

**Statement of Commitment**

**Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector**

Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

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Established in 2013, the Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector (GADRRRES) brings together leading humanitarian and development organizations working in the education sector, including the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), Plan International, Save the Children, Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO), United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization (UNESCO), United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), World Vision, Asia Pacific Coalition for School Safety (APCSS), and Disaster Risk Management Education Sector Latin America and the Caribbean.

At the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in March 2015, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction recognized the critical role children and youth play as agents of change. Through the SFDRR and the Sustainable Development Goals, world leaders have committed to ensuring development gains and protecting the rights of children and youth. These commitments include education, with the SFDRR Target 4 aiming to “substantially reduce disaster damage to critical infrastructure and disruptions of basic services, among them health and educational facilities, including through developing resilience by 2030.” Sustainable Development Goal 4 pursues “inclusive and equitable quality education and [the promotion of] lifelong learning opportunities for all.”

To fulfill these commitments, ensuring the safety of educational institutions and children’s access to quality education must be a priority. The Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector is here to support these efforts and provide leadership in their implementation.

Education is a human right to be ensured and provided during emergency situations. Schools provide a protective environment to learners and school community members. Children and young people are among the most vulnerable when disasters strike, facing several risks to their health and well-being. Disasters are occurring with increasing frequency and intensity, and it is predicted that in the coming years, 200 million children and youth will be affected annually by disasters, jeopardizing their right to education, development, and future.

The increasing impacts of disasters present a unique risk to children and youth learners. These events threaten the lives and health of children and young people while they are at school and limit access to quality education when schools are damaged or used as temporary shelters. However, children and young people maintain their rights to survival, protection, participation, and education even in disasters, and these rights must be protected.

Beyond needing protection, children and youth are able to serve as catalysts of action and contribute to developing the resilience of their communities. Their perspectives, ideas, and creativity can provide solutions for disaster risk and their unique position can initiate knowledge sharing throughout the broader community. Children, youth, and school community members must be meaningfully included in Disaster Risk Reduction activities, decision-making, and policy design at all levels.

Education holds the potential to bring protection and participation together to address disaster risk and foster resilience. Incorporating DRR comprehensively into education not only enhances safety for children and youth, but also builds their knowledge and skills to address disaster risk in their community and supports their role as leaders in developing resilience. The Comprehensive School Safety Framework addresses DRR in the education sector through DRR education policies and plans that combine efforts in three pillar areas: Safe Learning Facilities, School Disaster Management, and Risk Reduction and Resilience Education.

To support implementation of Comprehensive School Safety (CSS) at the national level, the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools (WISS) was created as a response to the High Level Dialogue Communiqué at the 2013 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. The WISS is a government-led initiative composed of countries that voluntarily sign up to participate and commit to supporting CSS. Through this initiative, GADRRRES supports WISS Safe Schools Champion Countries to create solid DRR foundations through education policies and plans that address the three pillars of CSS.

In support of the Sendai Framework, the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools, GADRRRES is committed to:

* Engage Ministries of Education around the world in building resilient countries and communities as well as ensuring the right to education during emergencies and disasters.
* Supporting the development of education sector plans and policies that integrate DRR at national and local levels to create an enabling institutional environment.
* Promoting and supporting the implementation of Comprehensive School Safety to address Safe Learning Facilities, School Disaster Management, and Risk Reduction and Resilience Education.
* Advocating for and promoting the meaningful participation of school communities, children and youth in all Disaster Risk Reduction efforts, including in the education sector.
* Promoting the use of child-centered multi-hazard risk assessments to inform education sector plans and programs.
* Supporting regional and national efforts to implement CSS by sharing technical resources, tools, and good practices.
* Supporting WISS Safe Schools Champion Countries in implementing CSS by providing technical expertise and facilitating the sharing of good practice.

In support of Comprehensive School Safety, GADRRRES calls on Ministries of Education, government representatives, and other partners to:

* Acknowledge that because every child has the right to safety and survival and to access education, every school must be a safe school.
* Ensure DRR is incorporated in education sector policies and plans based on child-centered multi-hazard risk assessment.
* Implement all three pillars of the CSSF to ensure the fulfillment of children and youth’s right to education and safety.
* Ensure adequate funding is provided for school safety efforts, including for retrofitting and reconstruction.
* Build the capacity of children and youth to address disaster risk in their community and to contribute to a culture of safety and resilience.
* Ensure the meaningful participation and decision-making of children and youth in DRR policy design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, including in the education sector.
* Demonstrate commitment to school safety by supporting national governments to sign up to the WISS and become Safe School Leaders, enabling alignment of education sector policies and plans with disaster management policies and plans at all levels.
* Avoid the use of schools as shelters.