



World Conference on Disaster Reduction
18-22 January 2005, Kobe, Hyogo, Japan

ECHO/ISDR good practices for resilient communities



Save the Children

Children and young people make a difference in community multi-risk management in Cuba scfcuba@enet.cu



Save the Children's UK work on community risk management with children and young people in Cuba was developed in the mountainous Eastern provinces of Holguin and Guantanamo. Its main aim was to make youth participation an integral part of community risk management systems focusing on mitigation and preparedness activities such as:

- planting riverbanks with bamboo to prevent erosion,
- involving children in early warning systems,
- 'risk mapping' to improve school preparedness plans,
- training young people as first aid brigades,
- formation of entertainment brigades specialising in artistic activities to help reduce the stress of evacuated populations after a hurricane
- a community focused educational campaign designed, implemented and evaluated by young people and aimed at changing community risk behaviour.

The programme comprised of three separate projects which allowed institutions to learn from their experiences over a 4 year period, gathering key lessons from each stage. The starting point in 2000 was the training of school teachers and children on disaster-related issues. The stakeholders, including children, who undertook a participatory review, came to the conclusion that these activities were only working at a theoretical level and, for the next project, decided to involve children and young people in practical activities to prevent disasters caused by flooding. Lessons learnt from the second project led to the decision to incorporate a multi-risk approach for the third project, covering other risk areas as well as flooding. In this way the most serious risks identified by the community such as forest fires,

earthquakes, flooding, landslides and hurricanes were able to be addressed in this third stage.

This experience is part of the Save the Children's mandate to work for children's rights and prepare children to take part of the decisions that affect them. The programme used peer education methodologies as well as testing gender perspective indicators. Children and young people's contribution to Cuba's excellent disaster preparedness system proved to be positive and is valued by national authorities and local stakeholders. This programme has been funded since 2000 by the Disasters Preparedness Programme of the European Commission Humanitarian Office (DIPECHO) alongside co-financing from Save the Children's own funds.

MATERIALS PRESENTED AT THIS FORUM

A Prepararnos: (Let's be prepared). Manual for teachers.

Orestes Valdes Valdes, Pedro Ferradas Mannucci.

The book, addressed to school teachers makes a review of the main elements of disasters and community risk management. Spanish.

Save the Children UK with collaboration of the Ministry of Education of Cuba and Cuban Civil Defence. Cuba, 2001

Escuchando las Aguas: (Listening to the Waters)

A 22 minute **video** of the second stage of the programme which explains the results achieved and methodologies applied by children and young people.

Copyright: Save the Children UK in collaboration with the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment, Ministry of Education and Cuban Civil Defence.

Film maker: Natasha Vasquez.

Spanish with English subtitles. *Cuba, 2003.*

Escuchando las Aguas: (Listening to the Waters)

A **CD Rom** addressed to children, teachers, authorities, local stakeholders and community promoters with information of the methodologies used in the second stage of the project for dissemination and replication of the experience

Copyright: Save the Children UK with collaboration of Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment, Ministry of Education and Cuban Civil Defence.

Spanish.. *Cuba, 2003*

Escuchando las Aguas: (Listening to the Waters)

A **Book** addressed to children, teachers, authorities, local stakeholders and community promoters with information of the methodologies used in the second stage of the project for dissemination and replication of the experience.

Spanish. *Cuba 2003.*

Por un Futuro Mejor: (For a Better Future)

A 12 minute **video** which briefly explains the Cuban natural disasters preparation system and the children and young people involvement as well as some activities of the second stage of the project.

Copyright: Save the Children UK with collaboration of Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment, Ministry of Education and Cuban Civil Defence.

Film maker: Ian Padron. Original Soundtrack Grupo Buena Fe.

Spanish with English subtitles. *Cuba, 2004.*

Riesgolandia ¡Aprendamos a prevenir los desastres! Los niños y las niñas también participamos en la reducción de riesgos. (Riskland: Let's learnt to prevent disasters: We girls and boys also participate in risk reduction)

Interactive CD based on the material of the same name produced by UNICEF and ISDR and tested and adapted for the Cuban context. Playing this game, children can learn positive

behaviour messages and community activities on forest fires, flooding, landslide, earthquakes and hurricanes. The material has got an official resolution by the Cuban Ministry of Education and Civil Defence to be used in every Cuban school.
Spanish. Cuba, 2004.

Posters and educational materials used in the educational campaigns tested in the communities by young people to prevent earthquakes, flooding and forest fires.

Books and materials produced on children's rights and disasters by Save the Children Uk in the Central America and the Caribbean region by Neptaly Medina and Pedro Ferradas.