honduras

Strengthened the capacities of national and municipal actors, including the Ministry of Education (MoE), to incorporate children's rights into risk management polies and plans through the risk management tool INFORM Honduras[48] (i.e., implementing school safety plans and improving access to climate-resilient WASH services in schools).

Indonesia

Used UNICEF's Adolescent Kit for Innovation and Expression[49] to build adolescent competencies to identify disaster risk issues that affect them, and work in teams to develop community solutions.[50] Supported the government with an app to monitor and assess its disaster-safe school programme.[51]

Kazakhstan

Ran a school-based volunteering programme with 900 schools where young people first learned about reducing disaster risk, going plastic free and being green. The volunteers then led 1,300 peer-to-peer interactive online lessons and reached 130,000 children and adolescents with their messaging.

Lesotho

Provided technical expertise and strategic documentation to the Ministry of Social Development and the Disaster Management Authority on disaster preparedness. This included an integrated policy framework for early warning, early action and shock-responsive social protection.

Madagascar

Supported the government in developing child-centred disaster management plans at the subnational level nationwide to reduce risks and impact from droughts, floods and other hazards. Prepositioned supplies and used an integrated climate risk management approach to ensure rapid and sustainable response based on evidence and forecasting.

Mexico

Supported the installation of Casita Neta Cero Agua y Energía[52] in up to 30 schools as playful and interactive spaces that use rainwater for activities and drinking water, and solar radiation to create clean and renewable energies to operate the hybrid system. Developed DRR curricula and manuals for student and teachers on climate and child rights.[53]

Myanmar

Used a child-centred risk assessment approach to support the development of risk-informed programming for climate-resilient WASH services; for integrating DRR and climate into teachers' resources package curriculum; and in youth-led air pollution monitoring and reduction measures and activities.

Nepal

Strengthened and scaled helpline services to support the early identification of children at risk of violence, abuse and exploitation — including GBV; child labor; unaccompanied, separated and vulnerable children; MHPSS alerts for mitigation, prevention and timely and appropriate response in all 7 provinces.

North Macedonia

Developed localized DRR teaching manuals and trained 200 staff from 7 kindergartens and 4 primary schools in reducing disaster risk. Supported staff to develop rescue and protection plans, run simulation exercises and install needed equipment based on a vulnerability and capacity assessment carried out in 9 municipalities.

Pacific Islands

Supported a school-based DRR and resilience building programme in Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu to reach >1,040 school communities. Offered country-specific training resources for gender-responsive, inclusive DRR and capacity building for authorities at multiple levels to prepare for and respond to school needs during disaster.

Pakistan

Supported the National Disaster Management Authority in the development of WASH humanitarian response Standard Operating Procedures that are currently under approval and supported disaster-resilient response to humanitarian emergencies in various locations.

Philippines

Established a School Hydro-Meteorological Information Network (SHINe) in island-based high schools to generate local weather information from the school. This allows students, their families and the community to receive early warning information in real time using transceiver radio communication distributed in various parts of the islands.

Serbia

Supported the government to mainstream DRR and CCA into primary and secondary school curricula and education legal frameworks. Reached more than 11,000 students and 500 teachers in climate change education and project-based learning.

Sri Lanka

Trained officials in child-centred DRR who worked with 1,600 adolescents — including 432 children residing in 20 children's homes who are an often-ignored and highly marginalized population. They developed DRR and emergency response plans for their communities and children homes, which were integrated into sub-national level government development plans.

Viet Nam

Conducted technical reviews, analysed regional laws and synthesized UN reporting; leading to the government amending and approving the Law on Natural Disaster Prevention and Control.[54] The law establishes a Community Disaster Prevention Force, promotes awareness raising in ethnic minority languages and reallocates budgets.

DRR, climate change and resilience

Despite COVID-19 restrictions, 2021 was major climate moment for young people raising their voices demanding urgent climate action through online and in-person engagements and activism. This included children and young people amplifying their voices through social platforms and creative videos, capacity building and workshops, and support for youth advocates attending the Local Conference of Youth (LCOY), Youth4Climate and COP26.

As an example of climate and DRR engagement, in the weeks leading up to World Children's Day (WCD) 2021, UNICEF Djibouti worked with a group of 20 young people on issues related to child rights. They presented their views on priority issues — such as the right to education, protection and a healthy environment — at a ceremony organized by the Djibouti Ministry of Women and Family under the supervision of the Prime Minister and in collaboration with UNICEF.
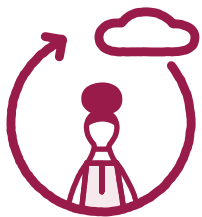
114 UNICEF country offices engaged young people on climate in 2021, up from 106 in 2020

Filling in the gaps in age-disaggregated disaster and climate data

UNICEF prioritizes gathering data and evidence to inform and shape DRR and CCA action for and with our partners. For instance, in 2021, UNICEF developed the Children's Climate Risk Index (CCRI) that provides country rankings based on children's exposure to climate and environmental shocks, such as cyclones and heatwaves, as well as their vulnerability to those shocks based on their access to essential services.

The data can be used as a programming tool to help prioritize actions to for and with those most at risk of disasters and climate change impacts. The tool is part of *The climate crisis is a child rights crisis report*[55] that presents a conceptual framework and a comprehensive view of children's exposure and vulnerability to the impacts of climate change.

The CCRI reveals that almost every child on earth is now exposed to at least one climate and environmental shock and stress. These hazards will increase in severity as the impacts of climate change accelerate. The report also finds that approximately 1 billion children living in 33 countries[56] are at an extremely high-risk to the impacts of climate change. None of the extremely high-risk countries, according to the CCRI, have an extremely high (>80 percent) score on the adoption and implementation of national DRR strategies in line with the Sendai Framework. A comprehensive DRR strategy is a critical component to better protect children from the impacts of climate change.

A woman surveys the damage to her village after Hurricane Eta in Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua. In 2020, more than three million people were exposed to Hurricanes Eva and Iota, which had torrential rains and winds upwards of 230 km/h. An estimated 1.8 million people were affected by the storms.

Investment and evidence-based decision-making

Investing in child-centred DRR for and with children and young people builds a better future for all — and the many generations to follow.

Short- and long-term investment is required to uphold the rights of children and young people to life, survival, development and free expression and advance global commitments to the **Sendai Framework for DRR 2015-2030**,[57] **2030 Sustainable Development Agenda**,[58] **UNFCCC Paris Agreement**,[59] **Agenda for Humanity**[60] and the **New Urban Agenda**.[61]

In the 157 countries with UNICEF programmes, the UN agency is actively investing resources, funding and expertise into child-centred preparedness efforts and in reducing risk through response and early recovery work. Investment also includes promoting, gathering and applying age-disaggregated data for child-centred decision-making.

For instance, from 2017-2021, UNICEF in the Latin American and Caribbean region has been strengthening the capacities of national and municipal actors to gather comprehensive data and evidence on multi-hazard risks. It did so through the open-source platform INFORM (Index for Risk Management),[62] with targeted programmes in Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras and Suriname.

The INFORM platform is designed to create a systematic and comprehensive analysis of risk to improve support and resources allocation and interventions. This can maximize benefits for affected populations, improve resilience of vulnerable communities and protect development gains. Recently, in drought-affected countries in the Central American Dry Corridor, the INFORM platform helped in regional and national response planning and for developing better disaster prevention, preparedness and response.

> $250 million/USD

UNICEF 2018-2021 investment in DRR activities, including risk assessments; evidence generation, evaluation, data syntheses and analyses; technical assistance; risk-informed programming; cross-sectoral emergency preparedness; capacity- and resilience-building; and advocacy to increase child-centred policies and practice.

Armenia
Investing in public finance for children helps to keep them safe

Armenia is among the 60 most disaster-prone countries in the world, with nearly 110 different hazards present (e.g., earthquake, flood, mudflow, hail, drought and frost). Climate change, environmental degradation and lack of access to clean, affordable energy threaten children's well-being, survival and access to quality essential services.

Being a mountainous country, Armenia is also particularly vulnerable to seismic risks. Yet, 80 percent of school and preschool infrastructures are non-compliant with earthquake-resistant standards, including 28 percent of schools in remote and rural areas that have an imminent need for retrofitting and reconstruction to reduce the risk of earthquake damage.[63] Thus, UNICEF Armenia works closely with the government on advancing comprehensive school safety underpinned with appropriate budgetary allocations.

Since 2018, UNICEF has provided technical support to the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport (MoESCS) for the development and adoption of a state budget programme on safer schools. This enables MoESCS to receive vital funding for school disaster management and for implementing a small-size secondary school approach complying with the construction principles of universal design and child-friendly school requirements. This was possible through combination of school safety assessment and UNICEF public finance for children (PF4C) work — capitalizing on the programme-based budgeting reform in Armenia, which included direct preparation of budgetary programmes and costing.

Davit (right), 8, and his friend learnt about explosive ordnance during a class at a temporary education and recreation center established by UNICEF Armenia and the IFRC.
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Commitment and collaboration

UNICEF promotes Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action[64] (UNICEF's central policy on how to uphold the rights of children affected by humanitarian crisis) and proactively supports governments with resilient recovery through a systems-strengthening approach.

At regional and national levels, UNICEF is active in DRR, disaster management and climate change committees; post- disaster needs assessment collaborations; and sectoral advocacy campaigns for and with children and young people to keep them safe and protected. Within countries, UNICEF integrates DRR into its programming to ensure disaster risks are assessed and monitored as part of planning processes. For DRR efforts to be meaningful and sustained, it focuses on building partnerships with government and civil society.

Globally, UNICEF is engaged with: the ARISE Global Network,[65] the Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative (CADRI),[66] Children in a Changing Climate (CCC),[67] Connecting Business initiatives (CBi)[68] the Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector (GADRRRES),[69] the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE),[70] the Global Education Cluster[71] and the Geneva Global Hub for Education in Emergencies,[72] the Inter-Agency Standing Committee,[73] the Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC),[74] the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR),[75] the Sendai Stakeholders Children and Youth Group (the DRR working group of the Major Group for Children and Youth) (SSCYG/MGCY),[76] the United Nations DRR Focal Point Group (UN DRR FPG), the United Nations Senior Leadership Group (UN SLG) on DRR for Resilience[77] and others (see page 50).

UNICEF supports the CADRI Partnership's capacity diagnosis services

As a CADRI executive partner, UNICEF provides support and multidisciplinary expertise across the CADRI Partnership's three main service lines: capacity diagnosis, prioritization and planning and training. For the new inter-agency CADRI Tool,[78] for instance, UNICEF experts developed nearly 2,500 education, nutrition and WASH questions related to risk governance, financing, knowledge and technology. The tool helps countries assess whether their policies, methodologies or technologies to reduce climate and disaster risks are adequate, conflict sensitive, gender-responsive and address the needs and demands of the most vulnerable groups.

Comoros and Bolivia are two country examples where UNICEF experts joined forces with other UN partners to support multisectoral capacity diagnosis. In Comoros, the Ministry of Health and UNICEF collaborated to integrate key nutrition indicators in the health information system. To date, the ministry has put in place 17 Intensive Nutritional Recovery and Education Centers and UNICEF has opened five other ambulatory centers. In Bolivia, UNICEF country experts facilitated an analysis of DRR capacities in education and WASH to help the government identify key recommendations for consolidating risk management capacities. These will inform a new national risk reduction plan and the formulation of the new UN sustainable cooperation framework.[79]

UNICEF DRR in action:
leadership, expertise and support

As this report shows, UNICEF is a leading agency on ensuring child-sensitive programming is incorporated in DRR plans, protocols and policies; providing technical expertise to government leaders and line ministries on multiple hazards (including in fragile and risk-prone contexts); promoting age- and gender-disaggregated research to inform decisions; and supporting children and young people to participate and lead in reducing risk at home, school and in their communities.

UNICEF's systems-strengthening approach moves away from a service delivery model towards risk-informed programming and strengthened policies, systems and capacities. The efforts aim to improve resilience, strengthen preparedness and better link both humanitarian and development efforts in ways that address underlying causes that create or exacerbate child vulnerabilities.
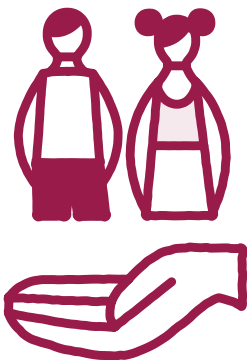
To support and advance UNICEF's multi-faceted, child-centred DRR efforts, in 2022 it launched the **UNICEF Thematic Trust Fund on Climate, Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction**.[80] The Trust Fund highlights UNICEF's global commitment to reduce disaster risk for children and young people, build resilience in the environment where they live and support rapid recovery from disaster impacts.

To collaborate with and support us in our work, contact:

- UNICEF Headquarters: DRR@unicef.org

- UNICEF National Committees

- Regional Offices & Country Offices

Resources

Disaster risk reduction and recovery: Every country protected; every child resilient | UNICEF

UNICEF Disaster Risk Reduction knowledge hub

The Climate Crisis is a Child Rights Crisis: Introducing the Children's Climate Risk Index | UNICEF

Children's Climate Risk Index | UNICEF

Words Into Action: Engaging Children and Youth In Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Building | UNDRR. UNICEF acted as lead agency; 100+ contributors

Interagency Standing Committee (IASC) Guidelines on Working with and for Young People in Humanitarian and Protracted Crises | UNICEF and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) as lead agencies

Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Guidelines for Member States to Safeguard Children's Rights and Well-being | Children in a Changing Climate

Programme Guidance: Strengthening Shock Responsive Social Protection Systems | UNICEF

UNICEF Guidance for Risk-Informed Programming (GRIP) | UNICEF

Risk-informed Education Programming for Resilience | UNICEF

Healthy Environments for Healthy Children: Global Programme Framework | UNICEF

UNICEF Partners

UNICEF works with multiple local, national and international partners around the world. The following are many of the global partners we are currently engaged with on DRR and climate action:

ARISE: a global network supporting the private sector to become a key partner in reducing disaster risk; equipping it to effect change by investing in a risk-informed sustainable future. ARISE has more than 350 members and 20 networks across the world.

Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative (CADRI): a global partnership that helps countries reduce disaster and climate risks through providing access to a unique pool of multidisciplinary expertise in various socio-economic sectors

Children in a Changing Climate (CCC): A coalition of child-centered development and humanitarian organisations committed to sharing knowledge and working with children as agents of change, in full recognition of their capacity to prepare for and respond to shocks and stressors. Its mandate is to advocate for and promote child rights in global agreements.

Connecting Business initiatives (CBi): A joint initiative by UNDP and OCHA, CBi supports both crisis response and development efforts. CBi engages the private sector in disaster preparedness, response and recovery.

Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector (GADRRRES): a global alliance that strengthens global coordination, increases knowledges and advocates on risk reduction education and safety in the education sector, including through the Comprehensive School Safety Framework.

Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), the Global Education Cluster and Geneva Global Hub for Education in Emergencies: global mechanisms supporting risk reduction, resilience and recovery in contexts of humanitarian action.

Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC): a humanitarian coordination forum of the UN system. This includes offering guidance on child-sensitive DRR and resilience-building within United Nations System programming; participating in joint efforts to protect children and young people from sexual exploitation and abuse[81] and co-developing the *IASC Guidelines on Working with and for Young People in Humanitarian and Protracted Crises*.[82]

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC): a technical expert group committed to protecting affected populations from sexual exploitation and abuse within all the humanitarian response operations. Members provide technical support, resources and partnerships.

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR): the UN agency that convenes partners and coordinates activities to create safer, more resilient communities.

Sendai Stakeholders Children and Youth Group, the DRR working group of the Major Group for Children and Youth (SSCYG/ MGCY): the primary facilitator for the engagement of young people in the work of UNDRR and the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

United Nations DRR Focal Point Group (UN DRR FPG): a network that supports the UN SLG in implementing and advocating for the UN Plan of Action on DRR and monitoring its progress, as well as advocates for and ensures integration of DRR within their respective organization's strategic planning and monitoring and evaluation frameworks to enhance risk-informed sustainable development in their areas of work.

United Nations Senior Leadership Group (UN SLG) on DRR for Resilience: a network that strengthens UN system-wide coherence in key international agreements and ensures that DRR remains a strategic priority for UN System and Related Organizations. The UN DRR FPG and UN SLG include 40 UN entities.

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