Disaster Risk Reduction and Education

Disaster risk is the potential loss expressed in lives, health status, livelihoods, assets and services, which could occur in a particular community or a society due to the impact of a natural hazard.

Disaster risk reduction (DRR) is a systematic approach to identifying, assessing and reducing that risk. Specifically, the purpose of disaster risk reduction is to minimise vulnerabilities and disaster risks throughout a society in order to avoid (prevent) or to limit (mitigate and prepare for) the adverse impacts of natural hazards, and facilitate sustainable development.

UNICEF’s DRR goals:
1. DRR for children and women is a national and local priority
2. Different risks faced by girls, boys, adolescents and women are identified and addressed
3. Safer and more resilient conditions for girls, boys and women
4. Strengthened humanitarian preparedness, response and recovery through capacity development

Introduction to DRR and Education
- Disasters may result in the damage or destruction of learning facilities and materials, the closure of schools and the prolonged disruption of education, increased barriers to education, limited access to schooling, and decreased education quality.
- The overarching objective of DRR in education is the systematic integration of the analysis of disaster risks and DRR measures into education sector development policy, planning and financing obligations.
- UNICEF promotes three commonly accepted goals relating to DRR education and school safety: (1) promotion of DRR in teaching and learning; (2) provision of safe school environments; and (3) promotion of school safety and disaster management, e.g. drills.

Child-centred DRR requires focusing on the specific risks faced by children, as well as involving children in efforts and initiatives to reduce disaster risk.
Disasters negatively impact children’s and women’s rights, disproportionately affect poor countries and poor communities, erode development gains and set back progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). With its local and national presence before, during and after disasters, and working across all key programme sectors, UNICEF is ideally placed to address disaster risk and to undertake risk reduction measures.

For further information, please refer to the DRR and Education Technical Note or contact Aisling Falconer (afalconer@unicef.org) and Antony Spalton (aspalton@unicef.org)

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<th>3 pillars of DRR and education</th>
<th>Examples of key DRR and Education actions</th>
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| Promotion of DRR in teaching and learning | • Integrate DRR into the formal and non-formal education curricula from pre-school to secondary level.  
• Provide in-service teacher training on disaster preparedness.  
• Produce support materials for teaching and learning linked with disaster risk reduction. |
| Provision of safe school environments | • Carry out safety inspections and assessments of education facilities, and ensure their suitable location and construction.  
• Provide temporary schooling facilities and alternative sites when hazards are anticipated.  
• After a disaster, support the development of sustainable multi-hazard resistant standards and designs for reconstruction of schools. |
| Promotion of school safety and disaster management | • Support school level vulnerability and capacity assessments, which include the participation of children, parents and teachers.  
• Establish early warning systems, including training for teachers to identify and act on early warning signs.  
• Systematise and disseminate good practices of school preparedness and response. |