

Children and young people as partners for sustainable development and community risk management



Save the Children

Cuba

Background: Context



- **Save the Children UK**
- **Cuban Context**
 - **Socialist system since 1959**
 - **IMR 7 per 1000 live births**
 - **Life expectancy: 75**
 - **Literacy rate: 97%**
 - **Model disasters preparedness system. Since 1996 7 hurricanes, 16 deaths**
- **Save the Children in Cuba**
 - **1994**
 - **Priority areas:**
Environmental education,
social disadvantage,
emergencies.

The environmental education programme

1997 - 2004

- **Environmental Mission: Agenda 21 by children and young people. 97 - 99**
- **Umbrella Programme: Supporting National Strategy for Environmental Education. 2000 - 2003**
- **Environmental Education for Coastal communities: Research to Action in Local Communities 1997 – 2000 - 2005**
- **Participatory review, 2004**
- **Children consultation of National Environmental Strategy, 2005**

Aim: Involving children and Young People in sustainable development actions



Locations: Havana, Guantanamo, Pinar del Rio, 11 protected areas, Varadero, Playa Giron, Cojimar, Jaruco Batabano. 15,000 children involved

The environmental education programme

Main elements

- **Research to action**
- **Advocacy**
- **Inclusion: Handicapped & vulnerable children.**
- **Formal and non-formal education**
- **Advocacy**
- **Partnership**

Global environmental problems are our problems: Let`s act.



The risk reduction programme

2000 - 2005

Let's be prepared:
including disasters preparedness issues in schools. Holguin 2000 – 2001

We are prepared, listening to the waters:
flooding. Holguin 2002 2003

We are prepared, listening to the earth:
multi-risk, gender and peer education.
Holguin and Guantanamo 2003 2004

AIM: Involving children and young people in community risk management



Locations:

Yateras, Sagua de Tanamo and Mayari Municipalities in Holguin and Guantanamo provinces

Main programme activities

Forestation



Early warning system

Entertainment brigades



First aid brigades



Risk mapping



Educational campaign



E&P

Gender

Multirisk

Peer education

Partnership

PRINCIPLES

- Transparency
- Sharing decisions
- Accountability
- Capacity building: All work hand in hand.

CHILDREN AND YP AS PARTNERS

- Right to be part of the decisions that affect them
- Education beyond theory: Actions are the best way to educate
- Empowerment for the future and the present in integrating environment and risk reduction
- Participation according to age in a capacity building process.
- New views for ongoing policies, strategies and activities.
- Children are great communicators for adults risk behavior change
- Young people capacity for influencing policies.
- Involved from research to action.



- Ministry of Environment
- Civil Defence
- Local Governments
- Centre for Research Information and environmental management
- National Aquarium
- International Donors: ECHO, DFID. UNDP
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Tourism
- Museums
- Protected Areas
- Children and Young People

ACHIEVEMENTS

- **International agreements disseminated**
- **Effective participation of children and young people in environmental and community risk management as a consequence of research**



- **Documentation of experiences and publication of educational materials.**
- **Children voices heard by decision makers.**
- **Methodologies for inclusion, children participation, gender, peer education,**
- **Influencing and accompanying National Policies**
- **Risk behavior on earthquakes and flooding changed.**
- **Integration of environment and risk reduction approach.**
- **Contribution to the Cuba disasters preparedness system at the community level**

Key factors

Supportive Cuban context

- Education system.
- Government commitment with environment and risk reduction
- High priority that society gives to children and young people
- Political structure is woven into grass-roots organisations

Capacity building approach for sustainability

- High level partners
- Partnership principles
- Documentation



Lessons Learnt



- Not only theory but practice
- From global to local problems.
- Respectful relations & building of trust is critical
- Establishing links between political decision makers and educational projects is critical to producing lasting changes.
- Work of international NGOs is likely to be more sustainable if it enhances existing national structures and processes rather than creating new ones.
- Documenting experiences and lessons is key to ensuring sustainability of processes and sharing learning.
- The need to share tools rather than 'recipes' in different contexts.

- Children as partners influence adults.
- Projects built on the lessons and outcomes of former ones.
- Support structures and processes already in place: political will of institutions
- Capacity building approach



*Al combate corred, Bayameses,
que la patria es contempla orgullosa.
No temáis una muerte gloriosa,
que morir por la Patria es vivir.
En calenas vivir, es vivir
en agrenta y oprobio sumido.
Del clarín escuchad el sonido.
A las armas, valientes!*

Gracias

Thank you

Domo Arigato