

# Pacific Coalition For The Advancement Of School Safety

For a Bright Future Safe from Disasters for All Children







# **About Us**

Across the Pacific region, natural hazards and disasters – both large and small – are threatening children's lives and depriving them of access to education. Building resilience to disaster and climate change has been recognised as a key area for strengthening development goals across the region.

The Pacific Coalition for the Advancement of School Safety (PCASS) is an initiative in support of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Worldwide Initiative for School Safety. PCASS has strengthened commitments to protect children's rights to safety and survival, to ensure educational continuity, to safeguard education-sector investments, and to build a culture of safety in the face of natural hazards and climate change.



> Launch event for Disaster Risk Reduction Plans in East New Britian Province Papua New Guinea. Photo: Phillip So'on/Ministry of Education

# **Prioritizing School Safety**

A comprehensive approach to school safety is essential, in order to bridges the development goals of universal access to quality education and the recurring humanitarian imperative for Education in Emergencies (EiE).

It serves the need to safeguard long-term education-sector investments, and develop resilience in the face of natural and man-made hazards. Child-centered risk assessment helps us adopt a child's point of view on all the hazards that threaten their rights. Risk mitigation planning reduces the threatening impacts. Response preparedness planning and educational-continuity planning strengthen and speed recovery, making the education sector more self-reliant and less dependent on humanitarian assistance.

Disaster risk reduction and climate change education defend two fundamental child rights: the right to safety and survival and the right to education.



> A young girl participates in a Child Rights Education Program, Fiji. Photo: Save the Children

# **Unpacking School Safety**

The Comprehensive School Safety Framework has been put forward by child-centered intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations, in collaboration with partner education authorities around the world. The framework guides a thoughtful approach to protecting children's rights to safety and survival in the face of disasters, climate change, conflict and other risks, as well as protecting their rights to education and development.

Comprehensive school safety is addressed by education policy and practices aligned with disaster management at national, sub-national and local school-site levels. Its evidence base is a thorough all-hazards, all-risks assessment, and an understanding of the education sector and disaster management context. It rests on three pillars:

- 1. Safe School Facilities
- 2. School Disaster Management
- 3. Risk Reduction and Resilience Education



The framework enables us to see the complexity of achieving safety in schools. It involves many actors and stakeholders who, together, must become duty-bearers for the areas they are best positioned to address.

# Pacific Coalition for the Advancement of School Safety: The Program

The Pacific region, located in the ring of fire, has had a tumultuous couple of years. In 2016, Cyclone Winston brought devastation in Fiji. Drought, caused by the El Niño effect, occurred across the region in late 2015. Vanuatu bore the brunt of Cyclone Pam in early 2015. And, in 2013, the Solomon Islands experienced major flooding, and the Temotu Earthquake and Tsunami – all in the same year.

The Asia-Pacific region is the most disasterprone in the world and is 25 times more likely to be affected by disasters than Europe or North America. In 2014, around half of the



> Teacher training Efate, Vanuatu. Photo: Marla Petal/Save the Children

world's disasters occurred in the Asia-Pacific region<sup>1</sup>. Children were especially affected, facing risks to their health, psychosocial wellbeing, protection, nutrition and access to education. For Pacific countries, the numbers of people affected by disasters are often low relative to more densely populated parts of the world, however the percentage of the country's population and infrastructure vulnerable to disasters is extremely high.<sup>2</sup>

The Pacific Coalition for the Advancement of School Safety (PCASS) program, supported by the European Union, has bought together partners in support of Ministries of Education and National Disaster Management Offices (NDMO) to collectively improve school safety across the Pacific region. This includes making all school facilities structurally safe and able to protect children during disasters, ensuring appropriate school disaster management practices are effectively implemented, and ensuring risk reduction and resilience education is taught in school in order to build a culture of safety and resilience.

Work has taken place at the regional level<sup>3</sup>, and at the national level in the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji.

Ministries of Education, NDMOs and multilateral and bilateral development organisations have worked together to jointly identify priorities and recommended action plans for advancing school safety under the three pillars of Comprehensive School Safety.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific 2015. Disasters in Asia and the Pacific: 2014 Year in Review.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Barber, Rebecca 2015, *One Size Doesn't Fit All*, Save the Children, Care, Oxfam Australia and World Vision, page 9

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Regional level work has included Samoa, Tuvalu, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga, Kiribati and Papua New Guinea

# The following regional priorities have been identified:



#### **Pillar I: Safe School Facilities**

- Development of guidance on site selection for schools.
- Guidance on the limited use of schools as temporary shelters.
- Exploring insurance options with the private sector.



# **Pillar 2: School Disaster Management**

- Develop regional template and guidance for the implementation of site-based assessment and planning, risk reduction and response preparedness as part of normal school management and improvement.
- Regional guidance on local knowledge and natural warning signs (including capturing language for early warning that can explain what the impact of an expected hazard will be).



# **Pillar 3: Risk Reduction and Resilience Education**

- Provide teacher training for both teachers and teacher trainees on risk reduction and climate change adaptation curriculum materials.
- Collect, develop, adapt and introduce educational resources with local content relevant to climate change and disaster risk management and the Pacific for use in primary and secondary schools.

# The following gaps and challenges were identified:

- There is no clear consensus on which existing or new regional coordination mechanisms
  would be best suited to include DRR and education to carry the regional agenda forward and
  support cross-country learning and sharing. More consultations are needed and ideally multiyear funding should be secured to form, grow and sustain a regional support mechanism.
- Advocacy and awareness on the importance of safe schools programs targeting key government stakeholders, as well as including parents and community, are needed to foster greater collaboration and partnership.
- Lack of training of teachers and key stakeholders to be able to deliver DRR lessons in the classroom and informal settings is holding back integration of DRR and climate change into curriculum. Few teachers have the confidence to teach risk reduction material.
- Lack of guidance on school disaster management and procedures for emergency simulation drills threatens safety in emergencies and disasters.
- Difficulties in implementing risk reduction and education policies nation-wide and going to scale are experienced throughout the region, due to human and financial resource constraints.
- There is a lack of long-term training and teacher/administrator development plans, which are needed to institutionalise progress in comprehensive school safety.

# National level: Implementing a comprehensive approach to school safety

# Fiji

# **Disaster impacts**

Recent impacts of Cyclone Winston have created momentum in the education sector to ensure children and teachers are protected from the impact of disasters, and have highlighted the need to safeguard education-sector investments. Cyclone Winston damaged or destroyed 497 schools and affected 85,972 students. The Ministry of Education estimates that infrastructure damage is more than FJD \$61 million.

School safety in Fiji is governed by the EiE and School Safety Policy. The objective of this policy is to provide a framework for EiE for the Ministry of Education and schools in Fiji, and to proactively put in place initial safety measures that are aligned with the Comprehensive School Safety Framework and the Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies Minimum Standards. The policy is designed to ensure the safety of the whole school community, including students, teachers, children with special needs and school visitors. The Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts also has a full-time national focal point for Disaster Management.

### **Recent progress**

The Fiji Government has had strong support from GIZ to develop the national curriculum for grades 7–13, incorporating elements of climate change and disaster risk management. Supplementary materials for DRR and traditional knowledge have also been developed.

UNICEF and Save the Children have been supporting the EiE efforts of the Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts for more than five years through targeted training and capacity building, which recently included national level contingency planning.

With support from the European Union and PCASS, the Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts has developed an instructional film to support school disaster management and response preparedness. The children's film, titled Emergency and Safety Procedures for Schools, uses live footage and animation to engage children in the learning process and features Iggy the Iguana.



> Meeting Iggy the Iguana who teaches Primary School children about hazards and disasters in Fiji



> Children participating in an education program, Fiji. Photo: Save the Children

## **Priorities**

In 2015, a national priority setting workshop on Comprehensive School Safety and Education in Emergencies bought together the Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts, NDMOs and development partners. The following high priorities were identified:

#### **Pillar 1: Safe School Facilities**

- Implement disaster-resilient design and construction to make every new school a safe school.
- Implement a prioritisation schema for the retrofitting and replacement (including relocation) of unsafe schools.
- Schools as temporary shelters: If schools are planned to be used as temporary community shelters, they need to be designed and administered to meet these needs. Develop management guidelines for schools as shelters. Include a plan for long-term evacuation.
- Green schools: Develop a school sustainability model handbook for emissions mitigation, adaptation and risk reduction.
- Ensure water and sanitation facilities are adapted to potential risks.

# **Pillar 2: School Disaster Management**

#### Assessment and planning

- Provide policies, guidance at sub-national and school-site levels for ongoing site-based assessment and planning, risk reduction and response preparedness as part of normal school management and improvement planning.
- Develop, roll-out, institutionalise, monitor and evaluate the establishment or empowerment
  of school-site disaster risk management committees involving staff, students, parents and
  community stakeholders.
- Develop inspection guidelines which assist in hazard identification, assessment and planning for risk reduction.
- Undertake national Hazard Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis (HVCA) mapping of schools.
- Identify safe evacuation routes, assembly points and safe havens for all schools.
- Provide guidance for participation in and compliance with early warning systems.
- Improvement of school based early warning systems.
- Establish national, sub-national and local contingency plans to support educational continuity in times of crisis.
- Need for guidance for the use of schools as temporary shelters, including plans and criteria to limit the use of schools as temporary shelters and contingency plans for alternative learning sites [Temporary Learning Spaces (TLS)] when schools are used as collective shelters.

#### Response capacity development – skills

- Provide guidance and practice, and improve on response preparedness with regular school-wide and community-linked simulation drills.
- Incorporate children's participatory activities to learn Standard Operating Procedures in school (including the printing and distribution of the Emergency and Safety Procedures for Schools to all schools across the country).
- Provide standardised list of provisions to be kept on site or stockpiled, based on hazards faced, enrolment, and the planning for the use of schools as temporary shelters.

#### Capacity development – personnel:

 Scaling-up training of head teachers in disaster risk management (through distance learning and video training).

# **Pillar 3: Risk Reduction and Resilience Education**

- Distribute consensus-based key messages for reducing household and community vulnerabilities, and for preparing for and responding to hazard impacts as a foundation for formal and non-formal education.
- Develop a scope and sequence for teaching children about hazards, disasters and problemsolving for risk reduction.
- Provide teacher training for both teachers and teacher trainees on risk reduction curriculum materials.
- Develop and enhance specialised courses on climate change and disaster risk managementrelated topics for university students and other tertiary education systems targeted at preservice teachers and students.
- Collect, develop, adapt and introduce educational resources with local content relevant to climate change and disaster risk management and the Pacific for use in primary and secondary schools.

# **Enabling Environment**

- Enabling policies and legal frameworks that address key elements of comprehensive school safety are in place at national and sub-national levels.
- Use of Information and Communication Technology to disseminate updated information on the status of the schools [DRR and EiE information] self-assessment survey.
- Leadership and coordination for risk reduction and resilience including commitment to the World Wide Initiative for School Safety (WISS) and identifying and empowering designated focal points.

# **Kiribati**

The Ministry of Education has focal points for DRR at the national level. While the structure is able to absorb the roles of sub-national and school-level focal points, more resources are needed to raise awareness on their roles and responsibilities.

The National Infrastructure Standards provides guidelines on safe site selection, safe design and safe construction, all of which take into account hazards and risks.

At the school level, school-based risk assessments and educational continuity planning is undertaken. Both the formal and non-formal curricular conveys risk reduction and resilience education. The national school curriculum incorporates disaster risk management and climate change adaptation into school syllabus for years 1–6, and teacher-training colleges include risk reduction, resilience and climate change modules.

Save the Children, with support from UNICEF, has been working with the Kiribati Ministry of Education to support their National Education Sector Contingency Plan, capacity building for EiE and conducting table top simulation exercises.



A teacher displays the work of children who have learned about hazards, Vanuatu. Photo: Save the Children

# Solomon Islands

# **Disaster impacts**

In 2013, the Temotu Earthquake and Tsunami in the Solomon Islands resulted in the displacement of an estimated 2,714 school children. In that same year, flooding in Makira province disrupted schooling for 144 students for more than a month, depriving children of their most basic rights.

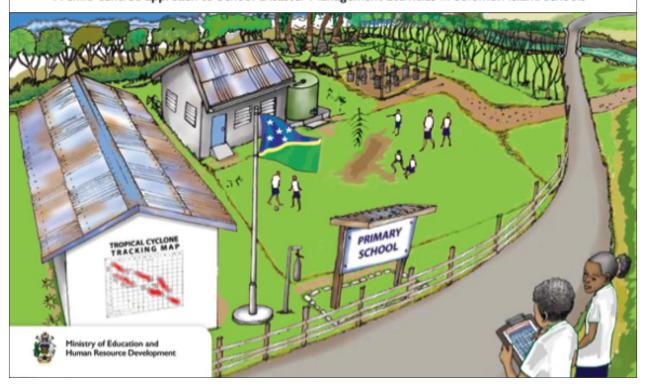
## **Recent progress**

Solomon Islands school safety programming is governed by a Disaster Preparedness and Education in Emergencies Policy, and supported by a national focal point for EiE, who dedicates 30% of their time to DRR and EiE. National capacity building for EiE has been supported by Save the Children and UNICEF for the last five years, during which training has been delivered at a national and sub-national level. The Ministry of Education Human Resources and Development has integrated DRR into the 2016–2020 National Education Action Plan.

Save the Children supported school disaster management to be integrated into normal school management with the Manual for School Committee/Board Training integrating school environment and disaster preparedness. Included within the School Development Standards is having a school disaster management plan and conducting school drills. Teachers from Guadalcanal have received training on school disaster management, school disaster management plans and children's participatory activities based on the use of a flipchart teaching aid.

# **School Disaster Management**

A child-centred approach to School Disaster Management activities in Solomon Island schools



> Save the Children supported MEHRD to produce the School Disaster Management Flipchart teaching aid: A child-centered approach to school disaster management activities in Solomon Island schools.

#### **Priorities**

A National Priority Setting workshop with governmental, inter-governmental and non-governmental partners was held in 2015. The workshop outlined the following to be high priorities:

#### **Pillar 1: Safe School Facilities**

#### New structures

- National and sub-national level: Disseminate the six disaster-resilient construction models/ typologies to provincial offices.
- National level: Develop a checklist on safe site selection for use by community. This will be included as an Annex in School Establishment Policy.
- Implement disaster-resilient design and construction to make every new school a safe school.

#### Existing structures

- National level: Existing structures implement prioritisations schema for retrofiting and replacement (including relocation) of unsafe schools.
- School level: Implement school assessment survey (structural and non-structural) in order to identify and prioritise schools maintenance and repair.
- Develop guidance for the use and administration of schools as temporary shelters for teachers and communities.
- School level: Water and sanitation: Facilities adapted to potential risks (rain-fed and lined latrines).

# **Pillar 2: School Disaster Management**

- Children's participatory activities to be rolled out for children's learning of School Disaster Management, and Standard Operating Procedures for Disasters and Emergencies.
- Develop focal points at sub-national level for disaster management.
- School level: Implement a non-structural inventory for mitigation measures (eg for fire and earthquake safety) including safeguarding of assets in all schools.
- School level: Collect information on which schools have conducted drills to be included in the Solomon Islands Education Management Information System (SEMIS).

#### Response capacity development – provisions

- Provision for school should be standard and include fire extinguisher, first aid kit and other resources and tools for us in emergencies.
- National level: Inventory of materials stockpiled, and their location.
- National level: Scope opportunities for financing or finance methods and guidance for maintenance of emergency material stockpiles (including stock to be held with key suppliers).
- National level: Advocate for the establishment of an information database for national risk assessments and use of risk assessments to inform school planning.

## **Pillar 3: Risk Reduction and Resilience Education**

- Adapt (from global sources) a scope and sequence for teaching about hazards, disasters and problem-solving for risk reduction.
- National level: Analyze entry points in curriculum for DRR education.
- Research current levels of climate change and DRR knowledge, beliefs and teaching practice among curriculum developers, principals, teachers and students.
- Provide teacher training for both teachers and teacher trainees on risk reduction curriculum materials.
- Teacher training should incorporate DRR and also include road safety and basic first aid.
- Develop strategies to scale-up teacher involvement for effective integration of these topics into formal curriculum as well as non-formal and extra-curricular approaches with local communities.
- TVET and SINU should offer certificate course in DM/DRR.

# **Enabling Environment**

- Ensure job descriptions of education staff include disaster risk reduction and emergency response and coordination between NDMO and MEHRD focal points in place.
- TEES to broaden scope and coordinate SDM not only EiE and response mechanisms.
- Improve monitoring mechanisms Create standard indicators for monitoring and tracking progress on CSS.
- National level: Review current EiE policy for incorporation of CSS and CCA and strategic plan.
- Disseminate policy to education authorities and schools.



# **Securing Children's Safety and Survival**

Ms Charlene and Mr Roland are teachers at St Francis Vaturanga Primary School in Guadacanal, Solomon Islands. The school is surrounded by two rivers which flood annually. In 2012, the school experienced a large flood which damaged school materials and forced the school to close for weeks. In addition, the school regularly experiences earthquakes.

In April 2016, they joined a threeday school disaster management training, which provided training on ways to develop safer school learning environments for students faced with hazards and emergencies.

Schools were provided with a flipchart of engaging activities for children. The activities encourage children to assess, analyse and plan for hazards that they face and to take action to make their school and community safer. Ms Charlene, a Grade 3 teacher, explains: "Children are very interested in this learning as it is

about learning about their surrounding environment and the world outside. They go to communities and ask elders and peers about past disaster events and can learn from their experience."

The school is undertaking hazard mapping, to map out high-risk areas for flooding, asking community members about past events to develop risk reduction and emergency plans. They have practiced a safe evacuation drill using an earthquake scenario and all students are now familiar with what to do in the case of an earthquake: 'Drop, cover and hold on'.

By completing the school disaster management activities, this school is fulfilling it most fundamental responsibilities to children – securing their safety and survival in the case of an emergency or disaster event. As Grade 5 teacher Mr Roland says: "Children will be better prepared for the next flood or earthquake."

### Tuvalu

School safety in Tuvalu is governed by the National Policy on Disaster Management and the National Minimum Quality Service Standards.

Hazard risk analysis information is available to the education sector for planning and decision making. At the school level, there are focal points for disaster risk management. In collaboration and partnership with non-government organisations, like TANGO, schools are being assisted with the development of school-based risk assessments, educational continuity planning and school disaster management plans. Save the Children, with support from UNICEF, has supported the Ministry of Education to produce their National Education Sector Contingency Plan and conducted, capacity building in Education in Emergencies and a national simulation drill.

Teachers and administrators have access to training on school disaster management nation-wide and the teacher training colleges include risk reduction, resilience and climate change training modules. There is a standalone DRR and climate change subject in the national curriculum and schools also learn about DRR and climate change in informal education settings such as afterschool clubs.

In the case of an emergency, the Ministry of Education can access funds through the National Disaster Committee as well as from organisations such as UNICEF.

# Key priorities moving forward include:

- The development and implementation (with regular monitoring and evaluation) of a national policy framework on school safety, which includes the establishment of an information database on school safety.
- A system for providing emergency fund for schools.
- Budget to support school safety programs in schools, particularly for students to have the skills required in the case of an emergency.
- Set up a pool of trainers to support school disaster management activities in schools at the school, community and national level.

# Vanuatu

# **Disaster impacts**

Vanuatu was devastated by Cyclone Pam in 2015, which saw more than 50% of primary and secondary schools damaged or destroyed. Around 34,500 students were affected and some schools did not open for up to a month. Thirty-four schools were used as evacuation centres.

# **Recent progress**

School safety in Vanuatu is encompassed in the country's minimum education quality standards. It is governed by the Education in Emergencies Policy 2013–2017, the Infrastructure Policy and draft WASH in Schools and Child Protection Policy. The Education in Emergencies Policy includes three main goals:

- Access: To increase equitable access
  to education for all people at all levels of
  education in Vanuatu through disaster risk
  management interventions and through
  being better prepared for and to respond
  and recover after an emergency.
- 2. Quality: to improve the quality of education in Vanuatu through disaster risk management intervention and to better prepare and respond to emergencies.
- 3. Management: To improve and strength the disaster risk management of the education system in Vanuatu and to be better prepared for and to respond and recover and after an emergency.

There is a strong national commitment to DRR and EiE and a national EiE focal point sits within the Ministry of Education and Training

with an annual budget allocation of VTU \$500,000 for risk reduction and resilience programming in the Ministry.

Vanuatu has school construction guidelines which outline resilient building techniques for cyclone and earthquake. In addition, post Cyclone Pam, a structural safety audit of all schools affected by the cyclone was undertaken with a report on required rebuild, upgrade and retrofitting for safety.

As a result of previous projects promoting school disaster management in three of Vanuatu's six provinces, the Ministry of Education and Training has national Standard Operating Procedures for emergency and disaster response, a training DVD with videos to demonstrate these skills, a tool for rapid damage assessment for schools and guidance for running school disaster simulation drills.

School disaster management training and children's participatory activities have been implemented in schools in three provinces, supported by Save the Children. Education and awareness-raising activities have been conducted at the national and sub-national level with support from Save the Children by the EiE focal point in six provinces.

In 2013, a national workshop adapted and adopted a set of consensus and evidence-based key messages for risk reduction and resilience at the household level. This bought together scientific experts and educationalists. These messages were updated in 2016 in consultation with cross-sectoral subject-matter experts and public education stakeholders.

#### **Priorities**

At the National Priority Setting workshop held in April 2016, the following priorities were outlined:

#### **Pillar 1: Safe School Facilities**

- New Structures: Select safe school sites to make every new school a safe school.
- New Structures: implement disaster-resilient design and construction to make every new school a safe school.
- Existing structures implement prioritizations schema for retrofit and replacement (including relocation) of unsafe schools.
- Existing structures: Provide certification of cyclone safety for those assessed and improved.
- Non-structural: Develop guidance to minimise building and facilities non-structural risks from all sources, including design and interior layout and furnishings safe for survival and evacuation. Include disability access in these considerations.
- Develop and adapt NDMO/MoET standards for use of schools as shelters (operational guidelines for evacuation centres).
- Water and sanitation: ensure compliance with established standards (25 students per one toilet).
- Water and sanitation: Facilities adapted to potential risks (rain-fed and lined latrines).
- Green schools: Environmental stewardship implement climate-smart interventions such as rainwater harvesting, solar panels, renewable energy, school gardens and recycling.
- Community advocacy to stimulate demand (public education campaign).



> Children in Efate during a class on hazards and risks. Photo: Marla Petal/Save the Children

# **Pillar 2: School Disaster Management**

#### Assessment and planning

- Develop inspection guidelines which assist in hazard identification, assessment and planning for risk reduction.
- Provide guidance for participation in and compliance with early warning systems.
- Establish national, sub-national and local contingency plans to support educational continuity, including plans and criteria to limit the use of schools as temporary shelter.

#### Physical and environmental protection

• Safeguard assets and supplies from earthquake, flood and wind damage.

#### Response capacity development – skills

 Practice and improve on response preparedness with regular school-wide and communitylinked simulation drills.

#### Response capacity development – provisions

• Provide standardised list of provisions to be kept on site or stockpiled, based on hazards faced, enrolment, and use of schools as temporary shelters.

#### Capacity development – personnel

• Scaling-up training of head teachers, etc, in disaster risk management through School Based Management national training programs.

### Pillar 3: Risk reduction and resilience education

- Develop a scope and sequence for teaching about hazards, disasters and problem-solving for risk reduction.
- Integrate traditional knowledge for risk identification and risk reduction into curriculum.
- Provide teacher training for both teachers and teacher trainees on risk reduction curriculum materials. Develop strategies to scale-up teacher involvement for effective integration of these topics into formal curriculum as well as non-formal and extra-curricular approaches with local communities.
- Develop a school sustainability model handbook for emissions mitigation, adaptation and risk reduction at the country level.
- Renew assessment examination and certification policy to address students sitting national examination in areas affected by disaster events.
- Display the national key messages in forms such a brochure, billboard, radio.

# **Enabling environment**

- Leadership and coordination for risk reduction and resilience, including commitment to WISS and designated focal points.
- Support the teacher service commission to review teacher and principle job description to include DRR and Climate Change Adaptation.
- Review the EiE policy.
- Draft terms of reference for EiE and DRR staff in MoET.
- Registration and certification of teachers trained in School Disaster Management.

# **The Way Forward**

It will be important to maintain momentum and support Ministries of Education across the region to implement their priority actions. Therefore, Save the Children – in partnership with UNISDR and development partners – are seeking support to pursue both the efficient provision of regional support, as well as support for implementation of the national priorities outlined above.



> Temporary learning space for children in Naglimara after floods destroyed their school, Solomon Islands. Photo: Save the Children

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# Methodology

This document summaries key priorities emerging from an online survey sent to National Disaster Management Offices and Ministries of Education and from national and regional workshops held with approximately 30-40 participants in each. It is not representative of all countries across the Pacific or of all of the work that has been undertaken in each country. It has been developed by Save the Children as a contribution to the Pacific Coalition for the Advancement of School Safety.



> Children learn about risk reduction and climate change in schools, Fiji. Photo: Save the Children

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