

CHILDREN AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC: A WAY FORWARD

DISCUSSION PAPER



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Executive summary

This paper presents the conclusions of a review of disaster risk reduction (DRR) initiatives in 22 countries of the Asia-Pacific region – but through the lens of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). All aspects of children's daily life and life chances are covered by the CRC and all are affected by disasters. A child's right to survival, to protection, to clean water and sanitation, to food, to health and to education are all adversely affected by disasters. It is the most marginalized, most under-nourished and those not attending school who are the most at risk. Disasters only worsen these conditions and increase the risk (see annex 1).

Over the past three decades, there have been increasingly frequent and intense disasters that further undermine family resilience and increase the poverty that diminishes a child's life and future opportunities.¹ All projections indicate that such disasters will continue to increase, making the need for more and better community-based and child-centred DRR ever more urgent. While the trend is global, disasters and risks are local; hence, the urgent need for community-based and child-centred approaches. Given the volume of literature and evidence on the impacts of disaster upon children in the region and the broader long-term damage this does to families, communities and economies, there is a need for the community-based and child-centred DRR to be much more prevalent, more integrated and less piecemeal than it is currently. This presents significant opportunities for greater South-South cooperation.

Implementing child-centred DRR will help to promote the outcomes sought by the CRC. Thus, the CRC and child-centred DRR can be mutually reinforcing, breaking the lifetime of damage done by disasters in early childhood. The links between DRR and achieving the commitments in the CRC are highlighted in the graphic shown in annex 1. Evidence is emerging of the value that children bring to reducing their risks along with the wider community's, as the examples cited in this paper demonstrate. Community-based and child-centred DRR saves lives and livelihoods, now and for future generations, while saving governments money and assets that can be better deployed to meet the Millennium Development Goals and support sustainable development.

The paper presents an analysis of a number of child-related initiatives in the region. It includes good practices and barriers to change, including understanding the importance of how behaviour changes. It then identifies some challenges and opportunities moving forward and closes with conclusions and recommendations.

Initiatives for mainstreaming community-based and child-centred disaster risk reduction at the national level

There are multiple initiatives for mainstreaming community-based and child-centred DRR at the national level, some of them overlapping and duplicating, not all of them coordinated or coherent. (see annex 2). This is currently a challenge that could be translated into an opportunity. The *Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction* (UNISDR, 2010) notes that commitment to the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) has not yet consistently translated into safer and more resilient communities. While progress has been made in developing institutional systems, legislation and mechanisms at the national level, more needs to be done to support this at the local and community levels. While disaster risk is influenced by broader national and global factors – such as governance and climate change, it is ultimately shaped at the local level (Spalton, 2010). As they are typically high policy priorities, assessments and activities that are designed to enhance food, water and human security also provide useful entry points because they all are sensitive to climate change and are usually important dimensions of natural disasters (ISDR, 2010).

¹ According to the World Meteorological Office, disasters have led to economic losses of US\$1.2 trillion and over 2 million lives lost since 1980. According to the OCHA, in the past 30 years, the number of storms, droughts and floods has increased threefold and the number of people affected has increased fivefold.

Integration of DRR into existing policy and practice rather than **separation** should be the guiding principle at the national level. Historically, the education sector has featured strongly in child-centred DRR and the review found a wide range of examples in this area. Some countries now recognize the need to include children in DRR planning and delivery. There is potential for the CRC to play a stronger role at the national level. Children can be risk analysers, designers and implementers, communicators and mobilizers. These are very different roles from that of passive victim so often allocated to them. There is a need to capitalize on this.

Knowledge mechanisms and information-sharing platforms for community-based and child-centred disaster risk reduction

Knowledge mechanisms and information sharing-platforms have been enthusiastically taken up at the global, regional and country levels in the past few years. The role that global knowledge platforms can play, together with academic and civil society organizations, is a valuable one because they can have the reach and access not necessarily available to a central government. Not surprisingly, the review found that education featured strongly, with good potential in other areas, such as use of the media, including radio, TV and satellite. There is also a valuable role for such networks at the regional level where peer-to-peer learning may be simpler and cheaper to achieve when considering the similar time zones, language and cultures and when facing similar challenges. For national platforms to be even more effective, they need to coordinate more to ensure streamlined dissemination and thus promote further integration and mainstreaming. There is an opportunity for countries in the region to cooperate together to strengthen capacity to design and implement child-centred DRR.

Country-to-country cooperation on community-based and child-centred disaster risk reduction

Children's voices and specific needs are noticeably absent from the majority of DRR-related discussions and visits that take place between countries. There is clearly a need for further integration of child rights and representation within such forums. Currently, references to children's rights and inclusion in DRR largely remain limited to the education sector.

Challenges and opportunities for moving forward

There is a demonstrated need for significant increase in child-centred DRR among all stakeholders if the necessary change is to occur in the rapid time frame required, given what we know about accelerating climate change impacts leading to an increase in the frequency and intensity of disasters and the close inter-linkages between them and other drivers of disasters. Governments and UNICEF need to consider this alongside the additional opportunities that have not yet been widely taken up. These include the role of the private sector, use of the media, the potential role of insurance and the banking sector, the role of cities and the importance of demonstrating the strong economic case for child-centred DRR.

All of these elements could be working together to ensure that children are respected and empowered providers and recipients of DRR initiatives. This would thus deliver multiple benefits simultaneously, including the promotion of children's rights and gender equality. This confirms the virtue of integrating DRR activities into daily life so that values and behaviour reinforce each other in a virtuous circle, supporting life-saving DRR and honouring the commitments of the CRC.

There is an opportunity for child-centred DRR reporting to be folded into CRC reporting. Simultaneously, child-centred DRR needs to be recognized as an activity that is supportive of, indeed integral to, climate-change adaptation. Child-centred climate-change adaptation needs to build on and compliment the processes, mechanisms and tools of child-centred DRR.

In summary, there is a need for:

1. Political determination to support community-based and child-centred DRR

This needs to be 'everyone's business'. This is not an optional activity; it is essential to the future well-being and sustainable development of any country to support the progress made on the Millennium Development Goals to date and enable current and future generations to make their contribution, from top leadership at the highest level all the way to the grassroots level. If this is understood and supported at every level, it will make the politics much more straightforward, whatever the operating environment. A stronger economic case will support this, along with more involvement by the private sector and cities as well as the use of newer instruments, such as insurance. Integrating this determination into everyday values and behaviour is essential.

2. Streamlining of knowledge development and sharing to support community-based and child-centred DRR

This is necessary to promote lesson learning and behaviour change. Lessons learned need to be simple, replicable, achievable and effectively disseminated. This is not currently being practised as effectively as it could be. There is potential for improvement here if governments and UNICEF agree to prioritize the need.

3. Promoting clarity, coherence and consistency to support community-based and child-centred DRR

There are currently overlapping mandates, a multiplicity of organizations and entities and a range of instruments supporting child-centred DRR. Many of them compete for attention in the same space rather than complementing and supporting each other. This sends confusing signals to national governments, to potential corporate partners and to civil society organizations. This also applies to deeper country-to-country cooperation. Within a country, there needs to be clarity on the lead agency within the government and the extent of its mandate.

4. Alignment, cooperation and support for the implementers of child-centred DRR

The agencies and organizations delivering child-centred DRR need the best support. The values of the implementers (usually the community) need to be supported so that DRR becomes a habit rather than a special activity prompted by external intervention. As the 'new normal', the community continues to practise child-centred DRR as part of its day-to-day activities. This will help all the way up the chain, reinforcing the political determination at the top. Children should be included at every level as active and valued participants.

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Acronyms

AADMER	ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADPC	Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre
ADRC	Asian Disaster Reduction Centre
AHI	avian and human influenza
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CAS	country assistance strategy
CCA	climate-change adaptation
CCC	Children in a Changing Climate
CCC	Core Commitments for Children (UNICEF)
CBO	community-based organization
CDMP	Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme
CDP	Centre for Disaster Preparedness
CLDRR	child-led disaster risk reduction
COE	Centre for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (Honolulu)
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DRR	disaster risk reduction
DRM	disaster risk management
GLOBE	Global Learning and Observation to Benefit the Environment
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation Agency
G-8	Group of Eight countries
HFA	Hyogo Framework for Action
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
ISDR	International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (framework)
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NAPA	national adaptation plan of action
NDMA	National Disaster Management Authority (Pakistan)
NEMA	National Emergency Management Agency (Mongolia)
NGO	non-government organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PRSP	Poverty-Reduction Strategy Paper
RCC	Regional Consultative Committee
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SOPAC	Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (secretariat)

Introduction

The need for disaster risk reduction in the face of increasing disasters

This paper reflects a review of the national planning processes and related instruments and activities for disaster risk reduction (DRR) in 22 countries of the Asia-Pacific region – but through the lens of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Disaster risk reduction is defined by the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), a United Nations framework, as: “The concept and practice of reducing disaster risks through systematic efforts to analyse and manage the causal factors of disasters, including through reduced exposure to hazards, lessened vulnerability of people and property, wise management of land and the environment, and improved preparedness for adverse events.”

The Asia-Pacific region is particularly vulnerable to disasters. According to the UNISDR's *Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction* of 2009, 75 per cent of global flood mortality risk is concentrated in only three countries: Bangladesh, China and India. Some 85 per cent of cyclone deaths are in Bangladesh and India.² The region experiences over 50 per cent of the total global disasters, representing the largest and most disaster-prone area in the world, with a regular and increased frequency of typhoons, tsunamis, floods, droughts, fires and other natural hazards. This region accounted for over 70 per cent of the lives lost due to disasters.³ The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation's (SAARC) Disaster Management Centre estimates gross domestic product GDP losses annually are between 2 and 20 per cent due to disasters.⁴

The 2009 *Global Assessment Report* notes that it is rapidly growing developing countries that are more vulnerable to disasters because such development can lead to a growing concentration of people and economic assets in hazard-prone cities, fertile river valleys and coastal areas. Disaster risks increase if the exposure of people and assets to natural hazards increases faster than countries can strengthen their risk-reducing capacities by putting policy, institutions, legislation, planning and regulatory frameworks in place. Disasters impact poverty outcomes in addition to the immediate deaths, damage and distress. The empirical evidence shows that school enrolment tends to fall, and children may develop at a slower rate due to nutritional shortfalls following disasters. Evidence from Save the Child International confirms that children are one of the highest risk groups (with over 175 million affected annually). The immediate impacts are compounded by the longer-term impacts on children by loss of assets, health and education, which in turn, increase the inter-generational damage done.

Evidence is also beginning to emerge of the links between climate change and conflict, with a better understanding of the damage multiplier and risk-accelerator impacts of disasters and climate change on states with weaker governance or institutions (so-called fragile states). For example, the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan and more recent situation in Pakistan have prompted wider concern about the multiplier effects of disasters. While climate-driven disaster alone does not cause conflict, it can act as an accelerator of instability or conflict, placing a burden to respond on civilian and military institutions. The accompanying displacement of people and stress on government resources and legitimacy was predicted in earlier models of climate change-induced emergencies. Other drivers of disaster include complex emergencies and short-term human-made disasters, such as oil or chemical spills. Pandemics and epidemics can also drive wider disasters.

Governments in the Asia-Pacific region are committed to disaster risk reduction through the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters.⁵

² www.irinnews.org; The *Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction* is produced by the UNISDR Secretariat.

³ From the third Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, UNISDR.

⁴ www.managingclimaterisk.org/document/SAARC.pdf

⁵ In January 2005, 168 Governments adopted a 10-year plan to make the world safer from natural hazards at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, in Kobe, Hyogo prefecture, Japan. Governments around the world have committed to take

The five priority actions encapsulated in the Hyogo Framework are:

1. Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.
2. Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning.
3. Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels.
4. Reduce the underlying risk factors.
5. Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.⁶

The World Conference on Disaster Reduction adopted three strategic goals, the first of which spoke to DRR concerns: "The more effective integration of disaster risk considerations into sustainable development policies, planning and programming at all levels, with a special emphasis on disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness and vulnerability reduction."⁷

There are a number of other commitments and agreements on disaster risk reduction that are relevant to the region. These include the Association of Southeast Asian Nation's Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (2005) and the latest inter-ministerial platform commitments from the third Asian Ministerial Conference in Malaysia in 2008 (conducted every two years). There are also institutions working to support regional knowledge and behaviour change, including the SAARC Disaster Management Centre that coordinates the South Asia Disaster Knowledge Network.

Disasters, children and the CRC

All aspects of children's daily life and life chances are covered by the CRC and all are affected by disasters. A child's right to survival, to protection, to clean water and sanitation, to food, to health and to education are all affected by disasters. Increasingly, frequent and intense disasters also undermine resilience and increase the poverty that further diminishes a child's life and future opportunities. Children's rights, as enshrined in the CRC, and child-centred DRR are mutually reinforcing – implementing DRR helps to promote the outcomes sought by the CRC. The inter-linkages between the CRC and DRR are highlighted in the graphic shown in annex 1. The timing of this and related reports is pertinent because it comes soon after the twentieth anniversary of the CRC and amid further scientific evidence that the rate of climate change is accelerating. This has a consequent increase in the frequency and intensity of disasters that effective DRR can do so much to mitigate.

The framework of the CRC is a useful one for a paper considering DRR and children. It requires the reader to consider the cross-cutting nature of the CRC when addressing the cross-cutting nature of DRR. All 52 CRC articles are of course interconnected. A child rights-based approach to DRR is thus entirely apt.

Definition of disaster risk reduction

The UNISDR defines disaster risk reduction as "The concept and practice of reducing disaster risks through systematic efforts to analyse and manage the causal factors of disasters, including through reduced exposure to hazards, lessened vulnerability of people and property, wise management of land and the environment, and improved preparedness for adverse events."⁸

action to reduce disaster risk, and have adopted a guideline to reduce vulnerabilities to natural hazards, called the Hyogo Framework for Action. The Hyogo Framework for Action assists the efforts of nations and communities to become more resilient to, and cope better with the hazards that threaten their development gains. The main outcome of the conference, the Hyogo Declaration and Hyogo Framework for Action, represent a strong commitment from the international community to address disaster reduction and to engage in a determined, results-based plan of action for the next decade 2005–2015.

⁶ These five actions play an important role in setting the DRR agenda – including in UNICEF's newly proposed Draft Programme Guidance on DRR.

⁷ ISDR, International Strategy for Disaster Reduction website, "Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters" at: www.unisdr.org/eng/hfa/hfa.htm

⁸ UNISDR terminology, at: www.unisdr.org/eng/terminology/terminology-2009-eng.html

The disaster risk reduction framework is composed of the following fields of action:

- risk awareness and assessment, including hazard analysis and vulnerability/capacity analysis;
- knowledge development, including education, training, research and information
- public commitment and institutional frameworks, including organizational, policy, legislation and community action
- application of measures, including environmental management, land use and urban planning, protection of critical facilities, application of science and technology, partnership and networking and financial instruments
- early warning systems, including forecasting, dissemination of warnings, preparedness measures and reaction capacities.

According to *Living with Risk: A global review of disaster reduction initiatives*,⁹ “It may be helpful to note that full disaster risk reduction includes prevention and mitigation rather than only preparedness and response. This is an important distinction helping to enhance the understanding of DRR as a development intervention and going beyond within the old disaster management paradigm.”

Child-centred disaster risk reduction initiatives in the region

This section begins with a review of the child-centred DRR initiatives in the region. These range from national-level planning to global information-sharing platforms to country-to-country cooperation.

1. Initiatives for mainstreaming child-centred DRR at the national level

The range of initiatives for integrating child-centred DRR includes:

- child-centred DRR or child-specific instruments or documents
- use of the legislature or executive decrees
- education sector-specific interventions
- health sector-specific interventions
- interventions led or inspired by civil society
- donor-inspired planning and funding instruments or documents
- the proactive role of children.

DRR or child-specific documents can provide an indication of the extent to which child-centred DRR is mainstreamed at the national level, such as national adaptation programmes of action.¹⁰ Such documents highlight how specific national initiatives can play a valuable role and be a preferred instrument rather than the sometimes more generic documents referred to later in this section. Box 1 presents the flavour of these national documents from the region.

⁹ UNISDR, 2004, p 23.

¹⁰ Some NAPAs (particularly earlier examples) have been criticized for being led by environment ministries, with little engagement from other government departments or from civil society organizations.

Box 1. The role of DRR-specific national initiatives

National adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs)

Because NAPAs specifically address the adaptation requirements of a country, they should feature DRR needs prominently. The Maldives NAPA refers to awareness raising and activity-based learning that was conducted for school children in five secondary schools. The Afghanistan NAPA includes the need for environmental awareness raising among school children and recognizes that environmental impacts on children can include increased vulnerability, being sold into marriage and adverse livelihood effects related to the collection of drinking water and firewood, crop production and livestock herding. However, generally the NAPAs reviewed in the region do not contain much emphasis on DRR or children. A preferred instrument seems to be specific action plans for DRR.

National action plans for DRR

The review found a number of such plans, including Cambodia where the Strategic National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction 2008–2015 was formulated by an inter-institution task force established by the National Committee for Disaster Management and the Ministry of Planning.

China is now on its eleventh five-year plan, which includes comprehensive disaster reduction aimed at enhancing overall national capacity. Also in 2009, the Government decided to set 12 May every year as national Disaster Prevention and Reduction Day to further strengthen education and awareness raising. Nepal also has a DRR action plan. Brunei Darussalam is the most recent country to engage in this exercise and a Strategic National Action Plan for DRR Implementation is expected to be ready by the end of 2010.

Papua New Guinea has not updated its National Disaster Management Plan since 1987, but in 2005 the Government's National Disaster Centre developed a National Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management Framework for Action, to be implemented until 2015.

A few countries have opted for even more specific targeting of children and DRR at the national level, as the following highlights.

Children's participation in DRR

The Bangladesh Government emphasizes the development and implementation of awareness and education programmes as a strategy for community empowerment at the national level. The Know Risk=No Risk campaign to promote disaster-reduction education adapted the Action Aid Learning Kit for Children on DRR to local contexts and language. The Action Aid initiative on learning kits started in 2005 in collaboration with the Disaster Management Bureau of Bangladesh. By early 2006, learning kits had been introduced in 26 schools. Action Aid is currently working with the Government to endorse the learning kit as part of the curricula in high-risk areas.

The Singapore National Defence Force (SNDF) recognizes that school children form an important niche group in public education efforts. Since 2005, the SNDF has included children in DRR through the formation of the National Civil Defence Cadet Corps. Activities include the deployment of liaison officers from fire stations to schools to train students in dealing with emergencies and threats. The SNDF also works closely with the Ministry of Education to incorporate emergency preparedness into primary and secondary curricula through modules on essential skills and knowledge in surviving emergencies (*Interim National Progress Report on Implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, 2009*).

One less-highlighted entry point has been the use of the legislature or an executive decision, such as a presidential decree, to enforce changes in behaviour. This has been a preferred instrument in a number of countries, including Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Thailand and Viet Nam.¹¹ Of course, children are first and foremost part of communities,

¹¹ This paper does not purport to comment on the wide range of governance models operating across the 22 countries that may be relevant to the effectiveness of implementation.

so poorly or non-enforced legislation can be ineffective. However, it is a signal of intent at a high level. Box 2 highlights some recent examples.

Box 2. The use of the legislature or an executive decision

Mongolia

In 2003, the Law on Protection of Child Rights was amended in line with the CRC and introduced 'children in emergency situations' and 'children in difficult circumstances'. Children affected by natural disasters, epidemic diseases, accidents and armed conflicts are classified as children in emergency situations and can seek assistance from the State when needed. The National Emergency Agency is responsible for providing assistance to children affected by natural disasters. However, the procedures, guidelines and crisis-intervention plans to prevent, protect and rescue children from natural disasters and accidents and ensure the safety and security of children during crisis situations are not clarified (CRC country report, 2009).

Indonesia

A presidential decree was issued to the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Home Affairs to integrate DRR into the school curricula. However, the decree has yet to be applied because a policy implementing instrument has not been devised at the national level. The forming of a national policy for mainstreaming DRR is currently underway and a Consortium for Disaster Education has been established that includes both government and civil society representation (*National Progress Report on Implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, 2009*).

The role of the education sector

The education sector has been a traditional entry point for children and DRR, and a wide range of examples were identified in this area, a few of which are highlighted in the following section. The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) has been a significant instrument in promoting this change through the use of "knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels" (UNISDR, 2005). Key activities under the HFA include the integration of DRR knowledge into relevant sections of school curricula, disaster-preparedness programmes in schools and institutions of higher education and the promotion of school-based activities for learning how to minimize the effects of hazards. The most well-established routes to date include the introduction of DRR via the curricula, such as in textbooks and in teacher training and school safety plans, which are sometimes and ideally done in partnership with community safety plans. Additionally, there is the use of schools and school children in emergency response planning and teams, special awareness raising and training sessions, and specifically targeted campaigns, such as the global One Million Safe Schools and Hospitals Campaign.

The focus on knowledge and education within the HFA could provide a useful vehicle for the inclusion and promotion of child rights in ongoing and future DRR activities. UNICEF also recognizes the role that children can play as future policy makers and environmental stewards and thus advocates the need for children to access the education skills necessary for driving a green economy and adapting to ever-changing circumstances.¹²

¹² Given the three main drivers of disaster identified in the *Global Assessment Report for Disaster Risk Reduction* (UNISDR), all made deadlier by climate change (see footnote 23), a green economy would work to prevent or mitigate all of these.

Box 3. Education sector examples
(These derive from government, UN and NGO initiatives)

China

The National Textbook Authorization Committee for Primary and Middle Schools of China agreed in 2004 to the production of a textbook for senior middle schools on natural hazards. By 2006, a copy was reported to be on every senior middle school student's desk. The book is a thorough introduction to natural hazards in the world, including in China, and has a separate chapter on preparedness and DRR. The book also features a list of Chinese websites that students and teachers can consult for further information (Wisner, 2006).

Indonesia

The education authorities of Indonesia, with the German Technical Cooperation Agency (GTZ), have developed materials and taught more than 33,000 school children about the causes and results of an earthquake, tsunami and volcanic eruption. The impact of this initiative was demonstrated in May 2006 when an earthquake hit the Yogyakarta region. Although 5,000 people died, the number would have been larger had children not learned at school what to do in the case of an earthquake and had they not passed this knowledge on to their parents (GTZ, 2006).

On 29 July 2010, Indonesia committed to increasing the safety of 3,156 schools and 105 hospitals as part of the global One Million Safe Schools and Hospitals Campaign. The Vice Minister for National Education pledged to ensure that thousands of schools would comply with school-safety standards, adding that he would urge the education departments at the district and province levels to participate in the campaign. More than 200 participants from government institutions, local and international NGOs and representatives of schools and hospitals made pledges online at the campaign website (www.safe-schools-hospitals.net/) and committed to various activities to increase the resilience of schools and hospitals throughout Indonesia (UNISDR, 2010).

Cambodia

The National Committee for Disaster Management stated that the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports will establish a national policy to organize emergency response teams in all schools and learning institutions and assist in a public education campaign through the integration of emergency and disaster management in the school curricula (RCC, 2007).

Afghanistan

In the first half of 2010, the education sector organized 132 awareness-raising sessions on prevention and response to diseases in schools in conflict- and disaster-affected areas. More than 113,000 people, including children, teachers and parents were trained (OCHA, 2010).

India

An innovation in this area has been a pilot project that makes use of a satellite, EDUSAT, which transmits public awareness information to school children, including on DRR.

The role of the health sector

While the education sector is often the entry point for designers and implementers of DRR, there is also significant experience emerging from the health sector. Environmental and health impact assessments can provide effective entry points for inter-sector cooperation on DRR and climate-change adaptation (UNISDR, 2010). As shown in annex 1, many identified trends will impact significantly on children. The leading global killers of children today (including malnutrition, malaria and diarrhoea) are all predicted to increase as a result of climate change. Some estimates suggest that 85 per cent of people who are dying from the impacts of climate change are children younger than 5 years. Indeed, the likely areas of climate change impact identified by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change correspond closely with the current leading causes of death in children younger than 5 years.

Box 4. Health sector examples

One Million Safe Schools and Hospitals Campaign

A consortium of partners, including the UN, World Bank, Pan American Health Organization, the Red Cross and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), launched this DRR initiative in October 2009 to make hospitals and schools safer and reduce people's exposure to future natural disasters. The initiative marked the 2009 International Day for Disaster Reduction, focusing on vulnerability assessments of all schools and hospitals, increased emergency preparedness and the enhancement of institutional capacity and local risk-assessment methodologies, in line with targets set by the 2009 Global Platform for DRR. The initiative brings together development partners and stakeholders in support of the government in pledging countries and engages them in concrete actions to make schools and hospitals safer. Countries involved in the initiative to date include Afghanistan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam (Prevention Web and UNISDR, 2009).

Bangladesh

Aparajeyo, a child rights NGO, has trained children as peer educators to play an active role in the organization's disaster response. Some elected peer educators serve on committees that coordinate various aspects of emergency response, while other young people are involved at a practical level by ensuring that health care needs are assessed, that the most vulnerable families are identified, that goods are purchased and packaged and that safe delivery sites are agreed upon with law enforcement and communities. Children can play an important role in addressing the health needs of affected populations by providing first aid and oral rehydration solution kits, ferrying people to clinics or relaying information about sick people, especially other children. The young peer educators are also instrumental in raising awareness about water purification, hand washing and latrine use as well as information about both health hazards and health facilities (UNICEF, 2005). Proper guidance should be provided when children assume such roles.

The role of UN agencies, NGOs, the private sector and civil society in the DRR context

Among the lead agents for delivering DRR work on the ground are global organizations, including civil society – whether local, national or international, as is reflected in some of the examples already provided.¹³ According to Spalton (2010), "Much of the driving energy and leadership behind the groundswell of support for disaster risk reduction increasingly has come from NGOs and from the South." Although they do not always deliver at the national level, they are included in this section as important players in promoting children's rights and DRR-related activities, including knowledge and lesson learning at the national, regional and international levels.

Civil society also plays an essential role in piloting and then sharing activities with governments for implementing nationally to achieve greater scale and impact. For example, they can influence policy making, even though their operations on the ground may be limited. This is of course dependent on the operating environment that they are seeking to influence, as alluded to in the previous section on the use of the legislature. There are potential opportunities for this group to consider on a country-by-country basis. Some examples provided in this paper highlight the potential, such as the role played by UNICEF, Plan and Save the Child Fund or in the preparation for a CRC report. An interesting development going forward is that some of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's humanitarian response clusters (currently child protection, WASH, education and health) are developing guidance and tools on DRR to support countries in and around humanitarian action. The CRC is an important instrument of change at the national level.

¹³ This section considers UN agencies, the Red Cross, NGOs and civil society organizations together.

Box 5. Examples of civil society-related influence and operations

Global

The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is mobilizing its community network of volunteers in 186 countries through a global alliance on disaster risk reduction.

UNICEF's Core Commitments for Children (CCCs) have been revised to include DRR and early recovery. Among the DRR measures included in the revised CCCs are the pre-establishment of child protection networks and contingency planning for child-friendly spaces (early return to education). DRR is being integrated into the work of the UNICEF-led education and WASH clusters as well as in the protection cluster. UNICEF has also developed a conceptual framework for integrating DRR into plans and programmes to promote safer and more resilient communities, to strengthen humanitarian preparedness, response and early recovery and to recognize the impact of disasters on children and their right to participate in the response (Spalton, 2010).

Thailand

The Red Cross is supporting a disaster-preparedness programme in hundreds of villages in southern Thailand to train entire communities on what to do before and during a disaster. This training has included evacuation drills and the changing of school curricula so that children know what to do in a disaster (IFRC and Red Cross Societies website, 2010).

Bangladesh

In 2007–2009, Plan Bangladesh implemented the Children's Participation in Disaster Risk Reduction programme that targeted 62 communities and 203,300 people. The programme included risk assessment and formulation of DRR plans by children and facilitated the participation of children in local government decision making and policy making.

Philippines, Cambodia and Indonesia

Plan International is implementing a child-centred DRR programme to promote greater acknowledgment and recognition of the capacity of children as agents for change in support of climate-smart disaster risk management. The programme works with children's organizations, schools, local disaster management committees and national government authorities to integrate children and young people into disaster-risk planning, implementation and evaluation processes (Plan UK, 2010).

Philippines

Save the Children has been implementing a two-year Disaster Preparedness and Bicol Assistance Project, with funding from the United States Agency for International Development. The project aims to rebuild the lives and promote the well-being of children and families affected by Typhoon Reming (internationally known as Durian). To accomplish the goal, the project has three components: non-food commodity distribution, food security and livelihoods, and capacity building on disaster preparedness. The component that focuses on food security and livelihoods has sought to improve the capacities of families with children to rehabilitate and diversify their livelihood activities to ensure their food security.

The project has focused on a number of activities, including:

- training on integrated pest management and safe use of pesticides
- provision of vegetable seeds, hoe, shovel and organic fertilizers for food production activities directly to families
- training on system of rice intensification
- poultry and livestock raising
- skills building support for alternative livelihoods, including dressmaking and hollow-brick construction
- access to microfinance for families to engage in small businesses and animal production.

The role of national planning processes

The review of the main national planning processes and related instruments in the region (22 countries) included Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP), Country Assistance Strategies (CAS) and UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF). Generic national planning documents reflect the integration or mainstreaming of child-centred DRR to a limited (perhaps misleading) degree. Box 6 presents a summary of the findings.

Box 6. The role of national planning instruments

A review of the national planning documents, specifically Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, Country Assistance Strategies and UN Development Assistance Frameworks, found a generally limited use of them to date as a means of mainstreaming DRR activities. There were several notable exceptions to this, including Bangladesh, Indonesia, Maldives and Viet Nam. There are also countries with significant potential to join up the issues of DRR and children's rights, considering both are recognized in one or more of their national planning documents. These countries include Afghanistan, Cambodia, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Other countries exhibited less integration, with neither children nor DRR highlighted in such documents, such as Pakistan and Bhutan.¹⁴ The main findings are captured schematically below.

Sample of mainstreaming children and DRR at the national level (as reflected in national planning documents)

Most		Least	
Bangladesh	Afghanistan	Mongolia	Bhutan
Indonesia	Nepal	Cambodia	Pakistan
Maldives	Timor-Leste	Sri Lanka	India
Viet Nam	Japan	Lao PDR	

There may be significant child-centred DRR on the ground, but the activity may not be reflected in national instruments. Bangladesh is a case in point, as is Nepal, where activity is often led by NGOs or by local authorities rather than at the national government level. Similarly in Indonesia, while there is significant activity in the education sector, it has not transferred across into the national plan for DRR. The wider range of different entry levels available is explored in the next section.

The positive, proactive role that children can play

Several countries now recognize the importance of including children in DRR planning and delivery as active participants rather than relegating them to the role of passive victim. This was captured in the literature in a recent UNICEF study, commissioned with the Children in a Changing Climate consortium,¹⁵ which found that children can make a number of positive contributions to disaster risk reduction, including:

- as analysers of risk and risk-reduction activities
- as designers and implementers of DRR interventions in their community
- as communicators of risks and risk-management options (especially communications to parents, adults or those outside the community)
- as mobilizers of resources and action for community-based resilience.

¹⁴ To work with this information alone could be misleading, such as in the case of India's National Disaster Management Agency, which recognized that mainstreaming DRR, as per the HFA, was not being achieved and opted to work with the Planning Commission to ensure that the eleventh National Development Plan (2007–2012) included all new developments in had to pass through for a self-certifying disaster-management audit. This applied to all infrastructure, whether power, water, airports, roads, railways, schools or hospitals. They also introduced a policy of zero tolerance to avoidable deaths from natural disasters. Although children are not specifically mentioned, they will be beneficiaries. Box 3 presents a relevant China example.

¹⁵ Back, E., Cameron, C. and Tanner, T., 2009, *Children and Disaster Risk Reduction: Taking stock and moving forward*, UNICEF with the Children in a Changing Climate consortium, Geneva.

Some examples of these roles are captured in box 7.

Box 7. The positive roles that children can play in DRR

Risk analysers

Children can and do work as risk analysers in their communities by drawing a baseline or community map that shows basic information, such as the locations of houses, public places and hazardous zones. They then analyse the community's experience of hazards and disasters as well as their risks and resources when looking at the hazards the community faces, the areas prone to disasters and the community's vulnerability (such as unstable buildings). They do this through interviews with community members, elders and their families. The children then discuss the information they have gathered with facilitators, sometimes including older children and teachers, and map their findings, which are then verified and cross-checked with experts. The verified map is presented in public places in the community and forms the basis of contingency planning and evacuation plans. Children can also do outreach activities with the community through drama, practice drills, songs and radio programmes. The important step is then to make sure that these plans are tied in with local government planning. Sometimes children also identify risk-reduction projects and receive funding to implement them. Save the Children supports this type of activity in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam.

Designers and implementers

Plan Bangladesh successfully lobbied for the inclusion of children in the Union Disaster Management Committees in the National Standing Order on Disasters and the inclusion of children's participation in the national Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme (Plan and World Vision, 2009).

Plan Sri Lanka used children's participation to help reconstruct homes after the 2004 tsunami disaster. Children were engaged in designing new villages from a risk-reduction perspective (UNICEF, 2005).

Communicators

In Viet Nam, UNICEF organized a national forum that brought together 126 children to raise awareness and promote discussion on climate change among children. The children developed and presented a declaration to government leaders as input for the UNFCCC Conference of Parties.¹⁶ UNICEF is currently working with the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs to establish a dedicated website for children that will include climate change and DRR messages (UNICEF, 2010).

In the Philippines, children's consultations were conducted for the first time in preparation for the CRC report in 2009. This included: i) child commissioners from the Children Basic Sector of the National Anti-Poverty Commission, ii) officers and members of the National Coalition of Children's Associations of the Philippines and iii) children from various NGO and government programmes, including urban poor children, street children, working children and children with disabilities. More than 60 children participated and expressed their own reading of the status of CRC implementation in the country in small workshop groups, as well as in plenary (CRC country report, 2009).

Mobilizers

It is increasingly recognized that children have specific concerns and a distinct perception of what needs to be done in an emergency situation. UNICEF has documented evidence on how they are among the first to take action when a disaster affects their community. In the Solomon Islands, the Red Cross engaged children and young people in a variety of activities to help them track and mobilize action around disaster-related risks and climate change. In the capital, Honiara, young people were trained as peer educators in schools and communities and are now able to track seasonal changes, communicate risks and undertake activities to protect their communities during times of disaster. The programme specifically built upon the enthusiasm and energy of young people to undertake DRR activities through the networks in which they were already involved, including the family, church and schools (Children in a Changing Climate, 2009).

¹⁶ United Framework Convention on Climate Change

Children clearly have an important role to play in national and local DRR initiatives. This has been most visible through the education sector but also more recently through the health sector. There are emerging opportunities, such as the expansion of child-centred DRR in civil society and relying on children as risk analysers, designers and implementers, communicators or mobilizers or some combination of these. It is important that children's rights and the specific needs of children are not overlooked while children fulfil these valuable roles.

Summary

There are multiple entry points for child-centred DRR at the national level, some of them overlapping and duplicating and not all of them coordinated or coherent – this point also applies to the wider DRR agenda. This is currently a challenge that could be translated into an opportunity for children. The *Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction* notes that commitment to the Hyogo Framework for Action has not yet consistently translated into safer and more resilient communities. While progress has been made in developing institutional systems, legislation and mechanisms at the national level, more needs to be done to support this at the local and community levels with community-based DRR. While disaster risk is influenced by broader national and global factors – such as governance and climate change, it is ultimately shaped at the local level (Spalton, 2010). Because they are typically high policy priorities, assessments and activities designed to enhance food, water and human security also provide useful entry points because they all are sensitive to climate change and are usually important dimensions of natural disasters (UNISDR, 2010).

Recommendations for national activities to strengthen child-centred DRR:

- **Integrate** child-centred DRR into existing policy and practice rather than **separate** it should be the guiding principle when identifying entry points at the national level.
- Avoid duplication of policy and activities.
- Be clear on which government department or instrument has the lead and mandate for child-centred DRR.
- Recognize the positive roles that children can play – as risk analysers, designers and implementers, communicators and mobilizers.

2. Knowledge mechanisms and information-sharing platforms

Knowledge generating and sharing platforms have a potentially critical role to play in improving outcomes for children and DRR. One of the challenges for this and other such initiatives is to ensure that learning and knowledge is captured and then disseminated to those that can make best use of it.

The role that global knowledge platforms can play here, together with academic and civil society organizations, is a valuable one because they often have the reach and access not necessarily available to a central government. The examples in the following boxes highlight the multitude of entry points available – this depth and variety can be perceived as a strength at one level, however, it is not without risk because learning can be duplicated, become fragmented or not reach the most appropriate recipient.

The review found that the education sector is a strong player in this entry point, with some good examples of informationsharing platforms across many different countries. These examples demonstrate the significant scale and reach that has been achieved in the region by use of this channel.

Box 8. Education sector across countries

The Education Task Force

This includes the UNISDR, UNESCO, UNICEF, IFRC and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC), with the aim of promoting DRR education throughout the Asia-Pacific region through its members and an expanded network of local, national and regional actors working in the fields of education and disaster risk reduction. The Bangkok Action Agenda was adopted at the 2007 Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop on School Education and Disaster Risk Reduction. This provides the regional blueprint for DRR actions in the education sector in order to achieve the Hyogo Framework for Action commitments. The Agenda recommends five priorities for action:

1. Integrating disaster risk reduction into school education.
2. Strengthening disaster risk reduction education for community resilience.
3. Making schools safer.
4. Empowering children for disaster risk reduction.
5. National and regional approaches.

In 2009, the members of the Regional Task Force on Education and School Safety conducted a mapping exercise to outline their achievements in implementing the Bangkok Action Agenda recommendations. Reports from a number of countries (including Bangladesh, Philippines and Sri Lanka) refer to increased involvement and awareness at the grassroots level as a critical step in improving their preparedness for emergencies and disasters. Media strategies have been developed to complement public education programmes and social marketing. Campaigns, debates, street dramas and annual events (and in some countries, monthly events) on DRR have become regular features. An Asia-Pacific regional library will also be designated to enable wider access to disaster-related information. This cross-country initiative deserves ongoing support.

Plan International's climate change education project

Make the Link, Be the Change is an international climate change project involving over 80 schools in 12 countries that connects young people aged 13 and older to explore and discuss the changing global climate. Four senior high schools from Indonesia have taken part, and the programme also has links to schools in the Philippines and Bangladesh (Plan UK website and project brochure, 2010).

Global Learning and Observation to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE)

This is a primary and secondary school-based science and education programme that connects a worldwide community of teachers, school children and scientists via the internet. It was launched in the United States in 1995 to enhance environmental literacy and stewardship. It now involves more than 20,000 schools and 40,000 specially trained teachers in 110 participating countries. In East and South Asia, GLOBE is currently networked in Bangladesh, Fiji, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nepal, Palau, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Starting in 2011, GLOBE will run a special campaign on climate change and hopes to draw in 1 million school children worldwide to empower them and their communities to take action on climate-related environmental issues (Red Cross, 2009 and GLOBE, 2010).

South-South Citizenry-Based Development Academy

The Academy will initiate a local dialogue of sharing and learning between those who matter most in reducing risk. It will continue the aim of the Training and Learning Circle, a South-South collaboration between the All India Disaster Mitigation Institute and the Philippines' Centre for Disaster Preparedness that facilitates the interface between community-based organizations (CBO), training institutions and universities. The main objective is to strengthen the ability of young academics, researchers and CBOs or community leaders in Asia and the Pacific to understand community resilience against natural disasters and to interpret diverse viewpoints on DRR by sharing knowledge and showcasing good practices. Interested young or junior participants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Iran, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka can apply.

More recently, there has been an increase in the use of global knowledge generating and sharing platforms. The first example of this is the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction that emerged out of the Hyogo Framework for Action and has since been followed by similar networks for NGOs, including ones that focus particularly on children. Box 9 features a few examples.

Box 9. Global networks

Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

This is the main forum for continued and concerted emphasis on DRR, providing strategic guidance and coherence for implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action and for sharing experience and expertise among its stakeholders.

The Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Risk Reduction

This is a network of 300 national and international NGOs in 90 countries aiming to reduce disaster risks worldwide. The network has published examples of good practice to make the case for more community-oriented DRR and to stimulate interest from donors and policy makers (UNISDR, 2007). Many international NGOs have developed DRR policies, and regional bodies, such as the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre, have helped develop the capacity of governments and civil society (Spalton, 2010).

Children in a Changing Climate (CCC)

The CCC is a global consortium of leading research and child-centred development organizations committed to sharing knowledge and building an evidence base to support children's involvement in climate change policy and practice. The consortium has established communication platforms run by children and for children to discuss and debate climate change and stimulate further action. Child representatives are selected through children-led processes and these 'climate champions' are the spokespeople for children in their country, informing regional policy analysis and making recommendations. A number of climate champions represented children at the fourteenth and fifteenth Convention of Parties to deliver their recommendations to conference delegates. The consortium supports children from around the world in telling their stories and sharing experiences (CCC, undated).

There is also a valuable role for such networks at the regional level where peer-to-peer learning may be simpler and cheaper to achieve when considering the similar time zones, language and cultures and similar DRR challenges. Annual meetings can be a way of sustaining interest or galvanizing learning, with up-to-date examples of good practice to be exchanged. Box 10 presents some regional examples.

Box 10. Regional networks

In February 2006, the Pacific Disaster Risk Management Partnership Network was established at a Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission-sponsored workshop in Fiji. The network now consists of over 30 international and regional organizations, including the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank. The network is committed to providing regional support for the development and implementing of comprehensive and integrated disaster risk management (disaster risk reduction and disaster management) national action plans (UNDP, 2008).

Participants in the Third Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (in Malaysia in 2008) recognized education as an essential contribution to the effective implementing of DRR and the need for behavioural shifts at the local level, where communities are most vulnerable to disasters. In 2009, 18 countries in the Asia-Pacific region reported on their Hyogo Framework for Action progress. There has been a marked increase of initiatives in the region to promote the integration of DRR into school education. Progress is evident in the assessment of existing teaching and learning materials, the development of new ones, designing adaptive approaches to training teachers and partnerships working on strategies to make DRR a part of the official curriculum.

The United Nations Centre for Regional Development has supported the drafting of country-specific guidelines to assess and prioritize schools for retrofitting in Fiji and Indonesia. Progress is noted in producing guidelines and booklets on the scaling up and institutionalizing of disaster-resistant schools that take into account the local context and locally available resources as well as the use of modern materials. In 2008, an international workshop was organized in Kobe on reducing earthquake vulnerability of school children in the Asia-Pacific region (*Regional Analysis on Disaster Risk Reduction Education in the Asia-Pacific Region, 2008*).

Country-specific networks can also be helpful, although the review found only limited examples of this so far. This may provide an opportunity for other countries to replicate such a model and roll out similar forums.

Box 11. Country-specific networks

Republic of Korea

The national progress report on implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action (2008) places children as the top priority for protection against emerging disasters. A national platform for DRR was launched in April 2009 that draws upon inspirations and insights from various stakeholders in civil society, academia, the private sector and the media. The platform is currently working to integrate DRR into the national development plan, and initial efforts have been made to mainstream DRR into the school curriculum to provide a solid education on disaster management for young people (statement made at the global platform for DRR, June 2009).

Some information-sharing platforms also fulfil an advocacy role. In recent years, this has advanced as a tool to enable children to conduct parallel summits or to make statements at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) meetings. Two of the most prominent examples of this entry point are featured box 12.

Box 12. Use of summits

Junior 8 Summit

Supported by UNICEF, this summit addresses a wide variety of topics and runs parallel to the regular Group of Eight (G-8) meetings. Young delegates from these eight countries and other selected countries discuss issues on the G-8 agenda and are given space to share their concerns and ideas (Plan, 2009).

2009 Children's Climate Forum Copenhagen

Young delegates formed a social network to share their experiences and difficulties as they take forward what they learned during the International Scientific Conference on Climate Change in Copenhagen. This follows the use of witness statements by children at several preceding UNFCCC Conference of Party meetings.

Panel event at Copenhagen that included high-ranking officials and children

A recent example giving children access to power rather than simply voice at a high-level forum.

The use of the media to convey learning and messages via a story-telling format is well established in many other sectors, including health and education, and has also been picked up for use for DRR. This can be a relatively cost-effective and straightforward way of reaching large numbers of people that avoids any literacy challenges or the need to either distribute or update hard-copy materials because up-to-date advice can be woven into story lines as required. Even more use could be made of this particular entry point as a supplement to other awareness-raising initiatives.

Box 13. Use of the media in country

Philippines

DevInfo-based Knowledge Centres in 24 local government units disseminate information on children's rights and well-being and involve children through the Kabataan News Network. UNICEF supports this half-hour programme, which is written and directed by 13- to 18-year-olds. The programme currently reaches an audience of 250,000 viewers each week. To date, at least 67 half-hour episodes have been produced and aired by young people from different parts of the country.

India

The National Disaster Management Authority recently started using 30-second advertisements on TV to advise the public on how to evacuate a building in case of an emergency.

Afghanistan

The use of a serial radio programme, "New Home, New Life", builds guidance into the story line on reducing disaster risks. The programme is a joint product of the BBC World Service and Tearfund. It is supported by a quarterly publication that repeats the messages in cartoon format for partners to circulate and use in their discussions with communities. The BBC World Service Trust also produces children's publications relating to the messages, which can be used in formal and informal learning methods.

Summary

A range of information-sharing platforms has been enthusiastically taken up at the global, regional and country levels in the past few years. It is not clear from the review how these are chosen or how a particular platform or focus arises in each country. The Bangkok Action Agenda, with its specific focus on the education sector, appears to have been effective in mobilizing action.

Recommendations for strengthening information-sharing platforms for child-centred DRR:

- Coordinate information-sharing platforms more explicitly to ensure streamlined dissemination, thus promoting further integration and mainstreaming of child-centred DRR and to make them even more effective.
- Use the media, such as radio programmes or TV advertising; it is an opportunity that could be even more broadly taken up, given the advantages in terms of both cost and reach.

3. Country-to-country cooperation

This section looks at country-to-country cooperation and the role it can play in mainstreaming children's rights into DRR planning and policy making. Country-to-country cooperation has become increasingly important in a global context in which many developing countries are facing similar disaster-related challenges, such as climate change, while also striving to deliver on universal development targets. Cooperation between countries is known to facilitate mutually beneficial partnerships that promote information sharing and lesson learning and can also help to develop supporting networks for mainstreaming DRR into national planning and programming. Such cooperation capitalizes on strong leadership, creativity, technical know-how and practical DRR experiences of governments, institutions, networks and communities,¹⁷ also referred to as South-South cooperation.

¹⁷ Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery's South-South Cooperation Programme for DRR, May 2009

Country and regional experiences can be shared through a variety of mechanisms. The following section explores some examples of DRR-focused good practices that have emerged within the South and South-East Asian region and further afield.

Box 14. The role of study tours

Yogyakarta, Indonesia, 18–20 February 2009

GTZ and ADPC supported an international study tour to encourage learning from Indonesia's experience of school-based awareness raising and life-skills development and enhance understanding of the issues and priorities in working with school children in the context of avian and human influenza (AHI) management in Asia. The tour identified successes and challenges of different approaches to behaviour change and life-skills development, including identifying lessons learned for community-based AHI management that can be shared with other practitioners throughout the region. The tour included a field visit to a project site in Bali and a discussion session with project beneficiaries, including children and school teachers. Collaborating partners were the ADB, IFRC and International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Rescue Committee, GTZ Indonesia and ADPC (ADPC, 2009).

Philippines, 11–15 April 2009

A partnership initiative between the Centre for Disaster Preparedness (CDP) Philippines and the Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme (CDMP) Bangladesh facilitated a visit for nine senior Bangladeshi government officials to the Philippines. The purpose was to learn about the different levels of disaster risk management and response activities across the Philippines and to explore possible replication of them in the Bangladesh context. The initiative was brought forth through the earthquake and tsunami/storm surge preparedness component of the CDMP that aims to enable earthquake-risk assessments, contingency plans and education programmes within Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet cities in Bangladesh. The group of officials visited a range of government departments, including the Department of Education. Participants expressed enthusiasm to share the learning and experiences they gained for possible replication in their country (CDP, 2009).

Honolulu, 22–24 September 2009

Officials with the Mongolian National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) visited the Centre for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (COE) in Honolulu to collaborate on the 2010 second annual senior-level event on disaster preparedness in Mongolia. The visit was a follow-up to the COE-led joint disaster response training for government officials from Mongolia in April 2009. The success of the disaster-response training in Honolulu and the planning and execution of a disaster-preparedness plan have led to a continuing partnership with the NEMA and the COE. Future events will focus on refining the country's disaster-preparedness plan for disaster scenarios. During the tour, the NEMA officials visited the Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre, the Hawaii State Civil Defence Disaster Centre and the Honolulu City and County Department of Emergency Management to observe the coordination of efforts at the state and local levels (COE-DMHA, 2009).

Study tours promote first-hand experience of systems and practices in use by other countries as part of their DRR strategy and can be extremely useful for replicating good models. It is encouraging that such tours have recently taken place within the South-East Asian region, although reference to children's rights largely remains limited to the education sector. More consideration has been given to children in regional workshops and conferences designed to promote country-to-country cooperation.

Box 15. The role of conferences and workshops

Regional workshop on child-led DRR (CLDRR), Bangladesh, September 2008

Save the Children International organized a three-day regional workshop in Dhaka to strengthen knowledge and understanding of the DRR concept through the sharing of agency experiences on CLDRR in South and Central Asia. A total of 31 Save the Children officials and two partner agencies participated. Outcomes included a common understanding of CLDRR and improved knowledge on how to implement CLDRR programmes.

Asia-Pacific regional workshop on school education and DRR, Thailand, October 2007

Focal points from the education ministries of the three piloted Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Management into Development Education countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR and Philippines) met in Bangkok for a three-day presentation of the work that had been done in each country. Information was shared from over 287 representatives from the region, including other Regional Consultative Committee members who benefitted from learning how to adopt similar mainstreaming programmes in their own country's education sectors. The experiences shared have since helped to refine the Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management's "Guidelines on Curriculum Development" (ADPC, 2008).

Workshop on DRR in the Pacific islands, Japan, 18 March 2008

The Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Asian Disaster Reduction Centre (APRC) conducted a one-day workshop in Kobe to discuss DRR in the Pacific islands. The workshop was organized in cooperation with the Japan International Cooperation Agency and was attended by experts from Fiji, Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC). Workshop objectives included the sharing of knowledge and experiences and on lessons learned from Japan, clarifying challenges and opportunities for community DRR and discussing regional cooperation for DRR (ADRC, 2008).

End of project meeting, Thailand, September 2009

UNISDR Asia and Pacific organized a two-day meeting for partners and stakeholders implementing the European Commission-funded Building Resilience to Tsunami Project in India, Indonesia, Maldives and Sri Lanka. The purpose of the Bangkok meeting was to share experiences, achievements, impacts, ideas and lessons learned around sustainability. The meeting also provided an opportunity to share lessons learned from implementing the projects at various levels (UNISDR, 2009).

Cooperation at the workshop level has included some country-to-country dialogue around children-focused issues on DRR, although it is worth emphasizing that children's voices are noticeably absent from the majority of these discussions. There is clearly a need for further integration of children's rights and representation within such forums.

The recently signed ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER), highlighted in box 16, could provide a more robust link between country-to-country cooperation on DRR and children. The agreement covers the entire cycle of disaster risk management, including those areas in which children can play a significant role. Country leads have been identified for different programme components that feature both children and DRR-related initiatives, although the two are not clearly linked at present.

Box 16. ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER)

On 24 December 2009, ASEAN members signed the AADMER, a productive regional framework for cooperation, coordination, technical assistance and resource mobilizing in all aspects of disaster management. The objective of the agreement is to ensure sustainability of response capacity for emergencies within ASEAN communities, recognizing that disasters pose a continual threat to the region. Members will build upon existing information and resource-sharing initiatives with 'lead shepherds' designated to promote each component of the programme, such as the Philippines as lead for mainstreaming DRR into national development plans and Cambodia and Lao PDR as leads for mainstreaming DRR into health and education sectors. The agreement deals with the entire disaster management cycle and could provide an entry point for the mainstreaming of children's rights across disaster management and response initiatives (ASEAN Partnership Conference, 2010).

India

India hosts the South Asia Disaster Management Centre for eight countries and the SAARC Disaster Knowledge Network. This is housed in the National Institute for Disaster Management (NDMA). The NDMA has also worked with the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery to access South-South cooperation grants for facilitating shared lesson learning between groups and women's organizations from Honduras and Guatemala with equivalent groups in India. The NDMA interfaced with its equivalent agency in Central America to do this. India is also in touch with Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh via UN volunteers in the region.

Summary

This section emphasized the range of entry points for improving country-to-country cooperation and learning on child-focused DRR in the region. It can be difficult to distinguish between more general information-sharing platforms and workshops specifically intended for more cooperative learning at the country-to-country level. This difference needs to be understood and communicated to prevent duplication of efforts and to help maximize the outputs of both.

Recommendations for enhancing country-to-country cooperation around child-centred DRR:

- The inclusion of children's voices in country-to-country cooperation is critical to ensure that resulting policy and practice considers the perspectives of those it intends to empower. There is an urgent need to integrate children's rights and representation within country-to-country forums. Identify 'model' country systems and practices within the region.
- Establish a database for lesson learning and cooperation, possibly within a regional forum.
- Map existing NGO and private sector-cooperation practices with a view to promoting good practices.
- Ensure a balance between top-down and grassroots cooperation (top heavy currently).

Good practice and barriers to change

Given the volume of literature on the impacts of disaster upon children in South and South-East Asia and the wide range of activities, it would seem that child-centred DRR would be more integrated and less piecemeal than it is currently. The following presents suggestions for what some of the main barriers to change could be and ways to overcome them.

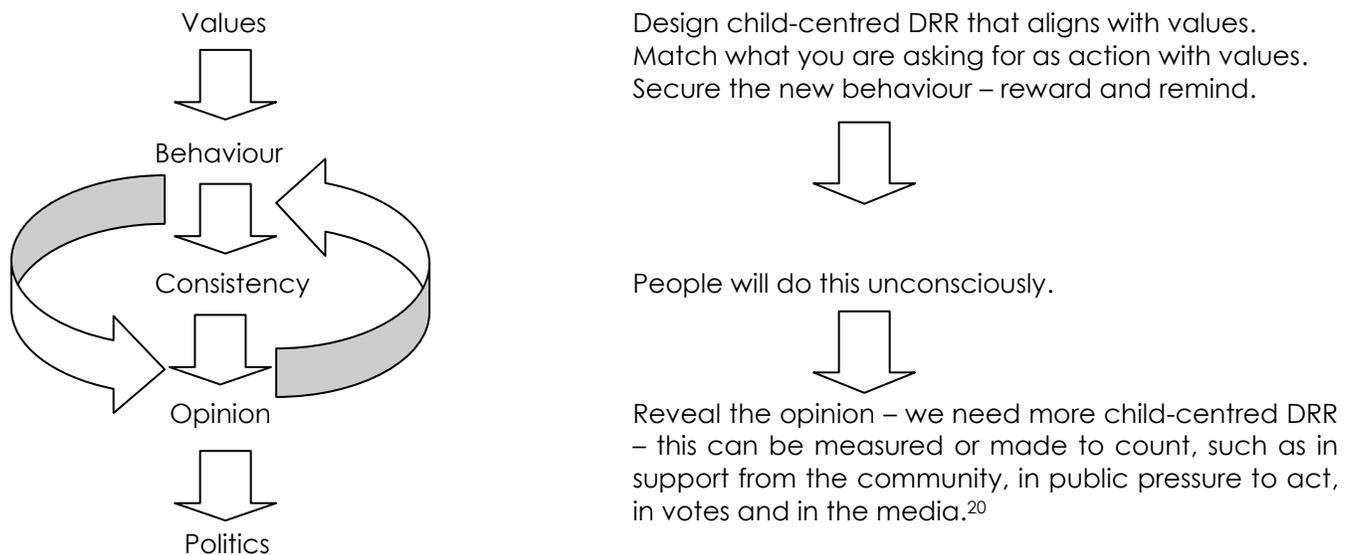
Exploring barriers to change

Question 1: Why, when the case for child-centred DRR is so clear, do we not see more of it?

Question 2: Why, when we know that children are among the most vulnerable and can make a valuable contribution to DRR, do we not do more to ensure that this happens?

The range of barriers to change in this area is consistent with broader resistance to change across sectors and activities.¹⁸ People are much more likely to change their behaviour if the arguments for changing align with their values. They are unlikely to change their behaviour just because they have been informed or educated as to why they should do something. However, if their values align, then it can be rewarded, even in very small steps, and people can be reminded to encourage and secure this new behaviour. This will then match with their opinions and help to mainstream the change into the everyday politics of the community, region or country. It becomes the 'new normal' (figure 1).¹⁹

Figure 1: How behaviour change occurs



The Bangladesh case study of adolescent girls in box 17 is an example of where girls addressed the values that mattered to the community, while DRR learning took place simultaneously and thus it was fully integrated. The community then supported DRR activities, recognizing their value, practising the behaviour and thus, as a community, now believes that DRR is a good thing, is being done and that others should follow. The Bangladesh case study is also a good example of the role that adolescents can play further on in their life cycle with more voice and perhaps a last opportunity to change the course of their life cycle (particularly in the case of girls in some countries, where motherhood looms large for late adolescents). The Indian example also in box 17 shows that integrating DRR with broader values leads to its acceptance, with children playing multiple proactive roles as implementers, communicators and mobilizers.

¹⁸ Examples include the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon's call for building standards codes to be observed (such as noted in the ISDR). It is known that building standards make sense and that if the codes are articulated, lives can be saved; yet, still the standards and protocols are not observed or enforced. For example, in 2008, a 7.9 magnitude earthquake in Sichuan caused damage to more than 10,000 school buildings, and almost 7,000 schools were completely destroyed. UNICEF estimates that millions of school children were affected; 9,000 children and teachers died (*Global Assessment Report, 2009*, p.105). The recent push by the NDMA in India for "zero tolerance of avoidable deaths" is a good example of how decree, backed up by name and shame for public ownership and accountability, is developing a new normal. The British Government approach to the Carbon Reduction Commitment is using a similar approach, with a public ranking (name and shame) to enforce a new normal.

¹⁹ Adapted from Chris Rose on www.campaignstrategy.org, 1 October 2010.

²⁰ This opportunity also partly depends on the effectiveness of governance in operation.

Box 17. Integrating DRR into broader community priorities

Bangladesh: Adolescent girls as teachers, trainers and doctors in their communities

Save the Children developed a programme to improve the capacity of 200 adolescent girls in two districts after Hurricane Ailsa in 2009. The objective was to empower adolescent girls to develop a model of adolescent-sensitive emergency response while promoting and protecting their rights. The girls were trained in child protection and to build awareness on children's rights issues while learning about community vulnerability and resource mapping, health, hygiene, birth registration, growing rice in saline soil and rainwater harvesting. Each of them was then responsible for training another 1,000 women in households, thus reaching over 20,000 households. They produced two child protection assessment reports and changed their behaviour and the way they were regarded in their communities. Girls involved felt respected in their role and were accepted by the community. They also participated in a video documentary depicting both the adaptation and DRR mechanisms that they practised to influence decision makers and emergency managers to adopt an adolescent-sensitive response.

India: Integrating children as implementers, communicators and mobilizers

In February 2006, World Vision India, in partnership with the Government of India and UNICEF, initiated a project aimed at strengthening community disaster preparedness and mitigation while also providing wealth creation and income-diversifying opportunities. The project targeted 15,000 vulnerable farmers and marginalized persons, with a special focus on children. It worked to improve livelihoods as a disaster risk 'safeguard' through awareness of disaster response and preparedness measures. Awareness was significantly enhanced through the distribution of learning materials to elementary school children. Local Relief Action Teams were formed with village volunteers, including women and youth, who are now trained in first aid, rescue and coordination with the local government structures in times of disaster. The Relief Action Teams also work with children's clubs to enable community members to access disaster-preparedness materials and conduct drill exercises with children. The activity ensures that preparedness reaches all households, including illiterate households that cannot make use of educational materials. The project's success is now being replicated in 92 villages (*Global Assessment Report, 2009, p.169*).

Why more child-centred DRR does not occur:

- lack of knowledge of what is required
- partial knowledge, incomplete evidence or uncertainty as to the best course of action
- delay or procrastination – the important is driven out by the urgent
- the priority and the cost effectiveness of the intervention is understood but there are no immediate benefits or votes in it for those with the power to introduce it
- insufficient funds or skills to undertake the interventions required
- belief that what is already in place is sufficient – failure to understand the scale of the requirement
- risk management is often not perceived as part of development
- planning and policy making remains the dominant approach to climate-change adaptation – not enough interaction with local governments and communities to put policy into action.²¹

²¹ The last two points are adapted from a UNISDR draft discussion paper "Accelerating MDGS by Reducing Risk to Natural Hazards: Invest today for a safer tomorrow", June 2010.

Opportunities for a way forward

Regional commitments, the role of governments and South-South cooperation opportunities

There are numerous opportunities to be seized in the next few months. The recent floods in China and Pakistan, along with other disasters in the region, have focused policy makers on the need for more and better disaster risk reduction, including the benefits of child-centred DRR. The recent Millennium Development Goals summit in New York and the halfway mark of the Hyogo Framework for Action provide an opportunity to advance child-focused DRR through national disaster management bodies and through the main government sectors. There are several relevant events, including the fourth Asian Ministerial Conference on DRR (25–28 October 2010) and the Global Platform (May 2011) in which child centred-DRR could be prioritized for both research and action.

Boxes 18 and 19 offer some examples of particular interest, given the opportunity presented by such initiatives, whether because of their innovative approach or the use of actors or instruments that are not yet mainstreamed.

Box 18. The role of the private sector

There are some limited examples of private sector support and participation for DRR activities that include a focus on children:

1. Children's disaster-awareness workshops run by Tokyo Gas in Japan.
2. Public donations of laminated glass for school buildings through an online donations portal.
3. Exploration for Disaster Prevention programmes developed by General Insurance Association of Japan in which children explore their towns/cities and familiarize with and map useful facilities for disaster prevention and reduction (Government of Japan presentation on corporate participation in disaster reduction, 2006).
4. ICICI Bank in India has provided funding for a project in three flood-affected states in India that focuses on building disaster-resilient communities.
5. Johnson & Johnson has provided funding for DRR work in the Philippines.
6. In India, the Corporate Disaster Report Network (CDRN.org), a web portal with private funding that has been in operation for the past 18 months, has achieved good results in recent flooding disaster response with requirements entered by NGOs on the ground and companies offering relevant contributions. It has proved to be a good rapid-response way of finding out both what is required and what is available. A similar system has been used by the Aid Matrix, with contributions from Fortune 500 companies in the United States, including multinationals operating in India that provide relief supplies to NGOs. The Food Backing Network works in food-insecure areas with a similar model, taking corporate contributions of technology devices, including GIS, to identify areas experiencing acute malnutrition. The needed resources are then distributed via NGOs. This has successfully addressed food grain shortages among tribal and very poor populations.

The disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management communities have, in recent years, recognized the role that insurance can play in providing coverage for damage to crops due to disasters via weather-based index insurance.²² Emerging lessons suggest scope for insuring against low frequency and high-cost weather events. Buyers may be farmers or local and national governments. Weather-based insurance can be offered to regions or countries, like hurricane insurance. An interesting new development in insurance is the idea of providing families with micro insurance that could be of benefit to children as part of a child-centred DRR strategy.

²² For example, in Mongolia, with the World Bank using an Index-based Livestock Insurance Project.

Box 19. The role of insurance and the banking sector

Indonesia

The potential role of insurance was recognized in the Bali Action Plan, adopted at the UNFCCC's thirteenth Conference of Parties in Bali in December 2007. It called for the consideration of "risk management and risk reduction strategies, including risk sharing and transfer mechanisms such as insurance".

Two examples from the Asia region focused on children

Nepal

Protecting families with micro health insurance (less than 3 per cent of the population has access to health insurance) could be a DRR activity with enormous benefits. In collaboration with policy makers, global technical service providers and local financial institutions and communities, Save the Children is exploring commercial and community-based models for delivering health insurance to vulnerable families. They are working with the Micro Insurance Academy to develop an inclusive and affordable, community-managed micro health insurance scheme. The pilot phase of this programme is expected to insure 45,000 people in rural Nepal and position the model for scaling up within Nepal and beyond (Save the Children, internal communication, August 2010).

India

The National Institute for Disaster Management is in discussion with the banking sector and technical experts to issue directives to banks regarding loan applications for infrastructure to ensure that they are combined with DRR requirements. Minimum safety standards will be required to access project financing.

A current weakness and significant future opportunity is the recognition of the role that city governments can play in child-centred DRR. The review found that much of the DRR literature, as with broader development work, addresses rural areas. The initiatives in box 20 reflect the role that cities can and should play but do little to recognize the specific role and needs of children. Many of the examples cited in this paper of children as risk analysers, teachers, etc. have been from rural communities rather than from the vast urban areas where currently more than half the world's population lives. More work is required on community-based, child-centred DRR in cities.

Box 20. The role of cities

The C40 cities initiative

C40 is a group of large cities committed to tackling climate change. The initiative was born out of recognition that cities have a central role to play in tackling climate change as major emitters and because of their vulnerability to impacts due to their location on a coast or a major river (such as flooding and sea-level rise). By fostering a sense of shared purpose, the C40 network offers cities an effective forum in which to work together, share information and demonstrate leadership. Cities in the following Asian and Pacific countries have signed up to the initiative: Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Pakistan, Thailand and Viet Nam.

UNISDR 2010–2011 World Disaster Reduction Campaign, Building Resilient Cities, Addressing Urban Risk My city is getting ready!

On 26 July 2010, three mayors from the Philippines joined the Making Cities Resilient campaign that has a ten-point checklist for making cities more resilient. The campaign urges community groups and NGOs to contact their local governments and propose a partnership to join the campaign. Outreach through local media, drawing competitions and public preparedness drills is also encouraged. The campaign recognizes that cities and local governments need to prepare and build resiliency to disasters; for the next two years and beyond, UNISDR will campaign together with its partners to encourage for this preparation. So far, 44 cities in the region have signed up, including from Bhutan, China, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka (UNISDR campaign website, 2010).

The Asian Cities Climate Change Resilience Network and Regional Climate Change Adaptation Knowledge Platform for Asia

These are emerging networks that seek to mobilize resources of relevant regional centres and on-the-ground networks to enhance scientific, technical and, most importantly, institutional capacity for adapting in a synergistic and coherent manner (UNISDR, 2010).

The need for more economic analysis

The literature on the costs and benefits of child-centred DRR is scarce. The benefits of DRR are generally understood in terms of lives saved and damage avoided. There is some specific cost-benefit analysis work available that shows high economic returns on DRR interventions. However, more specific child-centred DRR cost-benefit research is required that can provide evidence of the strong economic case for child-centred DRR. This then needs to be widely disseminated so that policy makers can better appreciate the full value of such efforts. UNICEF is leading research with the CCC and UNISDR that relates disaster damage and losses with child well-being indicators. Also, a UNICEF and CCC priority for 2011 is to develop evidence of impacts of child-focused DRR to better articulate this case.

Summary

There are a number of significant opportunities for child-centred DRR. These include:

- enhancing the focus and effort of governments
- enabling the private sector to play its full role, including the insurance and banking sectors
- developing the role of cities, given the demographic shift to urban centres
- improving the evidence base on the costs and benefits
- building on existing commitments and strengthening further South-South cooperation.

Recommendations

- Begin with the position of children as potentially powerful agents of change rather than vulnerable victims of impacts and check at every stage that this still holds. Do not do this, however, at the expense of children's needs and vulnerabilities.
- Work with a 'no regrets' approach to development that includes climate resilience, including DRR, as well as sustainable development.
- Use knowledge from all sources and platforms (local, regional and global), and set up a positive feedback loop by feeding lessons learned back into the system. Remember, children have good local knowledge.
- Engage at the right level – household, community, local authority and region – work with children.
- Tailor information to the relevant DRR risks, such as low-lying ground, close proximity to a river, in a hurricane, typhoon or earthquake zone and prone to drought. Include children as a good source of local knowledge.
- Use the appropriate mechanisms, such as media, schools and children as teachers and communicators.
- Recognize all the different instruments involved – is one more relevant to a particular case? For example, the CRC, the HFA, the Bangkok Action Agenda or country-specific legislation.
- Recognize the different actors and convenors involved, map them and then identify *who does what best?*
- Use wisely the role of standards and protocols, such as on buildings, water treatment, cholera prevention, water supply and sanitation guidance and, in the last resort, evacuation.

Conclusions and recommendations

The following covers conclusions and recommendations for promoting the realization of children's rights, and in particular the effective implementation of the CRC, in relation to child-centred disaster risk reduction.

DRR and children's rights

Focusing on child-centred DRR will help to achieve the aims and standards of the CRC. It will save money and lives, help to meet the Millennium Development Goals and promote development and progress.

The role of the CRC

The CRC reporting mechanism is a policy space in which a child-centred DRR agenda could be advanced. Although there is some consideration of the drivers of disasters in the initial and periodic reports submitted by State Parties to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, these are not explicitly linked to the need for child-centred DRR.²³ Alternative reports submitted to the Committee by national coalitions have also yet to include references to climate change. Thus, the reporting guidelines from the Committee on the Rights of the Child should be amended so that the Country Statements and Concluding Observations include coverage of child-centred DRR. A search of Country Reports and Concluding Observations from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Pakistan, Mongolia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Republic of Korea, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste and submitted to the Committee on the Rights of the Child suggests that such an amendment would have benefits.

This paper suggests that DRR should be included as a theme in the next round of country reporting. To support this, a diagram, such as the example in annex 1, should be provided (perhaps simplified), illuminating the mutually beneficial relationship between implementing appropriate DRR and meeting the undertakings of the CRC. Such a diagram could be used for inclusion on the CRC website, for use at forthcoming global, regional and country information-sharing platforms and in guidance documentation.²⁴ This would support the proposed change in the reporting guidelines.

Consistency, clarity and coherence

An overarching finding of the review has been the multiplicity of stakeholders, mandates, instruments and entry points to child-centred DRR. This is leading to a lack of clarity and coherence and possibly confusion over who leads, what the mandate is, which instrument to use, who the best convenor is, where the lessons are to be found and how best to achieve change. There is a need for consistency, clarity and coherence. The international community has an opportunity to show leadership at high-level meetings, such as by proposing a champion, suggesting universities in the region to lead on research and coordination of information sharing and also in agreeing to streamline and prioritize child-centred DRR.

Alignment of the message with the values to enable and embed behaviour change

If child-centred DRR aligns with the values of a community, it is more likely to be integrated and thus become accepted and embedded as the 'new normal'.

The role of information-sharing platforms

Information-sharing platforms can play a valuable role if used wisely. Publishing good practices is only a first step in spreading knowledge – it is rarely disseminated to local authorities, communities and practitioners (Tran, 2008). For example, in the 2009 *Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction*,

²³ The *Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2009 (UNISDR), refers to “the deadly trio, made deadlier by climate change, individually and in combination”. These are: unplanned urban development, vulnerable livelihoods and ecosystem decline. Human inaction also influences the risk level of a community or society.

²⁴ A similar provision was made in the UK's Department for International Development DRR policy paper that provided a table illustrating the links between DRR and meeting each of the MDGs.

the limited reference to children as agents in DRR represents a missed opportunity. The concluding chapter "Investing today for a safer tomorrow" could have provided a link for this kind of reporting. The forthcoming meetings of the Asian Ministerial Conference on DRR in the Republic of Korea in November, the High-Level Meeting on Cooperation for Child Rights in the Asia-Pacific Region in Beijing in November and the meeting on climate change adaptation, DRR and social protection platforms for South-South learning in Addis Ababa in February 2011 are all opportunities.²⁵ More thinking backed by evidence is required on the substance of child-centred DRR and how it can contribute to the future elaboration of community-based approaches.

The role of country-to-country cooperation

It can be difficult to distinguish between more general information-sharing platforms and workshops specifically intended for more cooperative learning at the country-to-country level. This difference needs to be understood and communicated to policy makers and practitioners to prevent the duplication of effort and to help maximize the outcomes. This activity has significant potential if used wisely.

Working with the private sector, cities, insurance and increasing the use of economic analysis

The review turned up some limited and interesting examples of private sector collaboration and funding in the Asia-Pacific region in relation to DRR and children. There is thus significant opportunity to develop or build public-private partnerships and/or sector partnerships working with civil society on child-centred DRR. The role of cities is under-used, as is the possibility presented by insurance. If the work done on the economic case, such as cost-benefit analysis, for DRR and child-centred DRR were extended and more broadly disseminated, it would strengthen the economic case for action. This could be part of a broader brief to give more attention to developing performance indicators of the effectiveness of integrating child-centred disaster risk reduction into mainstream development.

The role of the education sector

This entry point is well understood and established at local, national, regional and global levels. Significant progress has been made in the region in this area. There is an opportunity for universities to take up child-centred DRR research as well as coordination of knowledge management in the region. This would give follow-up action to a number of countries to look at capacity and perhaps agree which institution might twin with a northern equivalent, if helpful. An example is the regional research role already being played by ADPC and Kyoto University.²⁶ Although more work needs to be done, it should not be at the expense of the other opportunities highlighted previously.²⁷

The role of national planning instruments and tools²⁸

The guidance requirements and reporting framework for a NAPA, PRSP, CAS and UNDAF could be amended to require specific reference to the role of DRR and children and thus taken up by governments. The review found that these instruments are under-used currently in relation to child-centred DRR. Because these instruments inform planning and budgeting over a number of years, this is a significant omission. Provision of a dedicated budget in a national document would be a significant lever for change. Children's rights and child protection issues could be significantly improved if this recommendation were implemented. In more recent PRSPs and NAPAs, such as in Afghanistan, Maldives and Nepal, both issues are recognized but not quite joined up. Where these documents are in draft or still in the early years of implementation, there is significant opportunity for improvement.

²⁵ This meeting is particularly focused on learning between East Africa and South Asia.

²⁶ www.iedm.ges.kyoto-u.ac.jp

²⁷ Children out of school and children affected by conflict should not be neglected.

²⁸ This is thus a recommendation for both the donor community and for governments.

In summary

1. Political determination to support child-centred DRR

This needs to be everyone's business. This is not an optional activity; it is essential to the future well-being and development of any country to support the progress made on the MDGs to date and enable current and future generations to make their contribution, from top leadership at the highest level all the way to the grassroots level. If this is understood and supported at every level, then it will make the politics much more straightforward, whatever the operating environment. A stronger economic case will support this, along with more involvement by the private sector and cities and the inclusion of newer instruments, such as insurance. Integrating this determination into everyday values and behaviour is the key.

2. Streamlining of knowledge development and sharing to support child-centred DRR

This is necessary to promote the learning of lessons and behaviour change. Lessons learned need to be simple, replicable, achievable and effectively disseminated. This is not currently being practised for child-centred DRR as effectively as it could be. There is potential for improvement here if the international community agrees to prioritize the need.

3. Promoting clarity, coherence and consistency to support child-centred DRR

There are currently overlapping mandates, a multiplicity of organizations and entities and a range of instruments supporting child-centred DRR. Many of them compete for attention in the same space rather than complement and support each other. This sends confusing signals to national governments, to potential corporate partners and to civil society organizations. This also applies to deeper country-to-country cooperation. Within each country, there needs to be clarity on the lead agency within government and the extent of its mandate.

4. Alignment, cooperation and support for the implementers of child-centred DRR

Agencies and organizations delivering child-centred DRR need the best support. The values of the implementers (usually the community) need to be supported so that DRR becomes a habit rather than a special activity prompted by external intervention. As the 'new normal', the community then continues to practise child-centred DRR as part of its day-to-day activities. This will help all the way up the chain, reinforcing the political determination at the top. Include children at every level as active and valued participants.

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Samoa, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Cambodia, Lao, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal.

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