



WORKING SESSION

Children and Youth – “Don’t Decide My Future Without Me”

Brief & Concept Note

Brief

1. Why is this topic important?

In the context of multiple stressors, including climate change, rapid urbanization, growing populations, environmental degradation, and other factors, future generations will increasingly be exposed to compounding disaster risks. As the generation of tomorrow, children and youth today comprise over 60 percent of the world’s population. As such, reducing disaster risk is not only necessary to safeguard their futures, but is also a shrewd long-term investment to protect and expand on hard earned development gains. Their inclusion in disaster risk reduction (DRR) awareness-raising and decision-making processes is therefore crucial to building a global culture of safety and resilience.

As agents of change, children and youth have the capacity to innovate, educate, and reach out to their immediate and extended families and the wider community, to raise awareness and change behavior to reduce the risk of disasters. The *Children’s Charter: an action plan for disaster risk reduction for children by children* – developed in consultation with more than 600 children in 21 countries – outlines priority areas for DRR and climate change adaptation, as identified by children. Furthermore, since 2014, youth networks have spearheaded an unprecedented mobilization and global consultative process, supporting the identification of key priorities for children and youth in light of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. In our efforts to achieve sustainable development, the trans-generational transfer of knowledge is therefore critical, not only to strengthen the resilience of today’s societies, but equally important, the societies of tomorrow.

2. What gaps need to be filled?

While progress has been made in some areas, particularly in regards to broadening the access of children and youth to disaster risk reduction education, enhancing school safety and related risk assessments, the need remains for more systematic processes to engage children and youth as key stakeholders in disaster risk reduction and to build their resilience into

development agendas. To this end, the following gaps and in other cases actions require scaling up. These include:

- Recognition and more systematic engagement of children and youth as credible stakeholders in national and local level disaster risk management, including risk assessments, disaster risk management planning, monitoring, and evaluation.
- Elaboration of national and local development plans including the provision of social services, informed by an analysis of risk disaggregated by sex, age, ethnicity, and disability.
- Development and use of a robust collection of knowledge, information and data on the impact of disasters on children and youth to build evidence, inform and guide disaster risk reduction actions and policies. This should include impact on children and youth's rights to development, education, and protection (ranging in topic from psychological trauma to the effects of disruption of schooling)
- Scaling up comprehensive school safety to protect children, teachers, and the broader education system from disasters, as a basis for growing a global culture of safety and resilience to all shocks.
- Safeguarding ecosystems for future generations.

3. What (new) commitments are expected?

- Reaffirmation of commitments by children and youth to the implementation and monitoring of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.
- Commitment by decision-makers to create a conducive environment to involve more systematically children and youth in national and local decision-making and planning processes for disaster risk reduction.
- Continued dialogue between children and youth in advancing the disaster risk reduction agenda beyond 2015.

A child- and youth-sensitive approach to implementing the post-2015 framework for DRR should include progress in the following areas:

1. Risk analyses focusing on children's needs and their agency, to inform development and DRR planning at national and local levels.
2. Comprehensive school safety— specifically children and youth's contribution to safe school facilities, school disaster management, and risk reduction and resilience education.
3. Meaningful participation of children and youth as key stakeholders in national and local disaster risk management planning, monitoring, and evaluation.
4. Environmental sustainability through natural resource management and green development in both urban and rural contexts.

Concept Note

Schedule	Tuesday 17 March 2015, 14:00-15:30
Room and Venue	Exhibition Hall 1, Sendai International Conference Centre
Organizing Team	Children in a Changing Climate Coalition (Plan International, Save the Children International, NICEFUNICEF, World Vision International, ChildFund) and members of the Children and Youth Major Group (Child Fund, Youth Beyond Disasters, International Federation of Medical students Association, and others), UNISDR
UNISDR Focal Points	Christel Rose(rosec@un.org)
Background and Rationale	<p>As children and youth comprise over 60 percent of the world's population, their inclusion in disaster risk reduction (DRR) processes is critical to building a global culture of safety and resilience. As a matter of intergenerational justice, they furthermore have a right to participate in shaping the future they envision.</p> <p>The session will build on the outcomes of unprecedented global mobilization and consultation processes of children and youth to identify their priorities for the post-2015 framework for DRR.</p>
Session Objectives	<p>The session will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Showcase children and youth's experiences in influencing and implementing disaster risk reduction at national and local levels; 2. Provide participants with evidence and guidance on how to replicate effective child-centered disaster risk reduction; 3. Provide an opportunity for Member States and other stakeholders to explore opportunities for innovative partnerships to empower children and youth in disaster risk reduction and strengthen their resilience to disasters.
Discussion agenda and structure	<p>The session is intended to be led by children and youth. The panel will include the active participation of children and youth representatives from across the globe to share their experiences in disaster risk reduction, convey their viewpoints and recommendations and reaffirm their commitment to a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction in building the resilient future they want.</p> <p>Decision-makers, representatives from the private sector, donor community, will also be part of the interactive discussion to explore new opportunities of engaging and building innovative partnerships with children and youth as part of their commitment to a post-</p>

	<p>2015 framework for disaster risk reduction implementation at the national and local levels.</p> <p>Draft session scenario:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction, welcoming remarks 2. Opening statement 3. Video clips illustrating the contribution of children and youth to disaster risk reduction 4. Panel discussion with children, youth and decision-makers generating support for concrete recommendations in ensuring the prioritization of children and youth as active stakeholders in the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. 5. Overview of children and youth's interactions throughout the World Conference through google space or twitter; ad-hoc interviews with decision-makers, representatives from the private sector, scientific and technical community, or donors. 6. Wrap up, closing, and next steps.
<p>Expected outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased recognition by Member States of the importance of children and youth as key stakeholders in the implementation and monitoring of a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. • Lessons learned and good practices of child and youth-centred disaster risk reduction initiatives that can be scaled up.
<p>Commitment / special announcement in support of a post-2015 framework for DRR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaffirmation of commitments by children and youth to the implementation and monitoring of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. • Commitment by decision-makers to create a conducive environment to involve more systematically children and youth in national and local decision-making and planning processes for disaster risk reduction. • Commitment by children and youth to pursue the fruitful dialogue and cooperation in advancing the disaster risk reduction agenda beyond 2015.
<p>Expected number of participants</p>	<p>300</p>
<p>Background documents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's Charter for Disaster Risk Reduction • Outcomes and position statements of Children and Youth Major Group's consultation on a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.