

Child-Centred Disaster Risk Reduction: Achievements, Challenges and Scope



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CHILD CENTRED-DISASTER RISK REDUCTION (CC-DRR) IS DEFINED AS DISASTER RISK REDUCTION MEASURES FOR AND WITH CHILDREN, INVOLVING CHILDREN, PARENTS, COMMUNITIES, SERVICE PROVIDERS AND GOVERNMENTS (UNICEF, 2014). EMERGING AS A DISTINCT APPROACH TO DISASTER RISK REDUCTION OVER THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS, CC-DRR ADVOCATES A SHIFT FROM SEEING CHILDREN AS PASSIVE VICTIMS TO SEEING THEM AS AGENTS OF CHANGE FOR THEIR OWN WELL-BEING AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR COMMUNITIES (BENSON & BUGGE, 2007).

CC-DRR - WHAT IS IT?

Underpinned by a human rights approach to community development and guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (OHCHR, 1989) CC-DRR programmes typically include five main activities:

1. Workshops that enhance familiarity with the concepts and terminology of disaster risk and disaster risk reduction;
2. Lessons in how to complete vulnerability and capacity assessments for various types of hazards;
3. Training in the development of hazard awareness raising campaigns using a variety of media;
4. Knowledge and skill building activities aimed at improving chances of survival before, during, and after a disaster;
5. Developing school emergency management plans.

(Benson & Bugge, 2007; Mitchell et al., 2008; Haynes et al., 2010; Mitchell et al., 2009; Nikku et al., 2007; Haynes, Lasser & Towers, 2010; Plan International, 2010)

END USER STATEMENT

"The importance of developing quality CC-DRR programmes has become increasingly important to our organisation. However, we lack a credible evidence-base to inform our decision-making. This project will assist us to develop quality programmes that focus on floods and storms. We are especially interested in learning from the Bangladesh context where floods and storms are a major concern"

- Bob Stevenson, South Australia SES

WHY THIS RESEARCH?

Preliminary research and anecdotal evidence suggests that CC-DRR programmes are having a positive impact on children's knowledge, skills and capacities for action (Benson & Bugge, 2007; UNICEF, 2011; Martin, 2010). However, rigorous research is lacking and development agencies are asking serious questions about the effectiveness, sustainability, efficiency and replicability of the CC-DRR approach (e.g. UNICEF, 2011). Although many of the NGOs involved in CC-DRR have sought to answer these questions through their own evaluation research, scarce funding and limited human resources have prevented them from conducting the kind of in-depth, multi-stakeholder analyses that are required to reliably inform policy and practice (UNICEF, 2011).

Snapshot of Bangladesh

- 1,44,570 square km of land with a population of 159 million (aprox.) (BBS, 2015);
- 40% of the population is under 18 years of age (BBS, 2013);
- 23% of the children (6-10) remain out of school;
- More than 31% of households live below the national poverty line and gross national income per capita is just US\$900 (World Bank, 2014);
- It is one of the most disaster prone nations on earth with 80% of the land classified as floodplain (Huq & Shoaib, 2013);
- Extreme flood events tend to spread over 60% of the country (Majumder, 2013);
- 97% of its area and 97.7% of its population is at constant risk of multiple hazards the impact of which plays out in reduced food intake, reduced levels of sanitation and hygiene, limited health expenditures and withdrawal of children from school for work (UNICEF Bangladesh, June 2014);
- 33,000 schools have been completely destroyed by different disastrous incidents since 1971 (Akram et al., 2012);
- Due to flood and cyclone children miss up to three months of school every year or they drop out completely (UNICEF, 2011).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

With a focus on CC-DRR programs in Australia and Bangladesh, this project will seek to answer the following questions:

- What philosophical, theoretical and conceptual frameworks underpin CC-DRR programmes and to what extent are they sensitive to the prevailing socio-cultural context?
- What programmatic approaches are applied in the development and delivery of CC-DRR and which ones most effectively reduce disaster risk?
- What special steps have been taken to meet the specific needs of marginalised children (e.g. girls, children with disabilities, working children) and how successful have they been?
- What institutional mechanisms and processes facilitate the sustained implementation of CC-DRR at a local, regional and national scale and how can these be supported or improved?

