



INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR DISASTER REDUCTION

13 OCTOBER 2011

CONCEPT NOTE: PACIFIC REGION

THEME

Making Children and Youth Partners in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)

SLOGAN

Step Up for Disaster Risk Reduction!

The slogan is a basic call for action to all children/youth to step up to the challenge and lead others to get involved and participate in the efforts for DRR. Reducing disaster risk is everybody's business, and needs everyone's participation.

OBJECTIVES

1. **Create awareness to stimulate interest and increase involvement of children and youth in DRR activities in the Pacific**
 - a. Educate and inform children and youth that disaster risk reduction is also their concern and encourage them to advocate for investment in DRR particularly at the local and community level by Governments and private sector.
 - b. Advocate for the recognition and inclusion of children's and youth's contributions to DRR in the context of national and community development as well as in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.
2. **Mobilize and engage - Increase partnerships with children and youth in DRR in the Pacific**
 - a. Discuss possible avenues for institutionalizing mechanisms for the participation of children and youth in decision-making processes for building disaster resilient communities in the Pacific region, eg. identify how existing youth committees could participate more actively in national DRM activities
 - b. Engage children and youth-led organizations and initiatives in the Pacific to enhance their contribution to DRR with a focus on the 5 major principles of the Children's Charter.
 - c. Strengthen networks and partnerships among governments, children and youth-led organizations, local governments, academia, civil society organizations, the private sector, the media and the UN system, to enhance commitment and support for children and youth inputs to DRR.

RATIONALE

1. October 13 each year marks the United Nations' **International Day for Disaster Reduction (IDDR)**. The day forms part of the global awareness campaign of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) System to raise awareness of disaster risk reduction, spark public interest and ultimately help prevent, reduce and minimise loss and damage from disasters. In the Pacific, the observation of awareness events on IDDR or during national awareness weeks has a long standing tradition in many countries. In 2010, IDDR was observed for the first time at the regional level. Building on these experiences, more innovative activities, events and strategies are proposed for 2011 and future years.

The 2011 Pacific Regional IDDR event will be celebrated in Suva, Fiji as a **joint initiative** of the United Nations, regional and national stakeholders, and partners who are working in the fields of disaster risk reduction, climate change, children and youth in the Pacific.

2. This year's theme for IDDR focuses on **children and youth as enablers of disaster risk reduction** allowing discussions and activities during the Day to promote the role of children and youth in DRR and to advocate for

greater support and information they need to become participants, decision makers and implementers in the DRR process. The emphasis on children and youth in DRR was already selected for the 2006 – 2007 World Disaster Reduction Campaign with the theme 'Disaster Risk Reduction Begins at School' and resulted in increased awareness of the importance of school safety, improved knowledge of children and youth in DRR, and a range of new global, regional and national level partnerships around this topic.

3. UNICEF, Plan International, World Vision and Save the Children form the 'Children in a Changing Climate – Coalition'. The Coalition, along with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, OXFAM, UNISDR and others, agree **it is essential to include the unique perspectives of children and youth in disaster risk reduction.**
4. The IDDR 2011 builds on a momentum generated at the 3rd Session of the Global Platform on DRR (GP) in May this year. The 2011 Chair's Summary of the GP calls for the involvement of children and youth in disaster risk reduction decisions that affect their future as a practical way to ensure effective local action. A five-point [Children's Charter](#) was launched at the GP stating among other things that:
 - 1) Schools must be safe - education must be uninterrupted after a disaster event;
 - 2) Child protection must be a priority, before, during and after a disaster;
 - 3) Children have the right to participate and to access information on disaster risks;
 - 4) Community infrastructure must be safe, and relief and reconstruction must help reduce future risk;
 - 5) Disaster risk reduction must reach the most vulnerable.
5. The 2010-2015 World Disaster Reduction Campaign - adopted in the Pacific with the slogan ***Making the Pacific Resilient - My Community is Getting Ready!*** - focuses on the role of local governments in DRR. The overall goal of the campaign is to achieve resilient, sustainable urban communities, with a growing number of local governments that are taking actions to reduce risks to disasters. The local governments that participate in the Campaign commit to one or more of the ***Ten Essentials for Making Communities Resilient***, a ten-point checklist for DRR at local level. To-date seven local governments from the Pacific have signed up to the Campaign, i.e. Lami, Nadi and Ba from Fiji, Luganville from Vanuatu and Cairns, Lake Macquarie and Townsville from Australia. Two of the ***Ten Essentials*** have a direct link to schools and the education of children and youth, calling to "*Address the safety of all schools and health facilities and upgrade these as necessary*" and "*Ensure education programmes and training on disaster risk reduction are in place in schools and local communities.*"

Considering the linkages to this year's IDDR theme, it is proposed to include the Campaign in the IDDR celebrations and to encourage Pacific local governments to organize IDDR events in their communities.

6. Considering that **World Habitat Day 2011** is observed on October 3rd with a related theme on "*Cities and Climate Change*" both awareness days will again be celebrated jointly in the Pacific, as in 2010.

The rationale of the World Habitat Day is to reflect on the state of towns and cities and the basic right of all, to adequate shelter. It is also intended to remind the world of its collective responsibility for the future of the human habitat. The theme *Cities and Climate Change* was chosen because climate change has become one of the greatest development challenges of the 21st century. Advance planning will be required to ensure towns and cities are resilient to the negative impacts of climate change in 10, 20 or 30 years from now. In this new urban era with most of humanity now living in towns and cities, the greatest impacts of climate change induced disaster events begin and end in cities. Cities being important green house gas emitters also have a great influence on climate change.

For more information visit World Habitat Day 2011 website: www.unhabitat.org/categories.asp?catid=669

MEDIA ACTIVITIES

The following activities are proposed for the celebration of the IDDR 2011 in the Pacific.

Media activities and promotional materials:

1. UNISDR will produce an animated public service announcement (PSA) on IDDR for airplay. The PSA will be made available to countries who express an interest to broadcast it in the lead up to and on 13 October.
2. A series of events prior to 13 October will be hosted on the UNISDR website www.unisdr.org/2011/iddr/ to stimulate interest among children and youth about getting involved in the IDDR.
3. UNISDR Pacific will publish an announcement on the IDDR in a newspaper in Fiji with an invitation to join the action and share photos/footage with UNISDR on self-organized IDDR events. In other countries, National Disaster Management Offices, UN Country Teams and Joint Presences, and partners are encouraged to publish similar newspaper announcements. Suggested draft texts will be made available.
4. UNISDR Pacific will coordinate with UN Country Teams and partners the preparation of a joint press release to be issued on the IDDR celebration and share it widely across the region with media. Partners are invited to share their media contacts with UNISDR.
5. UNISDR Pacific will produce printed materials for dissemination on IDDR 2011 at the regional event: Banner, posters, T-shirts, wristbands and pamphlets. Contributions from partners are appreciated.

The following resources are available to all via IDDR website.

Resources:

- Ideas how to celebrate the IDDR 2011 for different stakeholder groups
- **Step Up!**-logos for websites, signs and posters, T-shirts etc.
- An animated public service announcement (PSA) on IDDR will be released soon and can be placed at the local TV for airplay leading up to and on 13 October.
- Stop Disasters! An online disaster simulation game from UNISDR

REGIONAL EVENT

The International Day for Disaster Reduction and World Habitat Day will be jointly celebrated on 13 October 2011 in Suva, Fiji, by the United Nation, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC/SOPAC), Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF), Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC), Save the Children, University of the South Pacific (USP), and other partners who are working in the fields of disaster risk reduction, climate change, children and youth in the Pacific.

The half-day event will include some of the following activities (see draft programme attached):

1. **Messages on IDDR 2011** from the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for DRR (video screening), and from UN-Habitat on **World Habitat Day 2011**.
2. **Welcome Address** to the event.
3. **Step Up!** - children and youth are invited to 'Step Up for Disaster Risk Reduction' with a message on reducing disaster and climate risks on a placard to show that disaster risk reduction matters to them.
4. **Videos** on children and youth in DRR/climate change.
5. **Quiz** on DRR and climate change with prizes for the winners.
6. **Launch of the publication** "Institutional and Policy Analysis of Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation in Pacific Island Countries" (UNISDR/UNDP).
7. **Presentation on "Consideration of Children in Pacific Climate Change Adaptation and DRR Policies and Plans"** (extract from upcoming research on "Climate Change Impact on Children in the Pacific") (UNICEF)
8. **Views from a local government in Fiji:** Experiences in addressing disaster and climate risks at the local level and views on the involvement of children and youth in the disaster reduction and climate change activities.
9. Announcement of the local governments that have been successfully nominated as participants of the **Making Cities Resilient Campaign** and presentation of certificates to the representatives in attendance.

The event will be documented and communication support from partners will be sought.

NATIONAL LEVEL ACTIVITIES

National Disaster Management Offices and partners are invited to share their respective plans for the IDDR 2011 with the UNISDR Sub-Regional Office for the Pacific (focal point: niskanen@un.org). Please document your IDDR activities (through photos/video/stories) and share these materials with us, so they can be placed on the UNISDR website.

When organizing events at national level, it is suggested to liaise with the Ministries of Education and Youth, UN agencies, local governments, youth-led organizations, NGOs working with children and youth and the media to strengthen the multi-stakeholder participation in IDDR 2011 events.

Step Up for Disaster Risk Reduction!

This year, as its primary activity of the IDDR, children and youth of the world are called to “**Step Up for Disaster Risk Reduction**” and show that disaster risk reduction matters to them with a message on any type of placard which states “Children and Young People are Partners in Disaster Risk Reduction!” or their own message. Alternatively carry out, any action or activity that signifies ‘stepping up’ to and confronting the challenges presented in DRR.

Suggested activities for different stakeholders are listed below, more ideas can be found at the IDDR website. You can also design your own activities around the suggested or related themes as appropriate in your respective context.

National Disaster Management Offices

- Organize an event, an activity, a programme with children and young people including **Step Up!** activity.
- Advertise the IDDR and the ‘Step Up!’ activity with your networks and media, and include the celebration of the Day as part of your National Disaster Awareness Weeks where applicable.
- Advertise the Step Up movement through your website, posters, T-shirts etc.
- Launch a drawing or painting competition.
- Organize an event with your national media to report on the day.
- Work closely with youth organizations to build on the IDDR momentum.
- Post photos videos, links, comments and brief stories on the events page of [UNISDR’s Facebook](#). Tell UNISDR what disaster risk reduction means to you and how you plan to make your community safer from disasters.

Children, Youth and the Public

- **Step Up!** - Show the world you’re stepping up to the challenge.
- Make a poster or draw/paint your image of a disaster resilient city or community.
- Make a video or video blog about how to reduce your risk to disasters.
- Get involved, join or volunteer with a children and young people network working on Disaster Risk Reduction.
- Advertise and promote the International Day by adding the on your website.
- Print the logo or poster on T-shirts, posters, stickers, etc. and wear/use them on 13 October.
- Share the Public Service Announcement (PSA).
- Post photos videos, links, comments and brief stories on the events page of [UNISDR’s Facebook](#). Tell UNISDR what disaster risk reduction means to you and how you plan to make your community safer from disasters.

Teachers and Educators

- Organize a **Step Up!** activity in your classroom on 13 October.
- Work on a DRR issue and raise awareness by involving students in a debate, discussions, assignments etc.
- Organize a drawing or photo contest to promote a disaster risk reduction.
- Create a dialogue with your students on DRR.
- Post photos videos, links, comments and brief stories on the events page of [UNISDR’s Facebook](#). Tell UNISDR what disaster risk reduction means to you and how you plan to make your community safer from disasters.

Local Governments and Communities

- Organize a **Step Up!** activity in your town/community to build DRR awareness among children and youth.
- Include children and youth in your DRR activities.
- Organize an event with your national media to report on the day.
- Organize special posters, drawing contest, activities around the Step Up.
- Conduct community risk mapping (residential/commercial area) and involve children and youth
- Initiative long term activities with children and young people.
- Post photos videos, links, comments and brief stories on the events page of [UNISDR's Facebook](#). Tell UNISDR what disaster risk reduction means to you and how you plan to make your community safer from disasters.

UN Joint Country Presences

- Liaise with national actors to organize national IDDR 2011 activities including a **Step Up!** activity.
- Organize an event to discuss DRR and climate change with children and youth.
- Organize an event with your national media to report on the day.
- Organize special posters, drawing contest, activities around the Step Up.
- Advertise the Step Up movement through your website, posters, T-shirts and other products.
- Post photos videos, links, comments and brief stories on the events page of [UNISDR's Facebook](#). Tell UNISDR what disaster risk reduction means to you and how you plan to make your community safer from disasters.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Natural hazards are increasing and while more and more people suffer from the related catastrophes, **children are among the most traumatized** as their ability to cope with unexpected and painful interruptions to their regular schedules is still not fully developed.
2. **Some 66 million children are affected by disasters every year.** For example, children may suffer acute morbidity, malnutrition, psychological trauma, become separated from their family, have basic services such as safe water, education and health diminished, and become vulnerable to sexual abuse and trafficking. In this context, the United Nations 2011 Global Assessment Report - Revealing Risk, Redefining Development – highlights a number of studies that explain exactly how children are affected by disasters. Destroyed or damaged schools together with the loss of household assets and livelihoods can force children out of school. Malnutrition caused by the loss of food supplies may cause stunting and lead to poor educational achievement and greater susceptibility to disease. Disasters also widen the gender gap in primary education, decreases school enrolment and increase dropout rates as well the incidence of diarrhoea, infant mortality and the numbers of babies born with low birth rate.
3. Addressing high child mortality rates as well as the significant psychological impacts of disasters on children requires new approaches that **recognize the role of children and youth as agents of change.** Participatory disaster risk management (DRM) policies and programming, children and young people are actively engaged in decision-making and accountability processes. These can improve communication and integrated planning within communities, and increasingly serve to promote effective preparation and prevention.
4. The regional celebration of IDDR 2011, targeting children and youth as a group, will kick start a process that aims to **create social demand for DRR** between 2011 and 2015 by;
 - 1) Stimulating bottom up community participation in the DRR process;
 - 2) Changing perceptions and current thinking about DRR;
 - 3) Changing expectations and behaviour;
 - 4) Complementing and critiquing ongoing top down efforts in DRR to date;
 - 5) Empowering communities and individuals to take charge of their own DRR and drive the process.
5. The 2011 IDDR is part of a broader communication strategy to involve more people in DRR. From now onwards, the **Step Up Initiative** will focus each year on a different group of partners - **women (2012), the elderly (2013), and the disabled (2014)**. The voices and key contributions of the different groups will be heard during the Global Platform on DRR in June 2013 and the World Conference on DRR in Japan in 2015.

6. The IDDR was celebrated regionally for the first time in the Pacific in 2010 in collaboration with UN-Habitat and Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) at the Pacific Local Government Symposium in Port Vila, Vanuatu. Some Pacific island countries have a long tradition celebrating IDDR in conjunction with their national public awareness days/weeks. It is proposed to coordinate activities with regional and in-country partners for a regional celebration of IDDR 2011.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For additional information and for sharing your plans and documentation of your activities on IDDR 2011, please contact:

Laura Niskanen

Associate Expert in Disaster Risk Reduction

UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), Sub-Regional Office for the Pacific

Level 5, Kadavu House, Victoria Parade

c/- UNDP, Private Mail Bag, Suva, Fiji

Tel: +679 3100 451

Email: niskanen@un.org

In Partnership:

