

Final Research Report

Scalable Approaches for Children and Youth led Disaster Risk Reduction



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Final Report of the Study on

Scalable Approaches for Children and Youth led Disaster Risk Reduction

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Table of Content

Executive Summary	1
1. INTRODUCTION	6
1.1 Background	6
1.2 Objectives of the Study	7
1.3 Methodology.....	9
1.3.1 Data Collection Methods	10
2. Review of Good Practices of Child and Youth Led DRR: Challenges and Lessons Learnt	16
2.1 Children in DRR and Climate Change Adaption (CCA)	16
2.1.1 International Frameworks on Child-centered DRR and CCA.....	17
2.2 Good Practice of DRR involving Children and Youth.....	19
2.2.1 Experience and Lessons from Philippines	20
2.2.2 Experience and Lessons from El Salvador	22
2.2.3 Experience and Lessons from Nepal	24
2.2.4 Experience and Lessons from Vanuatu	25
2.2.5 Experience and Lessons from Kyrgyzstan	25
2.2.6 Experience and Lessons from Guyana	26
2.2.7 Lessons Drawn from the Good Practices	26
3. Analysis of the Relevant Policies	31
3.1 National Plan for Disaster Management (2021-2025).....	31
3.2 National Disaster Management Policy.....	31
3.3 Disaster Management Act, 2012.....	32
3.4 Standing Orders on Disaster (SOD)	33
3.5 The National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA).....	35
3.6 Sendai Framework for DRR 2015 - 2030.....	36
3.7 Perspective Plan 2021-2041.....	37
3.8 Recent Five-Year Plans – 7th and 8th FYP.....	37
3.9 HCTT Contingency Plan 2020	41
3.10 Hyogo Framework for Action.....	43
3.11 Policy Comparison Chart.....	43
4. Analysis of the Existing DRR Approaches Implemented by Partners: Interventions, Innovations and Lessons	44

4.1 Dhaka	44
<i>Vulnerability Context</i>	44
<i>Risk Reduction Approach</i>	44
<i>Children and Youth Engagement Components</i>	45
<i>Outcome</i>	46
<i>Good Practices</i>	47
<i>Challenges</i>	47
4.2 Chattogram	48
<i>Vulnerability Context</i>	48
<i>Risk Reduction Approach</i>	49
<i>Children and Youth Engagement Components</i>	50
<i>Outcome</i>	52
<i>Good Practices</i>	52
<i>Challenges</i>	53
4.3 Satkhira	53
<i>Vulnerability Context</i>	53
<i>Risk Reduction Approach</i>	54
<i>Children and Youth Engagement Components</i>	54
<i>Good Practices</i>	56
<i>Challenges</i>	56
4.4 Bhola	57
<i>Vulnerability Context</i>	57
<i>Risk Reduction Approach</i>	58
<i>Children and Youth Engagement Components</i>	58
<i>Outcome</i>	58
<i>Good Practices</i>	59
<i>Challenges</i>	60
4.5 Sunamganj.....	61
<i>Vulnerability Context</i>	61
<i>Risk Reduction Approach</i>	62
<i>Children and Youth Engagement Components</i>	62
<i>Outcome</i>	63
<i>Good Practices</i>	64
<i>Challenges</i>	64
4.6 Bagerhat.....	65

<i>Vulnerability Context</i>	65
<i>Risk Reduction Approach</i>	66
<i>Children and Youth Engagement Components</i>	66
<i>Outcome</i>	68
<i>Good Practices</i>	68
<i>Challenges</i>	69
4.7 Kurigram.....	70
<i>Vulnerability Context</i>	70
<i>Risk Reduction Approach</i>	71
<i>Children and Youth Engagement Components</i>	72
<i>Outcome</i>	73
<i>Good Practices</i>	74
<i>Challenges</i>	74
4.8 Cox’s Bazar	75
<i>Vulnerability Context</i>	75
<i>Risk Reduction Approach</i>	76
<i>Children and Youth Engagement Components</i>	76
<i>Challenge</i>	77
4.9 Donor Mapping	77
5. Key Findings and Challenges	81
5.1 Key Findings	81
5.2 Key Challenges	82
5.3 The Drivers of Success.....	83
6. Recommendations	86
7. Conclusion.....	91
Bibliography	93

List of Abbreviation

CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CDM	Comprehensive Disaster Management
CRA	Community Risk Assessment
DMCP	Disaster Management and Contingency Plan
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
GIS	Geographic Information System
HFA	Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters
IDDRSI	Intergovernmental Authority on Development Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiative
ISDR	International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NAPA	National Adaptation Plan of Action
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PDNA	Post Disaster Needs Assessment
PDRF	Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
Sendai Framework	Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030
SFM	Sendai Framework Monitor
SOD	Standing Orders on Disaster
2030 Agenda	Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNFCCC United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

UNISDR United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

VCA Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment

WCDRR World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

WHO World Health Organization

Executive Summary

Children constitute a highly vulnerable group in disaster contexts. Millions of children are made homeless, lose loved ones, and suffer injuries and psychological traumas in disasters. Many children witness or experience violence during and after a disaster. In a post-flood survey of Bangladesh in 1993 (after the 1988 flood), it was seen that the prevalence of both aggressive behavior and enuresis in children rose sharply after exposure to major environmental stress.

Although children and youth are considered vulnerable groups both during and after a disaster, not much has been done to build an approach that can effectively engage them in DRR activities. Therefore, youth- and child-centered disaster risk reduction approaches are receiving greater emphasis over time from the concerned stakeholders. Engaging youth in combating disasters remained a prime focus of the Government of Bangladesh too. Against this backdrop, *World Vision Bangladesh, Action Aid, Plan International Bangladesh, and Save the Children* undertook this collaborative research study to find out the most effective approach for children and youth-led disaster risk reduction in Bangladesh.

This research aims to find the most effective and innovative approach that (a) generates impact in community mobilization, (b) generates impact in policy formulation, (c) ensures sustainability and cost-effectiveness, and (d) engages youths and children (10–24 Years) in innovative methods in both urban and rural disaster risk reduction.

The study is based on an explorative research design. To collect data, FGDs, KIIs, and IDIs tools were applied in eight selected districts across Bangladesh. These districts were selected purposefully to represent geographic variation and cover hazard profiles in Bangladesh.

Key Findings

- **Children and youth show high awareness and interest:** The study finds that the children and youth are aware of the significance of their involvement in DRR activities; they are also found to have a high interest in participating in them.
- **Children and youth are more effective in the pre-disaster phase:** It is found that children and youth could be more effective in the pre-disaster phase. They are found to be active, and interested in undertaking activities like hazard mapping, database building, awareness raising, disseminating early warning, helping vulnerable households prepare for shelter, solid waste management, identifying risky buildings, and so on. Due to their high enthusiasm and motivation, children and youth perform their roles very sincerely. Community members, including local government leaders informed that children and youth could contribute more during the pre-disaster phase compared to post-disaster rehabilitation activities. Their role could be more beneficial in risk reduction activities, including enhancing the capacity of the community.
- **Children and youth are quick learners:** Children and youth are found to be quick learners of DRR activities. It is found that children and youth are comfortably taking up DRR activities, which are usually not considered ‘fun activities. They are delivering a series of activities both before and after disaster episodes, including volunteering for different disasters, distributing relief, repairing and reconstructing during the post-disaster phase, taking vulnerable

populations (e.g., PWDs, pregnant mothers, the elderly) into the shelter, and so on. The important thing about them is that they learned the process and method of delivering these sensitive activities very quickly and proved their efficacy in being engaged in DRR.

- **Community leaders are found to have a positive attitude:** Community leaders think the engagement of the young generation in DRR activities is helpful for the community in general. According to them, this group of the population can be mobilized quicker and is able to deliver responsibilities faster. They are honest and efficient. Community leaders consider that their increased engagement would bring positive results for the community. However, parents are skeptical about sending their sons and daughters to such activities.
- **Multi-faceted impact of CYLDRR on the overall DRR program:** the impact of children's and youth's engagement in DRR activities on the overall DRR program ecosystem is quite significant. One of the considerable impacts here is the change in the attitude of the community members towards children and youth in society. Children and youth are, in general, considered to be 'non-productive'. However, the community leaders acknowledged that the youth and children proved their worth in serving the community. As a result, an overall positive attitude has been developed in the community, which in turn, could enhance the community's resilience and thereby contribute to achieving the goal of the project in the respective community.
- **Major obstacles for participation:** One of the major obstacles for children and youth to participate in DRR activities is the *discouragement of parents*. It is mainly because the parents think that such engagements hamper their regular studies.
- Another important issue raised by the parents is that they are afraid of their children's political engagement. They think that these young children and youth could be *manipulated by the political parties* in the process of their volunteerism in community activities. They, therefore, show skepticism about allowing them to go out and be engaged in community activities, including DRR activities offered by respective projects.
- Apart from the above-mentioned issues, conventional mentality, the prevalence of poverty, the presence of child labor, the lack of both financial and non-financial incentives, and involvement in income generation activities (IGAs) are also obstacles to being a volunteer in DRR activities. Often, their activity is termed childish, which also demotivates them. In cyclone-prone areas in particular, parents don't want their children to work amid adverse weather by risking their own lives.
- **Obstacles for the girls:** For girls in particular, major obstacles include disapproval from parents for safety and security concerns. Parents often think their daughters may be exposed to sexual harassment. Religious norms also play a critical role in forming disapproval among the parents regarding the girls' participation. Apart from the negative attitude of society, teasing by peer members outside the group, child marriage, and forced participation in political activities also cause poor participation by girls in such activities. In some places, eve teasing is also found as another major obstacle to girls' engagement in DRR activities.
- **The Innovations:** The innovations found in the approaches are (a) raising awareness using social media, (b) developing an online database through cell phones, (c) making different teams named '*shishu-dol*,' '*shishu-sangbadik dol*' where different issues are discussed, and (d) survey after a disaster occurs to measure loss and damage.

Key Challenges

- **Parental Prohibition:** The primary obstacle to children's and youth's engagement in the DRR process in Bangladesh is the restriction of their families. Major reasons further extend to fear of politicization, adverse weather, and the hampering of academic studies. Most importantly, parents do not want their children in peril.
- **Social and Religious Stigmatization:** Volunteering activities, especially by girls in many societies in Bangladesh, are still stigmatized. These stigmatizations prevent poor women's participation in DRR activities in different locations.
- **Criticism from the Peer Group:** Sometimes volunteers are even criticized by their peer groups, including maternal and paternal cousins. Often, such engagements are labelled a 'time waste' by their peers. Such criticism from peer groups exponentially demotivates youths from remaining engaged in such activities.
- **Reluctance of the Elected Local Representative:** In several sub-districts, engagement of children and youth with an elected local representative is found to be poor. In a few places, the local councilor and UP chairman are completely unaware of the programs and approaches. These are places where families are furious about the politicization of the volunteers. These particular local government officials are found to be prone to Being a critical component for the successful engagement of children and youth in the DRR process, this has to be accelerated with priority.
- **Absence of Incentives:** Low interest among the youth to take part in voluntary activities without any financial or economic benefit.
- **Absence of Recognition:** It has been seen that approaches that give adequate recognition to the volunteers are more successful in terms of achievement. Because the volunteers remain motivated. On the contrary, the absence of it is significantly destructive for the approaches.
- **Lack of Resources:** In some fields, it was found that volunteers are motivated, but they can't take part because of a lack of money. To attend the events, these students require transport and food expenses which are difficult for them to manage. For this particular reason, some volunteers become discouraged to work as volunteer.

Key Driving Factors for Success

- Our study suggests that relations with local government officials, relations with other stakeholders, and the magnitude of innovation are three vital factors that made projects successful in Chattogram, Sunamganj, Bagerhat, and Kurigram.

Relations with the community have been found to be very good in all fields. In fact, in community engagement projects, a relationship with the community is a fundamental precondition for all projects to be enrolled, however, it is deemed that it alone is not sufficient to generate a significant outcome. On the other hand, a good relationship with local government officials gives entitlement and power to the volunteers, which are pivotal to upholding the motivation and confidence of their parents. Confidence in this sense means that the parents do consider that recognition from local government officials ensures safety and security for their children.

Relationships with other stakeholders, which mainly refer to community leaders and local elites, help to remove stigmatization and accelerate the motivation of the volunteers. They are critical in creating awareness among parents and can stop the taboos that are still in play.

The magnitude of innovation is important because it ensures efficacy. Our young generation in this era of digitization is interested in technology. Technology brings changes that youth are more comfortable adopting. These changes bring a fruitful outcome that improves the situation, in this case by reducing disaster risks.

Girls' participation, though found moderately important in this analysis, can't be ignored at any given length. Girls' participation improves the quality of the community services rendered by the volunteer team. In the DRR process, some issues require women's involvement, and if they are not embodied in the process, the outcome appears to be less effective to many extents.

Recommendations

- **An awareness-building Program for parents** is the first thing to do for escalating children's and youth's engagement in DRR activities. In every location other than Sunamganj, parental discouragement appears to be one of the major obstacles to children's and youth's participation in such activities. This issue requires immediate action.
- **Engaging Religious Leaders** in such awareness programs can be considered. It is a strategic move to eliminate religious hindrances from society in terms of engaging young people in volunteering activities. Especially women encounter more such religious obstacles. Thus, the focus of this program may be to eliminate the barriers for girls in particular by convincing their families and local elites as well.
- **Engaging School and College Teachers** in such activities may also be considered. In many fields, we have seen that the young generation is not ready to join such programs because of academic pressures. If educational institutions can be engaged in such programs, it will help manifold. It will help in, but not be limited to, (a) eliminating the social stigma; (b) eliminating the fear of security of the volunteers, about which parents are mostly concerned; (c) removing religious stigma; (d) neutralizing partisan use of the volunteers, and (e) ensuring acknowledgment of the volunteers.
- **The child and Youth Journalism** model of Save The Children is one of the most impactful approaches for engaging children and youth in the DRR process. The 'Projonmo' magazine is an innovative approach. It simultaneously creates awareness among local residents, CSO members, and local administrative officials. Given the advantages, the wider circulation of this magazine may accelerate administrative engagement and the exposure of the writers.
- **Periodical Publication and Wider Circulation of 'Projonmo' magazine** among the departments of fire service and civil defense, department of disaster management, ministry of disaster management, ministry of social welfare, ministry of education, ministry of health and family welfare, UNESCO, UNDP, different donor agencies, other NGOs, and the department of Disaster Management in different universities may be effective. This will give the writers exposure and make them interested in taking part. The other way around, this will keep the policymakers in the same loop, and they will remain informed about the real-time scenario.
- **Robust and Inclusive Training** for urban community volunteers is necessary. This training should be comprehensive. Engagement of (a) the ministry of women and children's welfare

to train them on the aspect of gender-based violence amid disasters, (b) the ministry of health for addressing health aspects amid disasters, (c) House Building Research Institute for addressing post-disaster reconstruction, (d) development experts from universities and research institutes for addressing environmental aspects, and (e) the department of livestock for cattle management amid disasters can be considered. This training can be for a few hours for each party, and it shouldn't be longer than seven working days per training program. For effective results, a comprehensive approach is something to consider with priority.

- **Bi-annual Stakeholder Meeting** is suggested, where children and youth, their parents, elected local government officials, local administrative officials, community leaders, and NGO members will attend. The major objective of this meeting is to ensure the non-politicization of the volunteers. In front of all these parties, the dominance of any singular actor. The establishment of a wider consensus on any such sensitive issue in such a forum will not be easy for any given actor to break. As such, the efficacy of this meeting is significant in terms of stopping the politicization of the volunteers, which is one of the major barriers to children and youth engagement in the DRR process.
- Careful initiative needs to be taken to **prohibit the misuse of volunteer forums for partisan purposes**. This concern is found in almost every field. This issue is a matter of constant fear among the parents. Hence, to ensure uninterrupted engagement of children and youth in such activities, strict prohibition of such misuse is a must.
- **The Edutainment Approach** of Plan International in Bhola has been found to be very effective in terms of achieving the target. It's a very popular approach for both the local people and the donors. This refers to theatre and other similar activities that have the potential to teach via entertainment activities. This sort of activity is poorly practised in Bangladesh, but it has very high efficacy.
- **Life-cycle Graduation** model for community volunteers is an important issue to consider. The volunteers mostly offer their services out of goodwill. They don't look for any kind of monetary or materialistic gain. What they value most is recognition. The current life cycle model practiced by World Vision Bangladesh is found to be very effective in terms of creating a sense of ownership and continuity. If there is a process and opportunity for graduation from one layer to the next, it greatly motivates the volunteers to work efficiently. This model can be replicated by other implementing agencies.
- **Alumni Network for the Program**-in these types of volunteer activities, no individual serves for their lifetime. Volunteers look for better employment opportunities. Many of them are currently serving at different places. If they can be engaged with their very own predecessors, the current volunteers will be motivated to work efficiently. In addition, it will also attract other non-volunteer children and youth of the locality to work under the program.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report is the outcome of a collaborative research project carried out from February to August 2022. This project aims at identifying effective and sustainable Child and youth-led disaster risk reduction approaches (YLDRR) that are being implemented in Bangladesh in different geo-hazard zones. The research mainly draws on qualitative data collected from various categories of stakeholders, including project participants, community leaders, local government leaders, NGO managers, government officials, and development partners. The report also analyzes the existing policies and available good practices around the world.

This report has six sections. The first section provides a detailed overview of the project, including the methodology. It lays out the framework for the rest of the report. The second section presents a review of children's and youth-led disaster risk reduction initiatives across the globe. The third section is about the policy analysis of all relevant policies in Bangladesh that have been analyzed, and the gaps are identified accordingly. The fourth section analyzes the field data. This section exhibits the findings and analyzes the existing projects implemented by partner INGOs, i.e. ActionAid Bangladesh, Plan International Bangladesh, Save the Children Bangladesh, and World Vision Bangladesh through their implementing partner organizations in eight districts in Bangladesh. The following two sections are recommendations and conclusion.

1.1 Background

Bangladesh is one of the most disaster-prone and vulnerable countries in the world. Climate change is amplifying its vulnerability to different disasters, especially hydro-meteorological ones. The country is one of the most vulnerable to climate change because of its disadvantageous geographic location. On average, approximately 25% of the total area of Bangladesh is flooded every year (MoEF, 2009). Due to the rise in the average sea level, an additional 14% of the country may be extremely vulnerable to floods by 2030 (7th five-year plan, 2015).

Children constitute a highly vulnerable group in disaster contexts (Wisner and Luce 1993). Millions of children are made homeless, lose their loved ones, and/or suffer injuries and psychological traumas in disasters. Many children witness or experience violence during and after a disaster: including physical and sexual violence and human trafficking (Peek 2008). In a post-flood survey of Bangladesh in 1993 (after the 1988 flood), it was seen that the prevalence of both aggressive behavior and enuresis² in children rose sharply after exposure to major environmental stress (Durkin et al., 1993).

Analyses of disaster outcomes often represent children as passive victims in need of rescue from outsiders (Babugura 2008; Burman 1994; Jabry 2003). Opposing such a notion, Peek (2008)

² Enuresis has long been considered a marker for anxiety. Principle here is the control of the bladder during sleep. It is a subtle balancing act that requires either the child to wake to the stimulus of the full bladder and regression of bladder control such as that observed after the flood may imply autonomic system incoordination occurring at an age when the system is susceptible to being thrown off balance by an upsetting experience.

suggests that children's vulnerability is reduced and resilience to disaster is enhanced when they have access to resources and information, are encouraged to participate in disaster preparedness, and response activities, and can access personal and communal support. Children's practical and creative ideas and their unique knowledge and experiences of their local environment have provided important input to DRR efforts in several contexts (Back, Cameron, and Tanner 2009).

Studies showed that (a) child participation in preparedness, rescue, relief, and rehabilitation phases in South Asia (Nikku, 2006), (b) decision-making processes in Bangladesh (Back, Cameron, and Tanner 2009), (c) developing knowledge of risk and taking action to minimize risk through participation process in Mozambique (Ibid), and (d) children's agency to enact risk management practices in the Philippines (Ibid) reveal positive outcomes for both the children and communities. It makes DRR more effective, efficient, and sustainable. The other way around, child-centered DRR yields long-term benefits and future savings because learning and practicing DRR at an early age embeds changed behavior that can be integrated into adult life (Ibid).

Patterns, magnitude, and impact of different disasters in a different setting (e.g., rural and urban) are distinct for which context-specific risk reduction strategy is necessary. The evidence mentioned above indicates that engaging the vulnerable community (children and youth in this case) is the potential to bring suitable outcomes. As such, this study aims to develop a unique approach for ensuring the voluntary and effective engagement of children and youth in the DRR process.

Bangladesh is also known for its highly impressive disaster risk reduction approach, policies, and innovations. Although children and youth are considered vulnerable groups both during and after a disaster, not much has been done in building an approach that can engage children and youth in DRR activities effectively. Therefore, youth and child-centered disaster risk reduction approaches are receiving greater emphasis over time from the concerned stakeholders. Engaging youth in combating disaster remained a prime focus of the Government of Bangladesh too. Against this backdrop, World Vision Bangladesh (WVB) along with Plan International Bangladesh (PIB), Action Aid Bangladesh (AAB), and Save The Children Bangladesh (SCB) planned to conduct a study to find out the most effective approach for children and youth-led disaster risk reduction in Bangladesh.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

Indeed, a disaster, regardless of type and magnitude, impacts children and youth heavily. It leads us towards youth and children-specific disaster risk reduction approaches. Comprehensive disaster risk and crisis management through locally led initiatives both at the community and institutional level are sought in this regard, with special reference the voluntary engagement of children, and youth.

This research aims to find the most effective and innovative approach for

(a) generating impact in community mobilization,

- (b) generating impact in policy formulation,
- (c) ensuring sustainability and cost-effectiveness, and
- (d) innovating unique methods of engaging the youths and children (10-24 Years) for both urban and rural disaster risk reduction.

To meet these, prior to identifying gaps through policy analysis, this study possesses following specific objectives.

1. *Good practices, challenges and lessons learnt on youth led and child centered DRR models and approaches from last five years (2017- 2022)*

- a. Which project model/ approach/ practice worked well in which context? (Generated greater impact in community mobilization and policy formulation /children and youths were engaged effectively/ sustainable/ cost effectiveness)
- b. Which project model, approach, practice did not work well in which context? (Did not generate the desired result/ children or youth's engagement were not ensured to the expected level)
- c. What were the challenges?
- d. How those challenges could be overcome/what are the lessons learnt?
- e. How have youth and children benefitted/ been motivated by the youth led and child centered DRR?

2. *Policy compliance (content analysis of all the relevant policies)*

- a. Identify policy gap on youth led and child centered DRR
 - i. Identify how the content of the relevant policies cover the scope of children/youth led DRR (if its adequate)
 - ii. Internal coherence and contradictions among policies.
 - iii. If the relevant policy contents are being implemented.

3. *Past innovation on youth led DRR and possible innovative solution in future*

- a. What innovations were applied for youth led and child centered DRR in Bangladesh?
- b. What were the challenges and scope of the past innovations?
- c. What were the outcomes of these innovations for children/youth and communities?

- d. What could be the innovative and feasible solution for youth led DRR in Bangladesh in future?

4. *Donor Landscape*

- a. Who are the donors funding DRR work at NGOs for the past 5 years and what is the scale of their funding?
- b. Which concept/approaches the donors preferred in the last five years for youth led DRR?
- c. Analyzing funding pattern with concept (quantitative) (which concept got the highest funding by whom)
- d. What can be the future trend of funding for the donors?

5. *Best possible solution on youth led and child centered DRR*

- a. Proposing feasible solution (innovative) for implementation for 8 districts
- b. Identify the role of stakeholders (government, donors, I/NGOs, private sector, and development partners) for carrying them forward

1.3 Methodology

According to the ToR, this study is a learning study. Therefore, we have taken up an explorative research design, which means the research would mainly be for developing a new, unique approach for DRR that incorporates children and youth as active participants. The study followed a four-stage learning process:

In the first stage, the study team conducted a robust desk review to identify the success and challenges of existing DRR approaches, especially child led DRR approaches in Bangladesh and beyond.

In the second stage, a detailed policy analysis was carried out. The aim of this analysis is (a) to examine if and to what extent existing policies cover the scope of child-centred, youth led DRR in Bangladesh: (b) to find out the existing coherence and contradiction among policies: and (c) how the policies are implemented and in what modality.

The third stage is about collecting ideas, experiences, and opinions on how to engage children and youth in DRR in Bangladesh. This stage is composed of conducting FGDs, KIIs and IDIs in eight selected districts across Bangladesh. This geographic variation would cover various disaster situations in Bangladesh. During this phase, the team explored which approach(es) were effective in which disaster context, which were failures, and why. The learning process also reveals the past experience of children centered and youth led DRR, if any, in Bangladesh. This led us to form recommendations from the mass people, experts, government policymakers, and CSO leaders for ensuring CYLDRR in different contexts and settings in Bangladesh.



Figure 1: Youth in FGD

1.3.1 Data Collection Methods

As mentioned earlier, with a primary focus on the qualitative approach, this was a mixed methods study. Hence, data collection tools were mainly for the qualitative section, and a small part of them covered the quantitative section.

Prior to finalizing the tools, the research team conducted several meetings with the World Vision Bangladesh (WVB), Action Aid, Plan International Bangladesh, and Save the Children teams and reviewed all relevant documents in order to understand the scope of the assignment and work out the most efficient ways to carry- out the planned fieldwork.

With meetings, the consultant finalized the desk review protocol, qualitative and quantitative research design, data collection methods and tools, such as the interview checklist, FGD guidelines and list of stakeholders to be interviewed, and data analysis modality. To collect the necessary data for producing the deliverables, the following data collection methods was followed:

(1). Desk Review

Desk review mainly helped with understanding disaster, disaster management approaches, the impact of disaster on youth and children, and evidence of practicing CLDRR. It facilitated the field data collection by giving insights on the existing cases of successful implementation of CLDRR in countries

like Mozambique, and Philippines. This serves the objective one partially since it came up with successes and failures simultaneously.

The Desk Review also covered policy analysis since DM in Bangladesh is guided by a number of national drivers including plans, policies, and orders. This analysis will help meeting second objective of this study. Different documents including but not limited to (a) National Plan for Disaster Management-NPDM (2021-2025), (b) The Disaster Management (DM) Policy (2015), (c) The DM Act 2012, (d) Standing Orders on Disaster (SOD), (e) National Plan for Disaster Management-NPDM (2016-2020), (f) 8th FYP, (h) HCTT Contingency Plan 2020, (i) Hyogo Framework for Action, (j) Perspective Plan 2041, (k) Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR), (l) National Adaptation Plan, and (m) SDG Progress Report 2021. Analysis of these policies will help understanding the existing practices and identifying the places for contribution.

Lastly, through this review, trend analysis of donor funding will be conducted which eventually will predict the future trend of funding in this regard.

(2). Qualitative Research Method

Being the most important phase, it includes tasks to be performed in the field sites in collaboration with World Vision Bangladesh and partners. Key tasks that were performed in this phase include (a) interviewing local officials, youths, children, and other relevant actors (b) carry out a policy analysis, (c) conduct FGDs with relevant male, female groups representing both urban and rural backgrounds from among the youth and parents, (d) conduct key informant interviews with government officials, NGO leaders, and donor agencies, and (e) analysis of donor funding opportunities.

The consultant employed SEVEN main methods for qualitative data collection, described as follows:



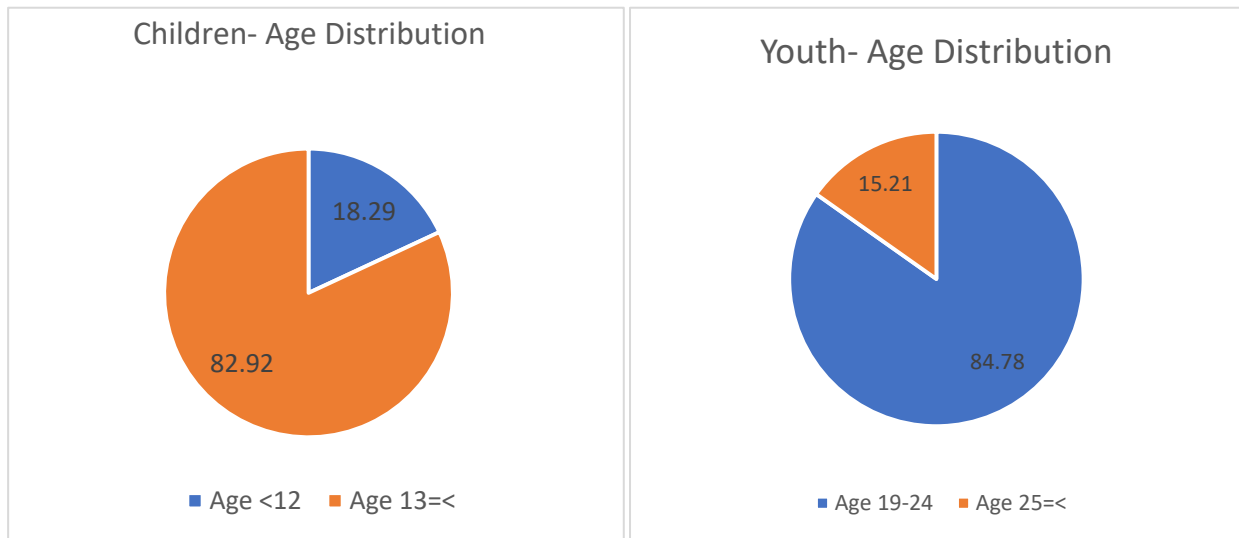
(2.1). Focus Group Discussion (FGD): FGD was used to collect qualitative data from the relevant stakeholders, especially the youth and children directly involved with the DRR program of Action Aid Bangladesh, Save the Children in Bangladesh, Plan International Bangladesh and World Vision

Bangladesh. In FGDs, both male and female participated together. To make the process inclusive, children/youth with disability was also accommodated. Having considered the sheer heterogeneity among the young population especially in Dhaka and Chattogram, we conducted 20 FGDs in the 08 selected districts.

Table 1: Distribution of FGDs participants by district

Field Location	Number of FGDs	Number of Participants		
		Children	Youth	Total
Dhaka	1+1= 2	09	12	21
Chattogram	1+2= 3	11	19	30
Cox's Bazar	1+1= 2	09	09	18
Satkhira	1+1= 2	11	09	20
Rampal	1+1= 2	12	12	24
Sunamganj	1+1= 2	10	10	20
Bhola	1+1= 2	10	11	21
Kurigram	1+1= 2	10	10	20

Figure – Age Distribution of the FGD participants



For FGDs, district and disaster specific guidelines were developed after the finalization of the list of groups. It was done in collaboration with the respective teams. Each FGDs was tentatively for 1 hour. Semi-structured questionnaire was used. Recording and Writing were used as tools to snap the responses prior to having the permission of the participants. Apart from that, all standard methodological and ethical protocols will be properly followed. Demographic information's of the FGD participants are given below in graphical illustration form. In terms of age, 18% of the total children's participants were below 12 and the rest belong to the age group 13 to 18. For the youth, nearly 85% of participants were from the age group between 19 to 24.

In terms of sexual identity, both in the children and youth's categories, the proportion was almost 50/50. The following illustration depicts that among children, 52.43% were female and 47.5% were male. Among youth, 50% were male and 50% were female.

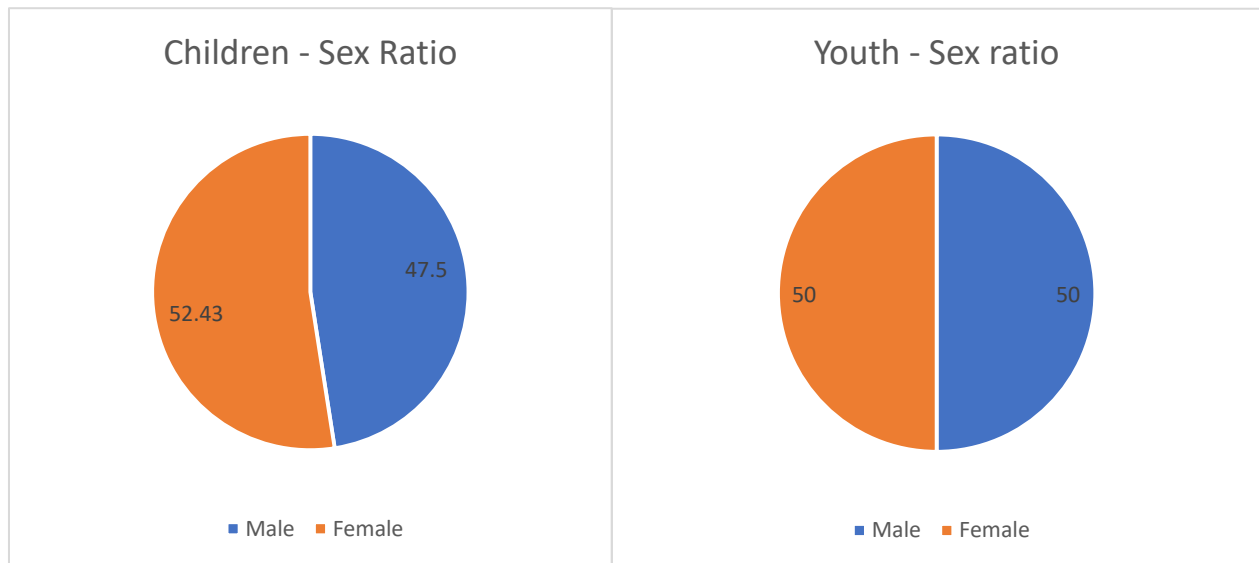


Figure – Male-Female Ratio among Children and Youth FGD Participants

In terms of education, 40.24% of participants in the children category were in class 9 or above, and 59.75% were in class 8 or below. In the youth category, nearly 71% of participants completed their SSC and were pursuing their higher secondary or above, and 29% were at the secondary level of education.

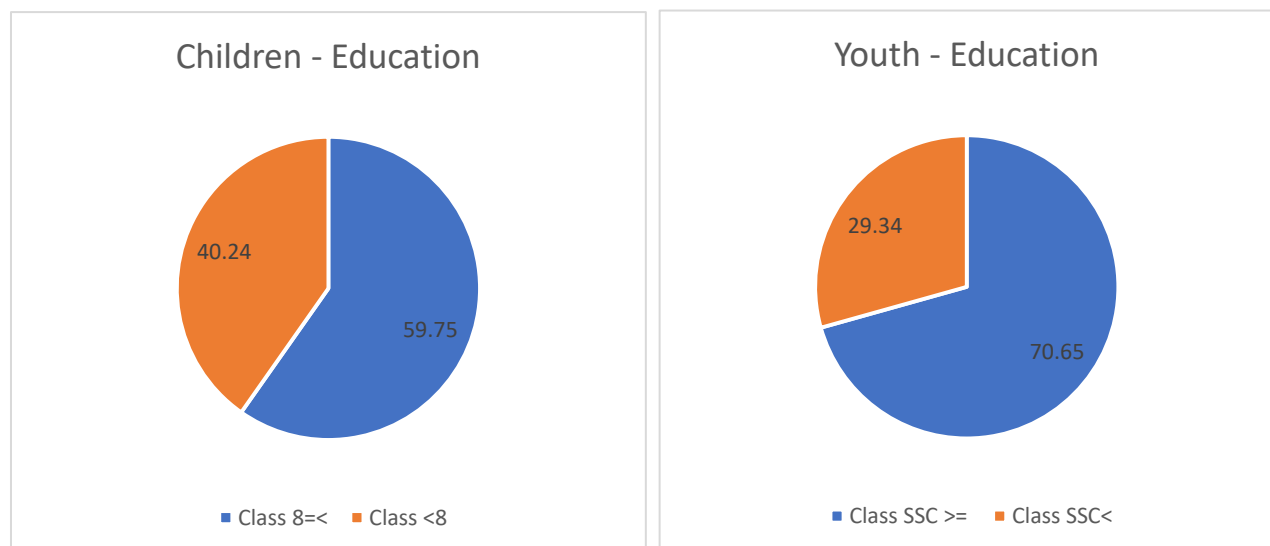


Figure- Education Level among the FGD Participants

(2.2). Key Informants Interview: In order to gather deeper insights, Key Informants Interview was considered to be appropriate for this qualitative research. Therefore, we have conducted 34 KIIs with relevant stakeholders, including donors, government officials, I/NGO officials, and private sector leaders. 04 individuals from donor agencies, and 4 government officials were interviewed.

List of Donor Agencies for KII

- A. European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) Bangladesh
- B. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Australia
- C. Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office, UK

Government Officials:

- A. Secretary, Disaster Management & Relief Division & Member Secretary, Inter-Ministerial Disaster Management Coordination Committee (IMDMCC), Bangladesh
- B. Joint Secretary, Planning Commission, Ministry of Planning.
- C. Deputy Secretary, UN-3 Brach (Climate Finance Wing), Ministry of Planning.
- D. Director (Planning and Development), Disaster Management Directorate, Bangladesh
- E. Additional Secretary (Budget and Expenditure Management), Finance Division, Ministry of Finance, Bangladesh

I/NGO Officials:

- A. Head of Disaster Management Wing, World Vision Bangladesh.
- B. Head of Humanitarian Disasters Division, Action Aid Bangladesh.
- C. Head of Humanitarian Division, Save the Children Bangladesh.

Private Sector Officials:

- A. Former President of DCCI and Honorary Consul of FDR Ethiopia
- B. Joint Executive Secretary, DCCI

(2.3). Case Study: For building a deeper understanding of the success and failures of different approaches to disaster management in Bangladesh, 08 case studies were taken from the selected 08 districts. For case studies long and open interview-conversation were conducted with a group of respondents. Distribution of Case Studies as follows:

District	Types of cases	Concerned Organization
Dhaka	Air Pollution	Save The Children
Dhaka	Fire	Save The Children
Dhaka	Earthquake	Save The Children
Chattogram	Landslide	Save The Children
Chattogram	Cyclone	Save The Children
Chattogram	Water Logging	Save The Children
Rampal (Bagerhat)	Tidal Surge	World Vision Bangladesh
Rampal (Bagerhat)	Cyclone	World Vision Bangladesh
Sunamganj	Flood & Lightning	World Vision Bangladesh
Bhola	Riverbank Erosion	Plan International Bangladesh
Bhola	Cyclone	Plan International Bangladesh
Satkhira	Salinity	Action Aid Bangladesh
Satkhira	Cyclone	Action Aid Bangladesh
Kurigram	Cold wave	Plan International Bangladesh
Kurigram	Flash flood	Plan International Bangladesh
Kurigram	Water Logging	Plan International Bangladesh
Coxs Bazar	Conflict	Action Aid Bangladesh

These case studies brought up facts about the success or failure of concurrent practises in disaster management in detail. It helps understand the dynamics of practising approaches and helps develop new approaches for the CLDRR context specifically.

2. Review of Good Practices of Child and Youth Led DRR: Challenges and Lessons Learnt

This chapter portrays global good practises in disaster risk reduction that are child and youth-led. This is completely based on secondary literature and doesn't incorporate any DRR practises in Bangladesh. The aim of this chapter is to unveil the global good practises in front of the actors in DRR in order to identify approaches that worked and thereby consider if they could also be replicated in Bangladesh.

2.1 Children in DRR and Climate Change Adaption (CCA)

Climate change and environmental degradation are consistently magnifying the risks to climate-vulnerable people all over the world. Children are considered one of the most vulnerable age groups in this case. During the last decade of the 20th century, disasters affected an estimated 66 million children around the world each year (UNICEF, 2016). Especially children from poor and marginalized families are the least able to withstand, cope with, and respond to shocks and stress and recover in the long term (Ibid). Displacement and separation from guardians and support networks further expose children to abuse and exploitation (Tuladhar, Yatabe, Dahal, and Bhandary, 2014).

The need to frame humanitarian and development in a broader context of disaster risk reduction (DRR) is emphasized throughout the 2030 Agenda (UN, 2015). However, the conventional community-based approach to disaster risk reduction (DRR) lacks a vision of children as important contributors to building community resilience. Children are not part of the structure of decision-making processes in pre- and post-disaster risk management (Seballos and Tanner, 2011; Tuladhar, Yatabe, Dahal, and Bhandary, 2014). The absence of children signals the presumption that adult-dominated organizations still treat children as incapable agents (Tanner, 2010). The shift towards a child-centered approach to disaster recovery and response (DRR) reflects a growing recognition that children have an important role to play in communicating risks or reducing risks. Children can also be dynamic agents for change with their unadulterated views and often 'politically free' positions (Seballos and Tanner, 2011).

The children in a changing climate coalition seeks to challenge the traditional paradigm of children as passive beneficiaries. They should not be perceived as helpless victims but as agents with the ability to cope and demonstrate resilience. Child-centered approaches reflect the understanding that DRR and CCA efforts cannot properly account for children's needs or secure their rights unless specific attention is paid to this during the design and implementation of any policy or programmatic intervention. Investment in child-centered DRR may yield higher benefits and future savings than when adults acquire the same skills (Roa, 2020; UNICEF, 2019). DRR is the ability to reduce risk behavior within households and at the community scale. It should be adapted in a way that it can expose children's capacity to mobilize adults and external policy actors to effect change on wider determinants of risk and vulnerability (Peek, 2008; Mitchell et al., 2008). Greater resources should be channeled towards children's agency, including enhanced efforts to incorporate their perspectives and potential for action (Haynes, Lassa, and Towers, 2010).

2.1.1 International Frameworks on Child-centered DRR and CCA

Much of the recent advocacy work around child agency and capacities for DRR and CCA is built on rights-based arguments. *UNCRC 4 Principles Framework*

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets out four main principles that reflect all the articles in the convention; these are:

- Survival and development
- Non-discrimination
- Child participation and
- The best interests of the child.

Many of these underpin the need for child-centered DRR and CCA to take a protective approach to ensure that disasters and the changing climate do not erode a child's basic rights to health, shelter, food, clean water, education, and freedom from harm. Recognizing a child's right to participate empowers them as individuals and members of civil society as citizens; it gives them the opportunity to exercise their citizenship rights and influence the actions and decisions that affect their lives.

UNICEF's Sendai Framework

UNICEF is supporting governments in implementing the Sendai Framework (United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2015) by:

- Highlighting both the particular vulnerabilities of children, as well as their critical role as agents of change.
- Prioritizing the disaggregation of data by age, sex, and disability, including in risk assessment and damage and loss records and data sets.
- Promoting social services as opportunities to reduce vulnerability and risk. For example, this includes robust health and education systems that continue to provide essential services during and following a hazard.
- Emphasizing the importance of safe schools and DRR education. DRR and CCA education play an important role in preparing children and their communities for possible disasters and reducing their impact. Safe school structures help make possible the continuation of schooling during critical developmental years.
- Strengthening national and sub-national capacities in multi-hazard risk assessment and analysis

In May 2002, the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly culminated in the official adoption of its outcome document, "A World Fit for Children" (UNICEF, 2008). It sets out an agenda for the decade based on four priorities: promoting healthy lives; providing quality education for all; protecting children against abuse, exploitation, and violence; and combating

HIV/AIDS. The agenda reaffirms the MDGs and the UNCRC, but crucially, it includes as one of the necessary outcomes in the "Plan of Action"- provision of ample opportunity for children and adolescents, to develop their individual capacities. It recognizes the child's best interest and right to participation in its principles and objectives and explicitly recognizes the role of children as partners in delivering the agenda and achieving the outcomes (Ibid).

Despite these internationally supported frameworks for promoting childhood well-being and securing child rights, it is increasingly recognized that recurring disasters and the changes in climate are causing child rights to become even more difficult to safeguard, as adults, communities and governments do not fully appreciate the threats to their children's future or are increasingly powerless to fulfil their responsibilities to protect them.

The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA)

The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015 underpins risk management approaches while seeking to address the need to reduce risk through systematic integration of DRR efforts into policies, plans and programs for sustainable development and poverty reduction and recognizes that sustainable development, poverty reduction, good governance and disaster risk reduction are mutually supportive objectives" (UNISDR, 2005; UNISDR, 2013). Where human and community should be understood to include children the five priority areas for action of the HFA provide great potential for child centered DRR to become institutionalized both in DRR policy and in the implementation process. Children on the Frontline – a child-centered assessment of progress towards achieving the HFA - the five priorities were given a child-focused perspective (Ibid) (emphasis as in the original):

PfA1: Governance

- Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation promote and support child rights

PfA2: Risk Assessment, Monitoring and Warning

- Involve children and young people to identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning

PfA3: Knowledge and Education

- Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels, because children are our future

PfA 4: Underlying Risk Factors

- Involve children and young people to reduce underlying risk factors

PfA5: Preparedness and Response

- Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels, particularly at the community level, concentrating on the wellbeing of children and young people.

The review however found that children are not satisfied with progress towards risk reduction or mitigation, they feel that they have something to contribute to benefit themselves and their communities but that currently there is very limited scope for children as stakeholders in DRR. While progress against PfA3 compared favorably with other indicators, there was a lack of evidence around processes transforming knowledge into action. Children and young people lacked encouragement and technical support to apply their knowledge and skills to support progress in other priority areas (Ibid).

A range of other international agreements recognize child rights and needs in their goals. The Millennium Development Goals are aimed at delivering, inter alia, Child Health and Survival (MDG 1, 4, 5 and 6), Education and Gender Equity (MDG 2 and 3) and Child Protection and Emergencies (MDG 7 and 8) all of which contribute to the realization of child rights and the promotion of well-being (UNICEF, 2008). Although there is a recognized need for a cross-sector approach to DRR - the MDGs will not be able to address the need for DRR alone - there is no doubt that these goals are drivers of action for governments, donors, and development agencies across the globe.

2.2 Good Practice of DRR involving Children and Youth

However, while we were looking at the experiences across the globe, we saw that children have been considered and thus engaged in DRR and CCA activities in many ways. Tanner (2020) in his paper identified that Children and young people can participate in climate change and DRR activities in several ways, especially -

- as analysts of risk and risk reduction activities
- as designers and implementers of projects
- as communicators of risks and risk management options (especially communications to parents, other adults, or those outside the community)
- as mobilizers of resources and people
- As constructors of social networks and capital

However, we see from the real experiences in different countries that not all the ways mentioned by Tanner (2020) were followed in every situation, some have followed all of them, some partly and some didn't. In the following section, we have presented a set of experiences from different countries. We followed two main criteria for selecting the cases from different countries: (i) representation of countries of different economic backgrounds, ii) diversity and innovation in approaches, and (iii) long-lasting impact of the interventions.

2.2.1 Experience and Lessons from Philippines

In 2010, the outgoing president signed the 'Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act' into law, now known as Republic Act 10121; a law based on the right to life and property. According to interviews conducted at the federal and provincial levels, the new Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act (DRRM Act) offers a strong push towards increased investment and institutionalization of risk reduction activities as well as much greater recognition of the role of citizens and communities in DRR activities. As the Implementing Rules and Regulations for the DRRM are being developed, the Disaster Risk Reduction Network Philippines (DRRNetPhils), which is made up of several child-centered organizations, is continuing its lobbying efforts. This presents an opportunity to develop DRR policy spaces that take children's roles and perspectives into consideration. Some of the notable best practices seen in the Philippines are mentioned in this section.

- *Children as Agency*

Child agency and responsibility within the household can be seen to evolve with age leading to greater trust and credibility through the developmental stages. Most children above 8 or 9 years take on domestic and other chores, but parents do not attribute responsibility or agency to the younger child in household decision-making processes. In the Philippines, where children are seen to be active in community affairs, there is wide support for their engagement in disaster risk reduction (DRR) activities. But very rarely are children conceived as having agency beyond their community. This is partly a reflection of the lack of skills and capacity of local officials to facilitate children's participation.

- *Integrating DRR in education*

The development of a module for First Year High School students and teachers by the Department of Education (DepEd) has already incorporated DRR issues within the Science and Social Studies disciplines. Additionally, all key personnel in both public and private schools were given instructions to prioritize the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction and management in the school system and to ensure the implementation of programs and projects related to DRR through a memo order issued by the secretary of the Department of Education. The Supreme Student Government (SSG) also has a visible and somewhat authoritative role within the school environment thanks to its formal mandate. Whilst the SSG, at its most basic, is a channel between the Department of Education (DepEd) and the student body, there is evidence from the research to show that where support exists, the SSG can play a bigger role in the school community and beyond.

- *Familiarizing Children with DRR through Extra-curricular Activity Clubs*

In the study case carried out by Fernandez & Shaw (2015) with the Science Clubs in the Philippines, they examined how youth can be actively involved in DRR through school-based youth organizations. Likewise, one of the points that the authors state are that the youth is an underutilized resource in DRR since they compose around 1.2 billion of the world's population (UN, 2015). A specific result is the multiplier effect and the outreach intergenerational interaction that Science clubs facilitate. But it also, concludes that science clubs can be a vehicle for DRR youth participation, if they have a strong support system which means the guidance and resources provided by distinct stakeholders. Likewise, Tuladhar et al. (2014) state – in line with the Hyogo Framework for Action - those extracurricular activities can provide appropriate environments for the students

(UNISDR, 2013) and recommend that the DRR Youth-centered education programs should be oriented to "learning by doing" in order to move from theory to action.

- *Engaging Children through Participatory Video Method*

The project in Eastern Samar, Philippines, used the Participatory Video Method as a tool to engage, raise awareness about disaster risks, and empower young people in their rural communities (Haynes & Tanner, 2015). This process enabled the youth to gain confidence, critical analysis and advocacy capacity to mobilize the entire community around risk reduction measures. That shows, how a tool like the Participatory Videos gives voice to the powerless in the advocacy process, policy dialogue and produces more equitable outcomes (Ibid). Also, one of the main results in this case was the empowerment of the youth to demand that the local authorities enforce strong actions against illegal activities in their communities which were the main causes of the flooding disasters in the area (Ibid). Consequently, the community recognized the capacity and effectiveness of youth to communicate a message, even better than the adults: "A few community members also noted how the young people, with aid of the videos, were better able to communicate the community's message to decision-makers than adults would be" (Ibid, p. 367).

- *Creating Policy Environment for Children*

The mandatory presence of the SK (youth council) imbues them with visibility in both the public and policy domains and furnishes them with a degree of authority, resources and voice. The role of the SK is widely recognized and where formal government programs seek to engage with youth, the SK is targeted as partners of the Village Councils, often overlooking other child or youth groups. The policy structures focus on the SK as the "next generation" and thus they are targeted by government agencies to participate in training alongside adult officials, equipping them with the skills they need to be future leaders.

- *Building Networks among Young Children*

Child and youth groups in Banaba (BK), Teguis (TCAAP), and Poro, Camotes, and San Ricardo (Poro) were found to benefit from federated planning and decision-making at the district scale. It was commonly found that a strong affiliation with an adult children's group played a key role in their success. The experience of BK demonstrates the value of a close partnership despite formal government involvement. In Banaba, the "mother" group (Buklod Tao) stands apart from the village council so the network of partners that the BK is plugged into is dominantly independent of state institutions.

- *Access to knowledge*

Children's knowledge is limited by their social, and lived experiences and exchanges. In most of the communities studied, this was dominated by the parameters of the community, occasionally extending to other villages situated within the high school catchment area and more remotely to the municipal center. This is a reflection of geographical location, socio-economic status and investment in both transport and communications infrastructure. In Barobo, cut off from the road by a river, there is a single "community TV" and no mobile network signal which limits access to informal learning processes, whereas, in the Camotes Islands, there is a high level of TV ownership within the homes but an internet connection that is unreliable and therefore ineffective as a source of knowledge. In the urban community of Banaba, where TVs are common and internet cafes populate the street corners there is a greater opportunity for informal learning. Its location and

transport networks between neighboring centers and even Metro Manila connect the village community with the nation and the BK is visibly proactive in seeking opportunities to access information and communicate beyond the boundaries of their community.

- *Facilitating Knowledge to Practice*

Access to information and support outside the traditional learning environment of the school is considered to be one of the factors with the most influence over the identification and prioritization of group activities. It not only increases the awareness and understanding of the individual it acts as a stimulus for group action, generating the agency for children to act together. The ability to transform training and knowledge into action is lost without the support of others with common and shared knowledge and agency.

2.2.2 Experience and Lessons from El Salvador

The traditional concept of the Salvadorian society is that childhood is a formative stage, where the children are learning progressively to become adult. They play an important role in domestic tasks, as well as in productive situations. This is pronounced in rural areas, where the old structure of agricultural production remains and where traditionally children were not entitled to their own opinion or to contradict the will of their parents.

Child-centered DRR in El Salvador is framed by the national cultural and legislative framing of childhood. The new legal framework for children and childhood was created in 2009 by the Law for the Integral Protection of Childhood and Adolescence in order to guarantee the rights and facilitate the accomplishment of responsibilities for all children and adolescents in El Salvador. It created the National System for Integral Protection of Childhood and Adolescence and is supported by the Salvadoran Institute for Integral Development of Childhood and Adolescence (INSA), which executes and monitors the implementation of the National Policy to Attend Minors and provides integral protection to children based on Child Rights established in the Constitution and the UN Convention on Children Rights. Clause 36 recognizes the right to have a healthy environment, ecologically sustainable and adequate for their development.

- *Children as Agency*

One of the most interesting cases is the experience in El Salvador (Mitchell et al., 2008) which was developed by Plan International, in which young people were involved in DRR activities, successfully showing a group of different competences like agency power, proposal thinking, analytical skills, communicative and advocacy capacities in the local risk management. This is considered an example of the relevance of the youth engagement in order to make the investments and strategies sustainable. Also, Mitchell et al., (2008) report the case of actions carried out by a youth organization after Hurricane Katrina in 2005. This group demonstrated once again the agency capacity of youth during the response and recovery actions, and the communicative power of the warning, evacuation and post-disaster systems. Boosting morale, setting therapeutic environments, high volunteer participation, bringing attention and translating information to elder

or non-English speakers' members, are examples of their roles during the disaster (Morris & Edwards, 2008).

- *Creating Policy Environment for Children*

Communities in El Salvador are organized through Community Development Associations (ADESCOs). ADESCOs are part of the local government, itself coordinated by the Mayor's Office and its legislative body of elected councilors. With little political power and resources devolved to community level, close links enable children's groups to access resources and undertake actions that are visible to members of the community (Mitchell et al., 2008).

- *Building Networks among Young Children*

Interaction of children's groups with networks outside their communities is crucial to their ability to engage with others and undertake DRR activities. Such interactions enable external knowledge to be combined with local experience and capacity, and in turn enable groups to influence beyond their own households and community members. Children stressed opportunities where they had been able to discuss their activities and share ideas with other groups in neighboring communities as a particularly important, as well as enjoyable, process. In most cases, support networks are developed through schools, health outreach workers, the police, or NGOs, notable here as the case studies built on communities supported by Plan El Salvador (Ibid).

- *Self-organization*

Children's groups related to DRR are commonly divided into different "Brigades", covering different aspects of DRR such as environment protection, health and disaster risk management, or different tasks in emergency preparedness such as early warning, evacuation, first aid, or aid distribution. Sometimes this was prompted by an externally facilitated training program, sometimes from groups themselves, allowing division of responsibility for actions. In some communities, the DRR groups were self-standing, while in some, DRR work was part of the long-standing youth group activities. This had helped sustain the groups over time, with the Youth group in El Cipres active since 1998 and tackling a wide range of issues. In El Coyolar and Palo Grande by contrast, the group was established with the school's support in 2006 specifically responding to external input by the NGO Plan El Salvador but had since made links to other NGOs active in the area. In some areas, the group's calendar of activities was dictated by the seasons. For example, in Los Guevaritas, the group's activities and meetings ceased throughout the labor-intensive harvest season (Ibid).

- *Sources of and access to knowledge*

Access to external sources of knowledge is vital to the enabling environment for child centered DRR, especially in remote and isolated locations. For example, knowledge of global processes of environment change, including global warming, empowered children to take a lead role in catalyzing change in the absence of adult awareness. However, the research also suggests that

situating an understanding of DRR within the lived experience is crucial to fostering action. Ideally this can be through well executed training that does not only seek to add external information, but often it is through lived experience of both low impact and extreme events themselves. The impact of Hurricane Stan in 2005 was widespread across El Salvador and within the memory of almost all participants, while more recent flood events in 2009 and 2010 were widely publicized (Ibid).

- *Knowledge into action processes*

Credibility was central to many of the knowledge to action processes, particularly where the DRR activities required a behavioral change among adults. Examples from El Salvador illustrates the disconnect between opinion and action. Many adults expressed the view that children can act as competent risk managers, but there was much less consistency in following this up by taking the actions that children prescribed in order to reduce risks (Ibid).

2.2.3 Experience and Lessons from Nepal

Against the backdrop of a country with a high exposure to natural hazards and rapidly changing political context, UNICEF realized the importance of incorporating risk into the analysis and design of its programs. As disasters were a constant in the environment in which the organization operated – as seen in mega disasters taking place at the time in Asia and around the world, and as later reinforced during the 2015 Gorkha Earthquake UNICEF recognized the growing and urgent need for disaster risk reduction to underpin both its humanitarian. The CCDRR program (Child-centered disaster management program) in partnership with UNICEF was changemaker project in this arena. Following is some of the initiatives of the project-

- *Children's participation in risk assessment*

Preventing and mitigating risks before they manifest as disasters are essential. UNICEF has been working to expand the scope of disaster risk management by improving the capacity building of children and communities. The organization's first child-centred risk assessment was developed in 2012 for the Government of Nepal. The tools used in this process are- Transect walk, Social resource mapping, Hazard ranking, Venn diagram and Hazard calendar

- *Mobilization of children*

UNICEF supports to mobilize children and organizes them into clubs which serve as an essential platform for social participation and inclusion. The formation of child clubs is a key community approach that has been adopted under the UNICEF supported Child-Friendly Local Governance (CFLG) Program (Gautam & Phaiju, 2013).

- *Child clubs and children's networks*

Under the CCDRR Program, UNICEF has strengthened the capacities of 81 ward-level child clubs and 9 children's networks. At least 57 school safety clubs have been formed in new target schools

in Baitadi, Saptari, Dhanusha, Bajura and Accham Districts. Within the school family, the safety clubs assume a leadership role in disseminating critical information on comprehensive school safety among their peers (Ibid).

- DRR focus teacher and the School Management Committee

One teacher per school is appointed as the DRR focal teacher in the CCDRR Program's target schools. This teacher takes the lead in promoting disaster risk reduction initiatives with school administration. In the target districts of the CCDRR Program, DRR focal teachers were trained by UNICEF and its implementing partners. Following the training, the DRR focal teachers conducted a one-day orientation on comprehensive school safety for members of the parent-teacher associations (PTA), school safety clubs, and school management committees (SMC) at their individual schools, with the assistance of local partners (Ibid).

- *First Aid and Light Search Training*

Children and teens have been empowered by the CCDRR Program's first aid/refresher first aid training in order for them to contribute during disasters by either helping themselves if they are hurt or helping others in their family and community. These trainings helped children and young people learn first aid skills and information. The objectives of the first aid training were-

- 1) To enhance knowledge, skill and capacity of first aid
- 2) To provide concept, principle and process of first aid and enable them to provide basic first aid;
- 3) To enable to follow safety first principle at the time of disaster

2.2.4 Experience and Lessons from Vanuatu

UNICEF is supporting governments worldwide to achieve sustainability of resources through water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) programmes, in addition to increasing the access of communities to safe drinking water and basic sanitation. The Pacific region has the lowest sanitation and clean water coverage rates in the world, at 53 per cent. Progress to improve these conditions has been slow, hindered by the frequency and impact of natural hazards and the ongoing pressures of climate change (including sea level rise). To support children and their communities and strengthen community management of water supply and sanitation, UNICEF Pacific is supporting communities, through participatory tools, to develop drinking water safety and security plans. In cyclone and flood-prone areas, communities now have regular water committee meetings, have improved toilet facilities and regularly clean water tanks.

2.2.5 Experience and Lessons from Kyrgyzstan

UNICEF is working in disaster-prone areas across the world to ensure that school buildings are safe, teachers and students are prepared in the event of a disaster, and DRR and Climate Change

Adaptation are included in school curricula. In 2015, the Kyrgyzstan Government initiated the retrofitting and reconstruction of schools throughout the country based on a safety assessment of almost all of their educational institutions (2,222 schools and 806 preschools). UNICEF is also working with government counterparts to develop a school-based DRR Guide, to systematize DRR initiatives that have been proven to work – risk assessments, risk mapping, preparedness and risk reduction interventions, carried out with child and youth participation. Furthermore, DRR and Principles of Everyday Safety have been incorporated into the formal curriculum for primary school grades one to five, and secondary school grades six to eleven.

2.2.6 Experience and Lessons from Guyana

In recognition of the importance of a context-specific and local approach to reducing disaster risk, the Civil Defence Commission (CDC) in Guyana launched a Community-Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) Project, in partnership with UNICEF. The project was born out of a recognition of the differences between communities in how they are vulnerable and exposed to hazards. Community members and stakeholders were engaged, including through the development and vetting of emergency disaster plans, to generate a greater understanding of the local hazard and vulnerability landscape and existing risk management systems. Particular attention was paid to the vulnerabilities of households with young children and individuals with disabilities, and the importance of incorporating indigenous and local knowledge to reduce risks. Participatory approaches were used to collect community knowledge and views. Community members were empowered to lead the process themselves, making up the entirety of the CBDRM Management Team and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), of which a significant number were youth. Team members were also given trainings in first aid, leadership and financial management, and emergency response. Building on these activities, Community Disaster Risk Management Plans will be developed through simulations testing the established preparedness and response systems. Equipment and resources to maintain the function of CBDRM will also be provided, to help the communities maintain and strengthen local capacities and systems now in place.

2.2.7 Lessons Drawn from the Good Practices

Increasing Awareness and Giving Children a Voice

Studies done on Philippines and El Salvador showed that in some cases, the community risk assessments done by the children led to direct changes made by the barangay council. Through the project, children have become more involved in DRR at the local level, and this has led to the inclusion of a children's perspective in the local government units' plans.

Involving Children in Decision Making

Children at a German school have been learning how to take care of the environment, and how they can contribute to making their community a better place. One of the small-scale projects

involved children learning about climate change adaptation, and urban gardening. Children were encouraged to grow their own plants and vegetables in plastic containers and had to commit to keeping their environment clean (Gautam & Phaiju, 2013).

Enabling Child-Centered DRR at the local level

Research and analysis of child-centered DRR in El Salvador and the Philippines provides a number of common findings and recommendations. The research is based on investigating the realities of child-centered DRR in areas of relative poverty and high disaster risk. It reflects growing dissatisfaction with the ability of top-down approaches to DRR and climate change adaptation based on scientific modelling to respond to the needs and realities of local populations (van Aalst et al 2008).

Adult perception of child agency underpins the enabling environment

The research suggests that adult views on child agency have the potential to foster or stifle child participation and contributions to reducing disaster risk. Whilst families value the potential of children as actors within the household they are often not prescribed with individual agency or voice within the home, and this is often carried over into the community sphere. Even where adults vocalized support for child-led DRR activities this was commonly contradicted by household decision making structures in which children have little or no voice. However, the support of the family for a child's action is a central enabler for child participation and agency (Gautam & Phaiju, 2013.; Ibid).

Children are actively seen and heard

There is considerable evidence that the visibility and experience of children's group activities was a crucial enabling factor in fostering community buy-in. Many adults and even parents of group members were not aware of the DRR activities of the children's groups. Yet where adults had been exposed to or involved in the activities, they were more supportive and there was a significantly higher level of support for child participation in communities with longer standing experiences. Visible demonstrations of children engaging in activities to reduce risks in the household and community provide a lived experience that acts as an important catalyst for shifting cultural understandings to support child agency (Mitchell et al., 2008).

Inclusion and experience generate support

In the early stages of child-led DRR programs children learn and act more effectively within the parameters that are known to them – the household, neighborhood, school and community – and with the people with whom they are most familiar. In particular, when parents are excluded from the processes of awareness raising, action and empowerment, they may be less likely to support the motivation or activities of their household members or the facilitating agency (Tanner 2010). Household support provides not only formal permissions for children to participate and engage in activities, but also confirmation to the children that their actions are valued within the community,

that their motivations are respected and thus they are empowered to continue in their efforts and advocacy.

Facilitation as a crucial enabling factor

Children are capable actors, but they need stimuli and support. There was a common perception that realizing the potential of children is necessarily a guided and supported process. This may come through community-based sources such as schools, health centers or adult-led disaster groups, or through external interventions by NGOs and CSOs. This catalytic role is an important part of the enabling environment, allowing children's groups to draw on outside expertise for training and resources, as well as opening up potential interaction with policy spaces and actors outside the community (Tanner, 2010; Mitchell et al., 2008).

Facilitation is also crucial in preventing parallel processes between adult and children's groups, with case studies demonstrating the challenges and benefits of opening spaces for children's participation and representation within (sometimes formally mandated by) adult-led groups. External training to children from those perceived to be technical experts, such as municipal officials, was regarded by adults as providing greater credibility to children's opinions and actions.

Children working together generate agency and action

Facilitation needs to go beyond training and knowledge, and support analysis, debate, prioritization and action at community level, as well as dissemination of learning. This recognizes the multiple modes of child agency, as analyzers, communicators and mobilisers for risk reduction as well as implementers of actions themselves (Tanner 2010). The ability to transform training and knowledge into action is lost without the support of others with common and shared knowledge and agency. The group structure provides opportunities for children to come together on a regular basis with a common purpose to plan and deliver action - this structure and accessible support and guidance is vital to turn knowledge into action.

Safe spaces for child-adult exchanges build trust and recognition

Creating safe spaces for engaging with authority figures represents an important part of a child-sensitive enabling approach. Children are often overwhelmed by the notion of authority, so bringing officials into spaces where children feel secure, such as facilitated workshops, is important. The creation of formal spaces for informal engagement between government institutions and children allows adults to be exposed to the children as they learn, discuss and debate, building recognition of the agency and capacity of children and seeing the potential of engagement. Designing facilitation and activities which allow children to participate in spaces that create dialogue and exchange with adult actors should therefore be a priority for facilitating agents.

Community development and existing programs are starting points for action. A marked distinction could be found between communities where children's groups had worked to link DRR to wider community development issues, both domestically and by using networks and champions. Where existing programs such as health and education are seeking to meet the basic needs of child

welfare and improve well-being, it is important that the contribution of these programs for DRR is communicated and understood; as children and communities see the multiple benefits of their action, they are motivated to continue and strive harder to achieve the common goals. Focusing early activities on nationwide campaigns builds links with the municipal and village councils who bear the duty to deliver.

Individual champions are often the difference between success and failure.

The most advanced and stable groups were encountered in communities where the groups worked with authority figures in the community who already commanded the respect and trust of both children and adults, especially ones not subject to political influence and repeated change in personnel. Often these were individuals whose roles directly pertained to child welfare such as school directors or health workers. Whilst also working as a link between outside networks and facilitation, authoritative champions also provided a reference point for parents regarding the appropriateness of group activities. Groups need to engage with wider networks to access resources and policy spaces. Engaging with actors beyond those who are "familiar and safe", such as their peers and family, requires significant and sustained effort on the part of the group and its support structure. While children may be part of this effort, it will also require other actors to advocate on their behalf. Wider support networks enable groups to exert influence beyond their own households and community members, as well as interact with others. These networks were often developed through schools, health workers, and NGOs rather than enabled by government structures. Where groups were well linked with municipal government, child groups accessed opportunities to exchange with peers, attend municipal wide training and secure resources to undertake actions that are visible to community members. The relationship also provided potential access to higher level policy spaces.

Access to policy spaces and long-term cultural shifts lead to sustainable child groups

Issues of the sustainability of child agency are based in groups themselves but also in supporting structures within and outside the community. Building partnerships and networks within and beyond the community appears to be critical in sustaining children's participation, including links with formal institutions to access and mobilize resources. Community structures can help sustain the enabling environment through providing policy spaces where children's voices can be heard in village committees or school planning boards. An accessible champion within the community can provide an important anchor point for children, parents and the wider community.

This anchoring can also sustain groups as members graduate out of the groups to ensure that experience, understanding and leadership are replaced. This reinforces the importance of internal knowledge transfer and ongoing training for DRR across scales and a need to engage those who are outside the scope of standard organized groups, including those out of school. Importantly, there was a significantly higher level of support for child participation in communities with longer standing experiences, and especially where former children's group leaders are now in local executive positions or indeed parents themselves. This suggests that just as awareness and

behavioral change around DRR will be carried into adulthood, investment in child participation is a multi-generational mission.

Learning Through Small Scale Projects

Some core groups organized trainings in Basic Life Support (BLS), or leadership trainings. BLS trainings aimed at teaching participants the foundations of first aid, and how to act in emergency situations. In Valenzuela City, for example, the core group managed to organize two three-day trainings, which were attended by youth aged 15-24. CDP facilitated some basic lectures during the training, on disaster preparedness and family preparedness, but most of the training was facilitated by resource speakers from different government agencies.

Overall, in every step, the children and youth involvement should be encouraged to speak up, and involved in many of the activities, and given responsibility and trust to implement their own activities. Doing this can show them that they have a voice and that they can make a difference and has empowered them to raise their voice.

3. Analysis of the Relevant Policies

The policy analysis section covers the most relevant policies that are in place in Bangladesh to encounter any disaster. These policies are broad in terms of scope and objective. To keep it relevant, only the sections that incorporate children or youth or both are mentioned and analyzed here. This analysis explores the gaps in engaging children and youth in disaster risk reduction activities.

3.1 National Plan for Disaster Management (2021-2025)

Core Objective

National Plan for Disaster Management (NPDM) 2021-2025 Action for disaster risk reduction was prepared under the leadership of MoDMR, and is aligned with national, regional, and international frameworks including Delta Plan 2100, 8th Five Year Plan, SFDRR, Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the Dhaka Declaration 2015 Plus for Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Management. The plan places importance on disaster risk management linked with rapid urbanization and climate change, and the necessity of DRR for sustainable development, and is flexible and adaptive in cognizance of the changing nature of risks in Bangladesh.

Gaps and Scope of Children and Youth-led DRR Integration

Despite evidence that disasters affect men, women, and children differently, the plan – and the actions emanating from it – were weak in addressing the gendered nature of vulnerability and the impacts of disasters. In addition, no specific children or youth-led DRR Policy, Strategy, or Approach is found in this document. Children and youth are considered beneficiaries rather than the actors and agents.

Bangladesh aligns its DRM strategies and plans with the SFDRR, SDG, and Climate Agreement. Adopting an inclusive approach – via multisector/stakeholder DRR platforms, both at national and local levels – is particularly important. What requires more attention is embracing the engagement of persons with disability, women, children, and youth, and the significant contribution of the private sector. Children and youth can be engaged in different activities that enhance the efficacy of risk reduction approaches.

3.2 National Disaster Management Policy

Core Objective

The purpose of NPDM 2016-2020 is to guide implementation of the Disaster Management Act 2012, allowing GoB ministries and other agencies to use it to produce their Annual Work Plans. The plan takes a ‘whole-of-Government’ approach, and it also attaches importance to the

engagement of the private sector. The National Disaster Management Policy defines the national policy on disaster risk reduction and emergency response management, and describes the strategic policy framework and national principles of disaster management in Bangladesh.

Gaps and Scope of Children and Youth led DRR Integration

Principles for Disaster management are the responsibility of all sectors, all organizations, and all agencies that may be potentially affected by a disaster. The key principles consistent with internationally accepted good practices that guide the development and implementation of the DM policy in Bangladesh. This policy is designed to guide during all phases of disaster management, as follows: Women, children, the elderly, people with disability and other socially marginalized groups will be the primary beneficiaries of all disaster management efforts. No specific children or youth-led DRR Policy, Strategy, or Approach is found in this document. Children and youth are found considered beneficiaries rather than actors and agents. What is emphasized here is the vulnerability of these people. It is presumed that they should be protected and rescued. Indeed, they should be but not as a victims. They can do it by themselves if trained properly. That is a major place of work that requires serious attention.

3.3 Disaster Management Act, 2012

Core Objective

The objective of the Act is to establish a strong disaster management system that is capable that is capable of dealing with both natural and man-made disasters. In this Sub-Continent, India and Sri Lanka adopted laws relating to disaster management before Bangladesh. The SOD and National Plan for Disaster Management were the main guidelines for disaster management in Bangladesh until 2012. These two instruments are inadequate and ineffective in dealing with the problems raised after recent disasters. For a more proactive approach and effective actions before or after a disaster Bangladesh has adopted the Act. To maintain the coordination of the institutions from the national level to the local level a revised National Plan for Disaster Management was essential and developed later. However, the Act has some distinct features that make the activities of the Government of Bangladesh prompter and more proactive.

Gaps and Scope of Children and Youth led DRR Integration

The government, through a specified method by rule, may take program to provide necessary assistance for proper rehabilitation or to reduce the risk of affected or vulnerable communities due to disaster: Provided that preference would be given to protection and risk reduction for the ultra-poor and underprivileged community especially the older persons, women, children, and handicapped persons while providing assistance.

Though it provides detailed guidelines relating to disaster management in Bangladesh, it does not cover some important aspects like sufficient children and youth led DRR policy, strategy, or

approach and status of environmentally or internally displaced persons, and the establishment of a special disaster response force. Given the purpose of this policy i.e., to establish a strong disaster management system which is capable to deal with both natural and manmade disasters, it is pivotal to engage the children and youth for achieving the goal. A strong system requires a strong, motivated, and energetic pool of actors who can actively operate and promptly act in any emergency situation. In this regard, children and youth of any society can be proven as the best actors since they are the sufferers of all the odds, they are energetic, and they know all the resources that need to be utilized to reduce the risk. They know the best possible way to motivate the locals to go to the shelter centers amid any disaster. Thus, to serve the aim and objective of this policy, it would be better if the young members were engaged in both policy-making and its implementation by the authorities.

3.4 Standing Orders on Disaster (SOD)

Core Objective

The Standing Orders (SoD) on Disaster Management have been prepared with the objective of making the concerned persons understand their duties, and responsibilities regarding disaster management at all levels. All ministries, divisions/departments and agencies shall prepare their own action plans in respect of their responsibilities under the standing orders for efficient implementation. According to the SoD, the National Disaster Management Council (NDMC) and Inter-Ministerial Disaster Management Coordination Committee (IMDMCC) will ensure coordination of disaster related activities at the National level. The Disaster Management Bureau will render all assistance to them by facilitating the process. The Ministries, Divisions/Departments and Agencies will organize proper training of their officers and staff employed at District, Thana, Union and village levels according to their own action plans so that they can help in rescue, evacuation and relief work at different stages of disaster. The different activities of different organizations are described at different Phase namely, Normal Phase, Alert and Warning Phase, Disaster Phase and Recovery Phase.

Main Approaches

Child Protection in Emergencies (CPiE). Refers to preventing and responding to torture and violence against children in disasters. Areas of humanitarian assistance include the positive impact of ensuring child safety.

Relief/Humanitarian Assistance. Aid is given by government and non-government agencies/individuals to meet the immediate needs of disaster-affected people. It can include food, blankets and winter clothing, shelter/tent, medical supplies, essentials for infants and children, drinking water, money, fuel, seeds, agro-inputs, livestock, fish-fry, house building materials and any other things required by those affected by disasters.

Responsibilities and Functions of the Committee

(a) Risk Reduction Functions:

Identify the peoples at risk according to gender, age, persons with disabilities, social class, occupations and economic status. Formulate short, medium and long-term risk reduction action plans with the active participation of persons with disabilities, women and children.

(b) Emergency Response Functions:

Assist rescue teams to evacuate women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities to a safe shelter according to directives and the evacuation plan of the authority.

(c) Disaster Stage

- Bring homeless family members to shelters during a disaster and ensure the safety and security of women, children, persons with disability.
- Ensure safety and security for women, children and persons with disabilities during a disaster in the shelter or in other accommodation.
- Ensure the safety of women, children, elderly people and persons with disabilities in disasters and provide priority for humanitarian assistance and other necessary needs.
- Take security measures for women, children and people with disability of the disaster affected communities.
- Undertake initiatives to provide necessary security to women, children and people with disability in safe shelters, homes or any other safe place during disaster.
- Keep women and children in separate rooms in the shelter and assist the shelter management committee to supply safe water and food at the shelter and to undertake necessary steps to prevent gender-based violence.

(d) Responsibilities and Functions of the Ministries, Divisions, Departments and Agencies for Disaster Risk Management

Develop and implement disaster risk reduction and emergency response plans following social inclusion principles by ensuring the participation of women, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities, small ethnic groups, marginalized populations and others.

(e) Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief

Assist in building a disaster resilient nation by ensuring the participation and empowerment in the risk reduction process of people, especially women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities who are at risk.

- Campaign at all levels on issues of security, protection and psycho-social support to women, persons with disabilities and children and take initiatives to incorporate these issues in all disaster risk management related training courses.

- Undertake initiatives with the Ministry of Education to make children aware through educational institutions about self-protection during disasters.

(f) Emergency Response Functions (Response Preparedness Stage)

- Provide information on issues of security and psycho-social support for women and children and take initiatives to include that in all training courses related to disaster risk management.
- Follow up on safety and protection activities for the elderly, children, women and persons with disabilities in a shelter and undertake necessary initiatives to address any gaps.

Gaps and Scope of Children and Youth led DRR Integration

This policy, unlike others, incorporates children and youth in the awareness building program to some extent. Though it mostly talks about the protection of children and youth during any disaster, it also formalizes the need for training for the children and youths. These trainings are prescribed to facilitate providing security, protection and psycho-social support to women, persons with disabilities and children amid any disaster by engaging the children and youth of the grassroot communities. It also emphasizes on creating awareness among them by educational institutions. Creating self-awareness among the children and youth is also addressed in this policy document.

Implementation of Policy for Engaging Children and Youth

Among the areas covered under this project, it was seen that children’s and youth’s engagement is not properly acknowledged. In few districts, local government authorities doesn’t know about SOD in fact, let alone its activities. Activities related to building awareness through educational institutions on the other hand have been accomplished.

3.5 The National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA)

Core Objective

The National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) for Bangladesh has been prepared by the Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF), Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh as a response to the decision of the Seventh Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP7) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) of Bangladesh draws upon the understanding gathered through discussion with relevant stakeholders in 4 sub-national workshops and one national workshop, prior research, background papers prepared for this report as well as research carried out for these background reports, and expert judgments. In the course of the preparation of the report it has been clear that climate change will exacerbate many of the existing problems and natural hazards that the country faces. But there are various coping mechanisms, formal and informal, already in place. What is new is the urgency of the matter to be integrated within the

development process so that when the Climate Change impacts become more clearly discernible, the nation shall be ready to handle that as almost a routine affair in its development process.

Gaps and Scope of Children and Youth led DRR Integration

Taking a livelihoods analysis approach to the potential impacts of climate change it is clear that the most vulnerable groups within each community are the poorest amongst them and even within the poor groups the most vulnerable are the women, children, elderly and sick. Rationale/justification, in relation to climate change, including sectors concerned is that the agro-ecological regions of the country are very diverse and will be impacted in very different ways. However, in all the ecological regions the poor (including women, elderly and children) are the most vulnerable and likely to also be most adversely impacted by climate change. Hence eco-specific actions for helping vulnerable communities (with an emphasis on women, children and elderly) need to be developed and disseminated to the vulnerable communities to allow them to adapt to the potential impacts of climate change. This strategy, like previous ones, considers children and youth as mere beneficiaries and doesn't include them in the decision making and implementation of programs.

3.6 Sendai Framework for DRR 2015 - 2030

Core Objective

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (Sendai Framework) was the first major agreement of the post-2015 development agenda and provides Member States with concrete actions to protect development gains from the risk of disaster. The Sendai Framework works hand in hand with the other 2030 Agenda agreements, including The Paris Agreement on Climate Change, The Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development, the New Urban Agenda, and ultimately the Sustainable Development Goals. It was endorsed by the UN General Assembly following the 2015 Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR), and advocates for: The substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries. It recognizes that the State has the primary role in reducing disaster risk but that responsibility should be shared with other stakeholders including local government, the private sector and other stakeholders.

Gaps and Scope of Children and Youth led DRR Integration

Children and youth are considered agents of change in the Sendai framework. It says children and youth should be given the space and modalities to contribute to disaster risk reduction, in accordance with legislation, national practice and the educational curriculum. It prescribes that there has to be a broader and more people-centered preventive approach to disaster risk. Disaster risk reduction practices need to be multi-hazard and multisectoral, inclusive and accessible in order to be efficient and effective. While recognizing their leading, regulatory and coordination roles, it

prescribes the Governments to engage with relevant stakeholders, including women, children and youth, persons with disabilities, poor people, migrants, indigenous peoples, volunteers, the community of practitioners and older persons in the design and implementation of policies, plans and standards. There is a need for the public and private sectors and civil society organizations, as well as academia and scientific and research institutions, to work more closely together and to create opportunities for collaboration, and for businesses to integrate disaster risk into their management practices.

3.7 Perspective Plan 2021-2041

Core Objective

“Making Vision 2041 a Reality: Perspective Plan of Bangladesh 2021-2041” is a genuine articulation of the government’s plan to transform the country from a lower middle-income country to an upper middle-income country by 2031 and a high-income country by 2041 under World Bank Classification. The other juxtaposed goals are eradicating extreme poverty by 2031 and zero poverty by 2041. Bangladesh is one of the most disaster-prone nations in the world. In this regard, “our village, our town”; efficient energy and infrastructure; building a Bangladesh resilient to climate change and other environmental challenges; and establishing Bangladesh as a knowledge hub country.

Gaps and Scope of Children and Youth led DRR Integration

The Planning Commission has published the Perspective Plan for 2010-2021. The major environmental, climate change and disaster risk reduction strategies include some strategies, but Children and Youth led DRR Policies, Strategies, or Approaches is absent in this perspective plan.

3.8 Recent Five-Year Plans – 7th and 8th FYP

Core Objective

The main objectives of the Seventh Five-Year Plan were to establish growth in areas of increasing economic productivity, the production of food grains, and generating employment through "Social Justice". Both FYPs have some strategies for disaster management. It is one of the major and most important plans of the Bangladesh Government. FYP is the main strategy that is being adopted by any government party that is in power.

Plan Goals and Targets. Recent FYPs reflect a continuation of the major goals articulated in the 6th FYP. The core targets were set in accordance with the vision and goals of the Perspective Plan under the 7th FYP. To promote inclusive development, special attention will be given to disadvantaged groups, including women, children and persons with disabilities.

Social Inclusion

- Regarding social inclusion, the Sixth Plan's strategy and programmes have been broadly on track. Particular progress has been made in the area of child protection. Of particular note is the adoption of legislation, the **Children Act of 2013**, based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It provides legal instruments to protect children with regards to a wide range of potential exploitation and abuse such as child marriage, work, and issues with the justice system. The concept of a Child Focused Budget has been introduced and implemented as a pilot in the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs. The incidence of child malnutrition has decreased significantly. However, progress in the area of children's nutrition requires additional effort. Implementation capacity for enforcement of the Children Act 2013 also needs considerable strengthening.
- Bangladesh has undergone an amazing transformation. Census Data (BBS, various years) and Household Income and Expenditure (HIES) Data (BBS, Various Years) suggest that these substantial improvements in the fundamental indicators of well-being of the rural population were also accompanied by enhancements in the quality of life in terms of quality of dwelling, access to safe water, access to sanitary facilities, access to electricity, access to rural roads, access to telephone, access to internet, better health facilities and growing education of rural children at the primary and secondary level.
- The primary challenge for Bangladesh is to scale up investments to create a suitable environment for the economic and social development of the country and to secure the well-being of people, especially the poorest and most vulnerable groups, including women and children.
- GoB has highlighted gender sensitivity as an important issue in climate change adaptation and supported the **Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA)** to take initiative under the BCCTF to integrate gender sensitivity in their respective project designs.
- Vision 2021 of the Government envisions a country where all citizens enjoy a quality of life assured by basic health care and adequate nutrition. The Perspective Plan stipulates necessary actions to increase coverage of all types of health care and family planning services, strengthen health administration and increase the number of skilled professionals in the HNP sector. The goal of the HNP sector is to achieve sustainable improvement in health, nutrition, and reproductive health, including family planning, particularly for vulnerable groups – women, children, the elderly and the poor. Conditions will be created in the HNP sector whereby the people of Bangladesh have the opportunity to reach and maintain the highest attainable level of health.
- The MDG target of reducing the number of underweight children is on track.

Implementation

- Three crucial pieces of legislation have been passed as a means to implement the children's empowerment section of the Sixth Plan. The key one was the National Children Policy was

adopted in Bangladesh in 2011. This policy aimed to empower children and protect their rights by eliminating any form of abuse, violation or discrimination that may impact their well-being.

- Among the objectives of this policy, the importance of providing all children (regardless of age, gender, religion, ethnicity and location) with equal opportunity for development is highlighted. The policy recognizes that children are a heterogeneous social group, with different needs that must be met. Prior to that, the National Child Labour Elimination Policy was approved in 2010 with the aim of improving children's life and well-being through the removal of all types of child labour, especially dangerous and degrading work. Emphasis was put on children with more predispositions to enter child labour, such as children from poor households and ethnic minorities. The policy looks at increasing the incentives for these children to return to the education system. The stakeholders are directed to coordinate amongst themselves to develop short, medium and long-term programmes to eliminate child labour in Bangladesh. Finally, the Government passed the Children Act of 2013 based on the Convention of the Rights of the Child. It defines children as an individual under the age of 18, a definition universally recognized. It also provides legal instruments to protect children with regards to a wide range of potential exploitation and abuse such as child marriage, work, and issues with the justice system.
- A programme, called "Services for Children at Risk" aims to strengthen the protection of children and the government's capacity to do so, and "Child Sensitive Social Protection in Bangladesh" improves children's access to social protection programmes. A Child-Helpline Programme is being implemented, 250 Community-based Child Protection Committees are being formed and 7 Integrated Child Protection Service Centres have already been established.

Sixth Plan strategies

Therefore, to overcome these issues, a series of strategic actions have been formulated by the SFYP. These fall under 4 broad categories: education, health, inclusion and governance. - Improve access to and achievements in education by

- Developing an integrated education Programme for visually impaired children,
- Expanding existing institutions for hearing impaired and mentally retarded children,
- Establishing new institutions to provide access to more children with disabilities at primary, secondary and tertiary levels and
- Collaborating with NGOs and the private sector to develop and implement improvements in the education sector.

Inclusion Strategy for the Seventh Plan

The goals to be achieved are: (i) ensuring children's rights and advancement through the implementation of government policies and legislations; (ii) providing health services the children

need; (iii) ensuring access to food and nutrition they need; (iv) providing access to girls to education, training and development opportunities; (v) ensuring access to urban poor children to early childhood development, education, sports and cultural activities providing knowledge and life skill; (vi) protecting children from all forms of abuse, exploitation and violence; (vii) providing access to children particularly in urban and remote settings to clean water and sanitation, and a healthy environment; (viii) ensuring participation of children in defining their needs, developing programmes, implementing interventions, and evaluating their success; (ix) ensuring support of duty bearer, parents and other care givers on whom children have to depend; and (x) ensuring widespread public support for survival and development of children.

Intervention and actions as indicated below will be taken during the Seventh Plan, in line with provisions of the National Children Policy 2011.

- An inter-ministerial coordination committee consisting of government ministries with children's portfolios and organizations representing children's mandates will be chaired by the Secretary of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and will coordinate implementation of the Children Act 2013, CRC, CEDAW, and the World Fit for Children Plan of Action.
- Strategy for Dalits and Extreme Poor Groups: The vision of the Government is to erase the discrimination and exploitation faced by dalit communities in Bangladesh, so that they can take their place as full citizens of the country.
- The Government will uphold the right to education for children from dalit communities with the expectation to ensure schools becomes non-discriminatory and inclusive spaces for all children.
- Children's Act 2013. Conducive rulings were given by the High Court including directives concerning women's and children's development. Some sectoral laws that were enacted ensuring the protection and benefits of women such as, Overseas Employment and Migration Act 2013 and the Pornography Control Act 2012. Similarly, some policies formulated addressed specific gender needs including among others, the National Children Policy 2011, National Education Policy 2010, and National Skill Development Policy 2011. Several acts and policies formulated before the beginning of the Sixth Plan, which incorporated provisions for participation and protection of women's rights were in effect, such as the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2009 and the laws governing the local government institutions. The People's Representation Ordinance on representation in political parties and in the national parliament was revised in 2013.

Targets for 7th and 8th FYP

- 19,25,150 youths will be trained up and out of them 5,96,000 youths will be involved in self-employment activities.

- 75,000 youths will be trained up for temporary employment under National Service Programme.
- Establishment of seven divisional offices along with infrastructures for Youth Training Centres.
- Sheikh Hasina National Youth Centre will be transformed as “Centre of Excellence.”

Gaps of Children and Youth led DRR Integration

In the recent FYPs, children and youths are introduced as vulnerable portion and their protection is ensured. But they are not perceived as an agent of change and not engaged in any risk reduction and management activities.

3.9 HCTT Contingency Plan 2020

Core Objective

The objective of this document is to help the humanitarian community complement preparedness and response efforts undertaken by Bangladesh’s national authorities in relation to climate-related disasters. It reflects the increased level of preparation of national authorities as well as the accumulated experience of the humanitarian community in supporting their efforts. The primary assumption of this plan is that climate-related events to which Bangladesh is highly exposed will not vanish due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, adapting preparedness and response interventions in a way that factors in this new reality is key. The second basic assumption is related to the fact that out of the 64 districts that comprise Bangladesh, 25 are most vulnerable to the socio-economic impact of the pandemic mitigation measures, and most of those are the ones most exposed and vulnerable to climate-related disasters. Therefore, the resilience of the most vulnerable population to climate-related disasters was already negatively impacted prior to the occurrence of such disasters in 2020.

Gaps of Children and Youth led DRR Integration

Child Protection Status of Preparedness

- Violence against women and children is prevalent with an estimated 45 million children locked down in homes that use violent discipline (MICS 2019)
- Quick release of children from overcrowded institutions and detention facilities is urgently needed to avoid further spread of COVID-19 and potential loss of life

Child Protection Priority Activities

Child Protection Risk Messaging:

- Need for continued distribution of various child protection messages including: Tips for parents, Violence Against Children incl. GBV messaging will be escalated through continued for PSS and preventing violence. Through various distribution methods; –CP workforce, partners, community microphones, mobile apps and social media.
- Child Protection Assistance Package The overall child protection response strategy aims to support the GoB mitigate the negative short and long-term effects on children as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, preventing and responding to abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence against children including adolescents , promoting the safety, mental and psychosocial well-being of children especially the most vulnerable including children living with disabilities, children on the move, those living on the streets and in residential care. Due to COVID-19 caregivers may fall ill, be quarantined, be hospitalized or die. Alternative care solutions need to be identified for children starting when a caregiver is reported sick (before hospitalization or death). Children in need of alternative care/support solutions may fall into any of the below categories.
 - Children who have lost one or two parents or a primary caregiver due to COVID-19
 - Children who are survivors of COVID-19
 - Children in quarantine situations (home, community, care centres)
 - Children who are living in communities heavily affected by COVID-19
 - Other vulnerable groups; include children with disabilities, children on the move, those living on the streets and those in residential care.
 - Financial support to be determined.
- Education Response Package The Education Contingency Plan is designed to support the Government of Bangladesh response to the immediate humanitarian needs of all affected children.
- Provide immediate educational responses to the affected children through the establishment of safe, temporary learning centers and the distribution of education kits.
 - Support micronutrient supplementation through Nutrition Campaign: Support the government Vitamin A campaign and real-time monitoring of all facilities to ensure no stock outs and maximum coverage of all children under 5.
 - Promote the National Helpline 109 toll free number for Violence against Women and Children

3.10 Hyogo Framework for Action

Core Objective

The World Conference on Disaster Reduction was held from January 18 to 22 2005 in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, and adopted the present Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters (here after referred to as the “Framework for Action”). The Conference provided a unique opportunity to promote a strategic and systematic approach to reducing vulnerabilities and risks to hazards. It underscored the need for, and identified ways of, building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters

Gaps of Children and Youth led DRR Integration

This framework promotes the inclusion of disaster risk reduction knowledge in relevant sections of school curricula at all levels and the use of other formal and informal channels to reach youth and children with information; it also promotes the integration of disaster risk reduction as an intrinsic element of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005–2015). However, there is no such specific Children and Youth led DRR Policy, Strategy, or Approach mentioned in this framework.

3.11 Policy Comparison Chart

The following chart depicts the stance of each these policies about children and youth engagement in DRR process. This is the summary of the whole discussion of this chaoter.

National policy document	Presence of children and youth as an agent	Children and youth engagement in DRR	Children and youth engagement in emergency response	Children and youth engagement in decision making	Children and youth are considered as special beneficiary
NPDM	No	No	No	No	Yes
DM Act 2012	No	No	No	No	Yes
SOD	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
NAPA	No	No	No	No	Yes
Sendai	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Perspective Plan (2021-2041)	No	No	No	No	Yes
8th FYP	No	No	No	No	Yes
HCTT Contingency Plan 2020	No	No	No	No	Yes

4. Analysis of the Existing DRR Approaches Implemented by Partners: Interventions, Innovations and Lessons

The following section presents the analysis of the existing practices involving children and youth in DRR activities that are currently being implemented by Save the Children, World Vision, Action Bangladesh, and Plan International Bangladesh. The information is primarily collected from the field. The implementation approaches are presented according to the intervention area i.e. District as to consider the fact that a district also represents a specific hazard profile.

4.1 Dhaka

Vulnerability Context

Dhaka is the capital of Bangladesh. The current metro area population of Dhaka in 2022 is 23 million and here 2156 residents live per square kilometer.^[1] Dhaka is facing serious environmental threats from pollution caused by the city's rapid expansion, congestion, and industrial activities. Increasing air and water pollution emanating from traffic congestion and industrial waste is affecting public health and the quality of life in the city. Water bodies and wetlands around Dhaka are facing extinction as they are filled in to construct multi-storied buildings and other real estate developments. Coupled with pollution, such erosion of natural habitats threatens to destroy much of the regional biodiversity.

Dhaka is susceptible to flooding during the monsoon seasons owing to heavy rainfall and cyclones. Because of the very high density of population and unplanned development of buildings, Dhaka is also prone to earthquakes, quite dangerously. Even a slight tremor is the potential to bring devastating collapse in Dhaka. Dhaka also has chemical factories situated in the residential areas which makes it no less vulnerable to fire breakout. Due to the poor drainage system, waterlogging is also an issue in Dhaka.

Risk Reduction Approach

In Dhaka, the study assessed the risk reduction approach adopted by Save the Children (SC). Since 2018, SC has been implementing an urban project titled 'Proyash II' in collaboration with partner organization SEEP. This project aims to enhance the capacities of women, children, youth, and relevant government institutions to contribute to urban resilience in informal settlements. In doing so, it engages women's group, Urban Youth in front of their community's first responders- commonly known as

^[1] https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Vhn2t_PbEzo5-NDGBeoFJq4XCoSzOVKg/view

urban community volunteers (UCV), Ward Disaster Management Committee (WDMC),

Promoting citizen journalism through child and youth engagement – commonly known as child and youth journalists, Children & youth group, Promoting children leadership in school for safe school, Slum Development Committee, Housing society committee, Media personnel, Govt. Officials, School Teachers, and Community people (Parents & caregivers).

Key activities this project performs in Dhaka include (a) arranging capacity building training for the urban community volunteers (UCV), Ward Disaster Management Committee (WDMC) in collaboration with Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defence (FSCD), (b) supporting FSCD to organize UCVs mass gathering and simulation for better coordination among UCVs, FSCD, city corporations, ministries and other related stakeholders, (c) supports the CCDMC and WDMC members to conduct the Urban Risk Assessment (URA), (d) arrange leadership training for selected youth groups only, not the children's, (e) support the children and youth networks to address the goals of cleaner, greener and safer cities and schools etc.

Children and Youth Engagement Components

This project aims increasing awareness among the people about the pre, during, and post-phases of any disaster. To prevent the prevalent disasters in their area like small fire incidents, waterlogging, and earthquakes, local children and youths and UCVs are being trained. This project also nurtures UCVs through fire service, mainly consisting of youths, so that they can work as first responders if any disaster occurs. They also provided them with light safety equipment for search and rescue purposes, which are stored in the community disaster resource center. They have CBO, women groups, and child journalists.

Urban Community Volunteers. Nurturing and facilitating the UCV members is one of the models of engaging children and youth in DRR activities under the project Proyash II. It engages them in different activities. In the first place, they are being trained to prevent disasters by using available resources. Fire incidents and waterlogging in Dhaka are quite prevalent. They are informed on how to prevent or manage these disasters using all the available resources they have. The UCVs are trained by the Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defence (FSCD) to manage disasters. Apart from fire service, the volunteers are also trained by SEEP and government agencies including the fire department, the Ministry of Disaster Management and Resilience, and the municipal corporation, who subsequently share their knowledge with the residents of slums. The major goal of SEEP's "PROYASH II" initiative is to create disaster-resistant cities. They are also being connected by the Ward Disaster Management Committee (WDMC) members for further exposure and expansion of their activities and learning. Through their engagement with WDMC, they remain connected with local government officials as well.

This project supports FSCD to organize UCV mass gatherings and simulations for better coordination among UCVs, FSCD, city corporations, ministries, and other related stakeholders. This enables them to work with policymakers, city leaders, planners, architects, academicians, practitioners, youth, and children to develop a child-friendly urban planning framework through a consultative process.

- **Child Journalists.** Under this project, another important model of children and youth engagement in DRR activities is Child Journalism. There is a child journalism paper named 'Projonmo' where child journalists bring up concerns and stories of their community. They write about hazards that might prey on them. They reach various levels through their writings. These children teach DRR methods to their families, and peers, and raise their concerns to the local govt officials, and duty bearers through their writings. Their writeups are sent to various levels of society ranging from mass people to local government officials and policy makers.
- **Arrange leadership training for selected youth and children's groups.** Under this project, leadership training has been introduced for all the children and youth of the community. In this training, every child and youth of the community attends. Local women (including garment workers) are also supported through capacity building for resilient livelihood. In doing youth and children-sensitive risk assessment and contributing to effective planning, this project facilitates youth and children to participate at the local level. It also supports the children and youth networks to address the goals of cleaner, greener, and safer cities and schools.

Outcome

- **Enhanced capacity among mass people, Urban Community Volunteers, and Ward Disaster Management Committee.** In this project, 'SEEP' raises public awareness for pre, during, and post-phases of every disaster. People now know how to store dry sand, how to utilize it, and how to alert the fire department. These volunteer groups are trained by the Fire Service and Civil Defense Department so that they could act as first responders in any event of a disaster. SEEP gave them light safety equipment for search and rescue operations, which is kept in the neighborhood disaster resource center. They now know the major sources of fire breakout and because of the awareness programs and fire drill, they are now aware of the sources of fire and keep themselves safe by carefully handling the sources. Kaiser (alias) says, "Cooking stoves and current are potential sources. The fire department showed us how to safely use the kitchen stove. This helped us. We all are aware of the safe handling of stoves, and it helps." In terms of waterlogging, since drainage is a major concern, during severe rain that is the potential for waterlogging, the youth community promptly takes action for cleaning the higher debris in the drain that allows the water to flow freely. The training program of SEEP also includes the management of earthquakes which capacitate the volunteers to act wisely and promptly. In terms of creating awareness, informing the locality about disasters, and informing the policymakers about their sufferings, child journalism has been found to play a very crucial role. Through their activities, they create an impact on society by teaching DRR methods to their families, and peers, raising their concerns to the local govt officials, and duty bearers through their writings.
- **Ensured cooperation among the locals and different government agencies.** Through this project, local people, especially the volunteers got the opportunity to work closely with the different relevant government organizations including the ministry of disaster management and Relief and fire service department. In the cases of a fire breakout, for example, SEEP equipped the locals with an emergency hotline number of the FCSD department for immediate communication and action. About the necessity of it, Roni (alias) said, "Fire services hotline might

not be available all the time. Thus, they gave us their numbers so that we can inform them as soon as a fire breaks out.” It also helped steer policy advocacy to integrate women's and children's issues in urban resilience through generated evidence.

- **School Safety Management.** This model helped develop the relationship of the students with the Ministries of Primary and Mass Education, and Secondary and Higher Education. It helped to implement policies with the engagement of the children and youth. This equipped the students to a great extent to learn about disaster management and to work for their community. This yielded a greater impact on society.

Good Practices

Disaster risk is reduced through SEEP's Proyash II project, especially for the volunteers. The volunteers make people aware, work themselves, and most importantly, are being trained. The volunteers' work is proven effective because the community bond in this area is high. Locals carefully listen to the youth and cooperate whenever they can. About the local government, it comes forward when a disaster strikes but for precautions, no visible activity is seen. Comparatively, with other stakeholders like the fire service, and concerned ministries, the relationship is very good. Proyash II is remarkably successful, especially for its ability to create a bridge between government agencies and these very local people. The volunteers and youth journalists in Dhaka use social media to create awareness and inform people about different disaster management systems which is something unprecedented and effective. In these activities, women's participation is however less, and it is required to enhance further. Some of the noteworthy practices are-

1. Children's journalism and publication of the magazine 'Projonmo.'
2. Establishment of connection of children, youth, and UCVs with the local administration, ministerial representatives, WDMCs, and local political leaders.
3. School-based disaster management initiatives.
4. Training from FCSD and other departments.

Challenges

The primary obstacle to children and youth participation is family prohibition. Typically, parents do not want their kids in peril. In addition, the majority of the families believe it hinders the study. There is a widespread belief that 'girls can't join NGOs.' Despite this, one girl joined. Initially, she found it difficult but now she claims that "Things are changing as our parents can see that we are performing good activities and it is benefitting the people here."

Parental opposition to children while participating in these programs is a challenge but the scenario is changing. One respondent Hashim (alias) said "Parents used to dissuade and block us, but not so much anymore." Parents are especially concerned about young girls since they often have to respond at night. Considering the socio-cultural context, guardians are concerned about their children's protection and safety, particularly for their female offspring. However, involving kids in these initiatives has certain benefits in case of emergencies because they are familiar with the

locations and can help the agencies from multiple fronts ranging from household listing to rescuing to relief distribution to relocation and rehabilitation.

About the role of children and young people in terms of risk reduction in disasters, community leader says, children and teens received training; the majority of them volunteered during the disaster. They are assigned for educating the rest of the community. He also added that,

“They are prepared for disasters and know what to do. They sometimes receive a disaster briefing, though often they had to work without one. The young people participate in rescue efforts as well as extremely swift public awareness campaigns. They are informed and ready for action when calamity is even just a hint away. They take all necessary steps to avert disasters and reduce losses.”

The youth can act promptly. This establishes the necessity of children and youth engagement in disaster risk reduction. Fact-based arguments can hereby be applied to persuade parents, and youths to take part in catastrophe risk reduction initiatives.

For effective engagement of children and youth, there are some suggestions from the participants of the training. They think the training time should be extended by 3 to 7 days and should be arranged at least twice a year. Improving communication through print and social media, providing the attire for volunteers, and public acclaim for volunteers in emergency services or firefighting will also be helpful in this regard. Most importantly, they stressed the fact that the campaign’s benefits should be made known to everyone and distributed everywhere to secure participation. Halim (alias) mentioned,

“The measures SEEP takes have many positive aspects. Safeguarding procedures are necessary when working with children and SEEP strictly maintains it. All that is needed is to let the parents informed about the measures SEEP takes for their successors.”

SEEP always get their parents’ or guardians’ permission. When a child is a girl, they usually bring their female guardian with them. During the process, their appropriate time is also taken into account. The presence of children also makes it clear where she is going—or rather, where she is going to work. Their guardians are aware of their business and their safety procedures. This transparency and responsible act are also changing the mentality and guardians are nowadays willing to send their children to such activities.

4.2 Chattogram

Vulnerability Context

Chattogram is located between 21°54' and 22°59' north latitude and between 91°17' and 92°13' east longitude. This district is distinct from other districts of the country in terms of natural features due to the presence of mountains, rivers, seas, forests, and valleys. The total area of the district is

5282.92 sq. km. (2039.74 sq. miles) of which 1700 sq. km. (456.37 sq. miles) including the coastal area is under forest. It is bounded on the north by Feni and Khagrachhari districts and Tripura state of India, east by Khagrachhari, Rangamati, and Bandarban districts, south by Cox's Bazar district, and west by Noakhali district and the Bay of Bengal. The district consists of 15 upazilas with an 8.44 million population.

Chattogram is prone to a good number of hazards that includes cyclones, tidal surges, coastal floods, windstorms, thunderstorms, waterlogging, and tornados. [1] Among these, this project dealt with cyclones, landslide, and waterlogging.

This district's 1318 sq. km. area is highly prone to cyclones that include 6.3 million people. Almost 80% people of in Chattogram are highly prone to cyclones. Among this, 2.5 million are residents of the city corporation.

Waterlogging is another very common disaster in Chattogram that put 3.6 lakh people in Chattogram under vulnerability. Waterlogging probably has the most dangerous face in nowhere but here. People of Anwara upazilla (76 thousand), Fatikchhari upazilla (20 thousand), Hathhazari upazilla (2 lakh), Patiya upazilla (26 thousand), and Sandwip upazilla (08 thousand) are susceptible to waterlogging in Chattogram. About landslides, no such national-level data is available

[1] Chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcgiclfndmkaj/http://203.112.218.65:8008/WebTestApplication/userfiles/Image/Atlas/Chattogram_Atlas.pdf .

Risk Reduction Approach

To tackle the disasters critical for Dhaka as mentioned, one of the reputed INGO 'Save the Children' works exclusively in collaboration with another NGO namely 'YPSA. Since 2018, they have initiated the 'Proyash II' project operates in Chattogram City Corporation.

This project aims to enhance the capacities of women, children, youth, and relevant government institutions to contribute to urban resilience in informal settlements. In doing so, it includes engaging women's groups, urban community volunteers (UCV), Ward Disaster Management Committee (WDMC), Children & Youth Journalists, Children & youth group, school students and teachers, Slum Development Committee, Housing society committee, Media personnel, Govt. Officials, School Teachers, and Community people (Parents & caregivers).

Key activities this project performs in Chattogram include (a) arranging capacity-building training for the urban community volunteers (UCV), Ward Disaster Management Committee (WDMC) in collaboration with Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defence (FSCD), (b) supporting FSCD to organize UCVs mass gathering and simulation for better coordination among UCVs, FSCD, city corporations, ministries, and other related stakeholders, (c) supports the CCDMC and WDMC members to conduct the Urban Risk Assessment (URA), (d) arrange leadership training for selected youth groups only, not the children's, (e) support the children and youth networks to

address the goals of cleaner, greener and safer cities and schools, and (f) translates existing DRR Key Messages for schools and households.

Key stakeholders of this project range from local government to different ministries that include Chattogram city corporation, Chattogram Urban Network (CUN), Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defense (BFSCD), Urban INGO Forum Bangladesh, Urban Resilience Coalition in Bangladesh, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR), Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME), Ministry of Education (MoE), Department of Primary Education (DPE), and Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP).

Children and Youth Engagement Components

The youth society of Chattogram is working on different NGO-led projects. The youth and the children are not only able to enhance their knowledge and experience but also act promptly in damage control activities, awareness-building activities, and post-disaster livelihood reconstruction activities. The youths are briefed after any natural disasters like fire breakouts and landslides, and they know what to do and what not to do. The disaster prevention committee that has been created, is successful in many ways. They cleaned many busy places in the town with YPSA. The specialty of the disaster prevention committee is, that they have small communities of children journalists who provide necessary news for local newspapers and magazines. They have cleaned the school and its surroundings. The local government along with the NGOs provides leadership in any initiative.

A project called Proyash II under YPSA has been successfully implemented for risk-averse people. The initiatives that are taken for the prevention of Natural disasters are - Emergency response & rescuing people during a disaster, awareness before disasters, and reconstruction after destruction by the disasters. The youth and the children work to prevent disasters by participating in these activities. The main focus of these programs is to encourage the youth to work on different social activities that help minimize the risks of disaster.

Youth involvement in disaster management yields better outcomes. According to one of the respondents, “Giving priority to the youth should be considered in terms of disaster prevention as youth and Children are more enthusiastic than adults in these cases.” This project aims increasing awareness among the people about pre, during, and post-phases of any disaster. To prevent the prevalent disasters in their area like small fire incidents, waterlogging, and earthquakes, local children and youths and UCVs are being trained. This project also nurtures UCVs through fire service, mainly consisting of youths, so that they can work as first responders if any disaster occurs. They also provided them with light safety equipment for search and rescue purposes, which are stored in the community disaster resource center. They have CBO, women groups, and child journalists.

- **Urban Community Volunteers.** Nurturing and facilitating the UCV members is one of the models of engaging children and youth in DRR activities under the project Proyash II. It engages them in different activities. In the first place, they are being trained to prevent disasters by using available resources. Landslides, cyclones, and waterlogging in Chattogram are quite prevalent. They are informed on how to prevent or manage these disasters using all the available resources they have. The UCVs are trained by the Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defence (FSCD) to manage disasters. Apart from fire service, the volunteers are also trained by

YPSA and government agencies including the FSCD department, the Ministry of Disaster Management and Resilience, and the municipal corporation, who subsequently share their knowledge with the residents of slums. The major goal of YPSA's "PROYASH II" initiative is to create disaster-resistant cities. They are also being connected by the Ward Disaster Management Committee (WDMC) members for further exposure and expansion of their activities and learning. Through their engagement with WDMC, they remain connected with local government officials as well. This project supports FSCD to organize UCV mass gatherings and simulations for better coordination among UCVs, FSCD, city corporations, district administration, ministries, and other related stakeholders. This enables them to work with policymakers, city leaders, planners, architects, academicians, practitioners, youth, and children to develop a child-friendly urban planning framework through the consultative process.

- **Child and Youth Journalists.** Under this project, another important model of children and youth engagement in DRR activities is Child and Youth Journalism. The child and youth journalists bring up concerns and stories of their community. They write about hazards that might prey on them. They reach various levels through their writings. These children teach DRR methods to their families, and peers, and raise their concerns to the local govt officials, and duty bearers through their writings. Their writeups are sent to various levels of society ranging from mass people to local government officials and policy makers.
- **Arrange leadership training for selected youth and children's groups.** Under this project, leadership training has been introduced for all the children and youth of the community. In this training, every child and youth of the community attends. Local women (including garment workers) are also supported through capacity building for resilient livelihood. In doing youth and children-sensitive risk assessment and contributing to effective planning, this project facilitates youth and children to participate at the local level. It also supports the children and youth networks to address the goals of cleaner, greener, and safer cities and schools.
- **Urban Risk Assessment (URA) and advocacy program.** Ward Survey and Advocacy program was another project that was completely done by the youths and children mostly though other members of the community also remain engaged in this process. They know their locality better and they work bias freely. As such, truly needy households get help from different interventions of the NGOs. Hereby, from multiple fronts, the participation of the youth is very essential for society in managing disasters in different phases.

In a nutshell, Proyash II enables and motivates the youth and the children to operate during and after any disasters with full dedication. The youth and the children provide weather precautions and raise awareness through miking and campaigning. They also help provide relief whenever necessary. Through the NGOs, the poor and vulnerable people receive grants, aid, medicines, and necessary commodities and these are being distributed by the volunteers of Save the Children and YPSA. In the post disasters phase, the children and youth along with the NGOs facilitate reconstruction work.

Outcome

- **Enhanced capacity among mass people, Urban Community Volunteers, and Ward Disaster Management Committee.** Under this project, 'YPSA' has 200 trained volunteers and currently providing training to 100 more. These volunteers are the first responders to any disasters in their locality. Due to the public awareness of pre, during, and post-phases of every disaster they raise, people are now much more aware of the adversities and can act accordingly. The training program of YPSA also includes the management of waterlogging, landslides, and earthquakes which capacitate the volunteers to act wisely and promptly. People now know how to store dry sand, how to utilize it, and how to alert the fire department. These volunteer groups are trained by the Fire Service and Civil Defense (FCSD) department so that they could act as first responders in any event of a disaster. YPSA gave them light safety equipment for search and rescue operations, which is kept in the neighborhood disaster resource center. In terms of waterlogging, since drainage is a major concern, during severe rain that is the potential for waterlogging, the youth community promptly takes action for cleaning the higher debris in the drain that allows the water to flow freely. In terms of creating awareness, informing the locality about disasters, and informing the policymakers about their sufferings, child and youth journalism has been found to play a very crucial role. Through their activities, they create an impact on society by teaching DRR methods to their families, and peers, raising their concerns to the local govt officials, and duty bearers through their writings.
- **Ensured cooperation among the locals and different government agencies.** Through this project, local people, especially the volunteers got the opportunity to work closely with the different relevant government organizations including the ministry of disaster management and relief and fire service department. In the cases of a fire breakout, for example, YPSA equipped the locals with an emergency hotline number of the FCSD department for immediate communication and action. It also helped steer policy advocacy to integrate women's and children's issues in urban resilience through generated evidence.
- **School Safety Management.** This model helped develop the relationship of the students with the Ministries of Primary and Mass Education, and Secondary and Higher Education. It helped to implement policies with the engagement of the children and youth. This equipped the students to a great extent to learn about disaster management and to work for their community. This yielded a greater impact on society.

Good Practices

Through YPSA's and Save the Children's projects, specifically for the volunteers, disaster risk is decreased. Most importantly, the volunteers are being trained. They are aware of individuals who work for themselves. The strong community bonding in this area makes the work of the volunteers effective. Locals consider the youth seriously and work with them wherever possible. However, the local administration steps up only when a hazard attacks and no other visible activity is observed. In comparison, relationships with other stakeholders like the fire service and relevant ministries are excellent. YPSA is incredibly effective, particularly in its capacity to build a bridge

between government entities and these local citizens. The volunteers and youth journalists in Chattogram use social media to create awareness and inform people about different disaster management systems which is something unprecedented, innovative, and effective. In these activities, women's participation is however less, and it is required to enhance further. Some noteworthy achievements are-

1. Children as agents of change.
2. Children as risk communicators
3. Children's role in local and national level planning as an advocate
4. Children and Youth Journalism
5. Establishment of connection of children, youth, and UCVs with the local administration, ministerial representatives, WDMCs, and local political leaders.
6. Urban Risk Assessment (URA) for assessing risks and resources.
7. Training from FCSD, Bangladesh Alliance of Youth (BAY), and other departments.

Challenges

Nonetheless, the youth and the children often face many problems regarding their participation in these events. The parents think about their safety issues. While working on disaster management issues, parents think that their successors will be in peril, thus restricting their engagement. Another issue is gender biases. Female volunteers often face gender-based criticisms, sometimes are countered by eve-teasing. This considerably demotivates them from engaging in such types of work. Also, this restricts society to consider female participation positively. In such works, boys and girls work together and this is also criticized by the families. Families also feel scared due to the fear of being politicized. Volunteers who work on these projects are prone to be engaged in politics.

Thus, to increase the participation of children, awareness building among parents and society is a must. Teachers and educational institutes can be utilized here for increasing their engagement. BNCC and the members of Rover Scout can also be included to gain the confidence of the families. NGOs however must ensure that the volunteers will be safe, particularly the girls. Comfortability and safety of the girls have to be ensured if their assistance is asked. If these steps can be done, children and youth engagement in DRR will be possible in Chattogram

4.3 Satkhira

Vulnerability Context

Satkhira is a district of Khulna division having an area of 3858.33 sq km. It is located between 21°36' and 22°54' north latitudes and in between 88°54' and 89°20' east longitudes. It is bounded by the Jashore district on the north, the Bay of Bengal on the south, the Khulna district on the east, and the West Bengal state of India on the west. The area is famous for its rainy climate, interesting

nature and lots of palm trees, interesting old culture, and architecture. Different rivers namely Ichamoti, Kalandi, Batraboti, Kopadakka, Raymongal, Morirchappa, Kulpatua, and Kaschiali rivers are flowing over the vast territory of the district. In the south of the district huge area of the Sundarban mangrove forest caused a monsoon climatic effect which once caused enough rainfall. But due to climate changes and recently happened to Aila and Sidr the physical environment of the district has Satkhira is subject to a greater number of natural disasters. Flooding, waterlogging, cyclones, and salinity are the four most common types of natural catastrophes that can be found in Satkhira. The salinity of the water is an ongoing concern, and there is no set period for it to be addressed. Flooding can happen at any time between February and July, although cyclones typically strike in April or May. Natural disasters such as typhoons and saltwater intrusion also occur often. These disasters are having a wide variety of repercussions at the moment.

Risk Reduction Approach

The research discovered that there are some interventions for engaging the youth and children community in the Satkhira district. Action Aid Bangladesh has made an effort to assemble some conscious adolescents and children and has given them the knowledge they need regarding the crisis. They received some inadequate training, however. The local population suffers significantly after each disaster. Youths of Satkhira worked in the post-disaster phase sometimes. When Cyclone Amphan was expected to hit the area, members of the youth organization attempted to verbally warn everyone in markets and public spaces. In addition, they also raised awareness for moving to nearby schools or cyclone shelters. For those who don't want to move to shelters, the youths requested them to stay in secure locations. After a recent disaster, a young woman claimed that they raised funds from the community and the local UP members and used them to buy food for the survivors. After it was prepared, the khichuri was given to the affected people.

Children and Youth Engagement Components

Some of the mention-worthy models developed and implemented by Action Aid Bangladesh in Satkhira as described here.

Youth-led food and hygiene kits distribution is one such activity. It was distributed in the context of 2nd Wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021. Young people of Satkhira working with HEAD distributed support to the marginalized community and followed a selection criterion to reach the most marginalized groups. Through this initiative, young people distributed food and hygiene packages to marginalized families. The following list explicitly exhibits their engagement via the model mentioned.

- A total of 98 young people participated in the various capacity development initiative, young women 52 and young men 46.
- A total of 212 young people, 97 young women, and 115 young men, participated in the actions against common causes.
- Against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic the grassroots community of Satkhira remained reluctant and faced challenges to register for COVID vaccination by using online

tools. Therefore, Meghna Youth Group, Modhumoti Youth Group, Gopinathpur, and Alor Michel Youth Group in Satkhira launched a campaign called ‘save people save life’. The campaign enhanced awareness in the community and a total of 150 community people registered under the vaccination program.

- Young people distributed Face Mask and Soap to the marginalized community
- Activists in Satkhira launched a campaign for enhancing awareness of the COVID-19 Pandemic through public announcements and poster-making with the message of maintaining personal health, hygiene practice, and social distancing. Through the campaigning, these young people could cover ten villages and approximately reached 10,000 community people. During this time young people distributed 500 face masks and soaps to the marginalized communities by mobilizing resources from the well-off community people.
- Young people of Satkhira, HEAD distributed food and hygiene packages to 146 marginalized families.
- In 2021, young people engaged with workers and owners of barber shops, hotels, and restaurants for practicing a decent work environment. The engagement process further activated the association of the barber shop workers for negotiating with the owners. As a result of the advocacy, 12 barber shops provided employment agreements to 55 workers to claim their rights.
- On another advocacy, young people mobilized Sawmill employees for organizing dialogue with the owners, and as a result of the intervention the Sawmill employers agreed to provide overtime to 60 workers.
- Along with that, young people in Sakthira engaged with the works of the Tailoring Shops. During the process, they motivated the workers to form a workers’ association to pursue their rights. As a result of their effort, a nine-member association committee was formed during the process. Afterward, the association advocated with the owners which resulted in 50 workers from 15 tailoring shops receiving employment agreements mentioning the rights.
- Besides, young people engaged with lathe and rice mills workers for generating evidence of decent work practices at the workplace. The initiative led to generate positive discussion among the lathe and rice mill owners who agreed to provide employment agreements to the workers.

Youth-led Digital Engagement Project (YDE)

Young people of Satkhira have worked together with CDOW (Local partner) from August 2020 to June 2021 to support COVID-19-affected community people in a variety of approaches.

- **COVID-19 awareness** – 63906 people have been made aware through the dissemination of leaflets, and banners, on COVID-related information. For mass awareness, young people have shared information through miking.
- **COVID-19-related health campaigning and medical support** – 7,252 people have been provided medical support during COVID-19. Young people have supported these
- people to access medical services, get registered with the hospital, and avail the health services.
- **COVID-19 vaccination campaign** – More than 40,000 people have been supported through local COVID-19 vaccination campaign booths to be registered for the COVID vaccine at the union, upazila, and district levels in Satkhira.

- **Mask distribution** – Young people provided 3,600 masks to community people on different occasions, in the marketplaces, and the community gatherings.
- **Food support** – 4,016 marginalized households have been given food support during COVID-19 who lost their livelihood during COVID-19 and were unable to afford food support for their family members. Young people collected money from the solvent families, bought food, and distributed it to those marginalized people in the community.
- **WASH and hygiene support** – 713 households have been given WASH and hygiene support and related materials during 2nd phase of COVID-19
- **Survey report preparation** – 20 young people supported to collect of national survey data from 400 households for a humanitarian response during the COVID period and beyond.

All these activities are notable in terms of youth engagement. The magnitude of children's engagement and more focus on DRR activities may bring better outcomes in terms of ensuring resiliency in Satkhira.

Good Practices

ActionAid Bangladesh to some extent tried to engage the local people to work for disaster vulnerability. The local government's involvement is not satisfactory here. The local people tackle disasters of their own mostly and if relief arrives, local government officials distribute those among the affected. The stakeholders are the youth and children, the local government, and NGOs. No such innovation in disaster management has been discovered in Satkhira. Women do not engage in any participatory work.

Challenges

There are some challenges from the family, but the major problem is people's non-cooperation. Such problems recur frequently; if a few of them take the initiative together, other people usually don't join us in that endeavor. The community also doesn't take their suggestions seriously. A girl said,

“Parents don't let us go for any work during the cyclone and elders don't want to listen to our views or opinions”.

Female volunteers suffer the most in this regard. The female members face criticism from society. Eve-teasing is another issue for them.

Apart from these, another pressing problem there is that the volunteers don't have clear instructions or any organizational support. There is no significant attempt to instruct or guide or train them. Because of this, most young people are not interested in these activities.

To increase youth engagement, arranging training, for the respondents think necessary. They claimed that if the children and youth are trained, participation will be increased. CDOW manager however mentioned that financing is the major problem in this regard. If financing is increased, their engagement can be ensured further. The youth also proposed that the NGOs should engage

the local government so that they can have direct access to the administrators and can play a role efficiently in managing the disasters.

4.4 Bhola

Vulnerability Context

Bhola, the largest riverine delta of the world, lies between 21°54' and 22°52' north latitudes and between 90°34' and 91°01' east longitudes. The total area is 3403.48 sq. km (1314.00 sq. miles) of which 1456.87 sq. km. is under forest. Bhola Island is a part of the active delta of the three mighty river systems –the Ganges, Brahmaputra, and the Meghna located in the lower Meghna estuary. Bhola is the largest island in Bangladesh. The total population of the zila enumerated in the 2011 Census is 1776795 of which 243317 (13.69%) constitute the urban population and the remaining 1533478 (86.31%) constitute the rural population.

Bhola a remote district from the capital surrounded by all Sides Rivers and rivulets, on the south, lies the Bay of Bengal, which is made of coastal plain land not much above 5 ft from sea level. On the eastern side the mighty Meghna flows into the Bay, whereas on the north and western side of river Tetulia, a branch of Meghna falls into the Bay. The island of Bhola is situated in an area categorized as estuarine floodplains. Estuarine floodplains differ from meander floodplains in being almost level, lacking meander scars and abandoned channels, and having almost uniformly silty deposits.

Being a coastal region, Bhola is prone to several disasters. ‘Bhola Disaster Prone Area Atlas’[\[1\]](#) suggests that Bhola is prone to cyclones, floods, salinity, tidal surge, thunderstorm, and tornado. Among these, this project dealt with cyclones and riverbank erosion – which is not listed in this document, however.

According to this most recent national document, a total 485.76 sq. km. area of Bhola is prone to cyclones which incorporate 1.28 million lives. Bhola has seven upazillas and the area and number of populations affected are distributed among those. In Burhanuddin upazilla, 54.09 sq. km area is vulnerable to be affected incorporating 1.3 lakh people; in Char Fasson upazilla 143.29 sq. km. area is vulnerable to be affected incorporating 3.2 lakh people; in Daulatkhan upazilla 43.94 sq. km. area is vulnerable to be affected incorporating 1.4 lakh people; in Lalmohan upazilla 102.66 sq. km. area is vulnerable to be affected incorporating 2.5 lakh people; in Manpura upazilla 24.14 sq. km. area is vulnerable to be affected incorporating 64 thousand people; in Tazumuddin upazilla 17.12 sq. km. area is vulnerable to be affected incorporating 54 thousand people. For riverbank erosion, no such data is nationally aggregated as of now.

Risk Reduction Approach

Given the risks of the disasters in Bhola, Plan International in association with SAP Bangladesh has been working closely with the local people for years. Currently, the “Integrated Sponsorship Project” is in continuation in which three major activities that have been done are, (a) procurement of menstrual hygiene management kits for adolescent sponsorship children (yet to distribute as no disaster happen in this FY), (b) organize DRR basic training for NGO staffs and community volunteers, and (c) organized School Level Mock-drill on Cyclone.

Earlier, another project namely “Inclusive Community Disaster Risk Management Project” was there which had a broader scope. In that project, local DRRM committees were trained on climate change, inclusive-DRRM, risk profiles, mainstreaming of gender, disability, and inclusive risk assessment and contingency planning. Besides, orienting the School Disaster Management Committees on Comprehensive Safe School Framework, contingency plans also took place. It also facilitated the Support Committees to conduct area risk assessment using the participatory hazard vulnerability and capacity assessment (HVCA) and created inclusive, gender-sensitive contingency plans. Moreover, Support Committees simulated inclusive area evacuations and management operations and established Area Based Early Warning System. It also provides funding to retrofit or rehabilitate dilapidated evacuation paths and area shelters to help them withstand environmental disasters.

In both the projects, local peoples are the main beneficiary and agent of change. They mostly involve the youth for effective implementation of these projects. Apart, they collaborate with Union Parishad, Upazila Parishad, teachers, and local elites.

Children and Youth Engagement Components

In Bhola, women and children participation are very low here. Participation of boys are also negligible. To motivate them in these activities, SAP and PIB applied the ‘Educainment’ approach. They organize theater show to inform people about disaster management techniques. This approach has got momentum and making people aware about the importance of their involvement in such activities.

Second important model is School level Mock-drill on Cyclone. Through the mock drill, students remain updated about the tasks they need to perform during a cyclone. They can also motivate their family members to take necessary actions. They can also help to some extent amid such emergency situation.

Outcome

Despite all these initiatives DRR in Bhola is good but can be enhanced further. Despite all these actions through projects, children are not at all allowed by the families to take part in them. The youths can engage to some extent. What they mostly do is awareness building. This swimming

learning campaign was taken especially for the children which was highly praised by the local people. It assures them that their children won't drown in water during the flood. Also, it gives them confidence that they can go out during a disaster to help others.

Young people of Bhola City are engaged in growing awareness about possible disasters and hazards. These youths (not children) are growing the awareness among people on managing disasters like cyclones, floods, and tidal bores. The people of this area are capacitated to address the disaster risk through an 'awareness program & campaign.' These programs capacitate local community members not only to cope with but also to manage the disaster. One of our respondents, Jamal (alias) said,

"We know how to deal with disasters risk cause campaigns are carried out here, such as SAP practiced the play with the youngsters a few months ago. They took part in this play and advocated on how to cope with catastrophe risk."

To deal with the disasters, the youths took precautions before the disasters, keeping the risk-averse people in the rehabilitation centers during disasters and repairing and reconstructing after that. One of our respondents also said,

"Due to the awareness program of SAP, we are informed now that how to get prepared for disasters. We uplifted our houses and reconstructed our roads. We taught swimming to the children through our initiatives supported by NGOs, sometimes."

Youth engagement, the UP chairman, and other community members consider pivotal for disaster management. In one case the chairman mentioned the erosion at Elisha Ghat and Veduria Launch Ghat. The chairman along with the ward councilor provided blocks to prevent river erosion at Elisha Ghat and Veduria Launch Ghat. The youths volunteered in that intervention, and they secured the place within a week. Referring to this event, the UP chairman said,

"The young members are energetic and enthusiastic. They can work fast and effectively. That's the primary reason for youth engagement in disaster prevention measures."

Apart, the youths also repaired the road that was broken and damaged by the flood. Youth engagement in Bhola is not only limited to these interventions. They also help make family members and neighbors aware of any approaching disaster, offering varied information, collecting dry food, and assisting people to get to the cyclone center.

Good Practices

1. Edutainment approach via Theater. This is found as the most praised intervention with an unparalleled efficacy than any given DRR intervention introduced in Bhola in recent decades. People of all ages eagerly wait for theater shows and they take lessons from that. Mostly the local youths act in these events. This has been proven as a great learning platform.
2. School mock-drill. This helps to raise awareness among the children and youth

Challenges

In Bhola, community bond is moderate. Community leaders though think the engagement of children and youth is pivotal, families don't want it that way. Especially for children, families are in a non-negotiable stance that their children won't join any such activity. Regarding youth, some families allow many of them to restrict themselves mainly for two reasons – education, and politicization. Families are afraid of being politicized and don't eager to send their boys to these activities. The primary obstacle to children and youth participation is family prohibition. The majority of the members believe it hinders the study and they are not capable of doing such work. There is a widespread belief that 'girls shouldn't join in those initiatives. Family does not allow girls to leave home, what society will say about this. Families' reluctance to sign off on their daughters' participation in such programs is thus a significant barrier to their widespread adoption. Families typically do not volunteer information. In this regard, the UP chairman said,

“Families here are very conservative, and it is very difficult to engage the girls and women in disaster management activities. Sometimes it is difficult to engage the boys as well.”

Though partly agreed with this statement, the area manager of SAP further added that,

“There have been a lot of changes since I started working here in 2016, he says. There is a rapid pace of change.”

Another obstacle the youths face is demotivation. Often, when young people try to speak up or approach for assistance, local elites discourage their intervention and effort saying that they are inexperienced, and they do more harm than good. These are the political roadblocks. To put it simply, youth engagement lessens local elites' power and dominance. This, however, make the youths reluctant and demotivated. The elites and political leaders want their young political leaders to intervene. Amid such a politically chaotic context, many families don't allow their boys to take part in such activities.

Another issue of their demotivation is the lack of funding. The volunteers explicitly said that they receive no money from the organizers. Being students, they can't travel with their own money. This factor plays a major role in the reduction of their engagement.

As such, most of the community engagement activities are found patronized by NGOs. To lessen the danger of disaster, the Jago Nari Foundation worked closely with them. They engaged youths to reconstruct a busy road and establish a bridge. This foundation however discontinued their activities in Bhola. Currently, SAP directly works with the community in disaster risk reduction programs intending to make Bhola a disaster-resistant city. UCYF (Union Children Youth Forum) was used to carry out the exercise to connect the local people to deal with the disaster. This particular event is very popular among the locals, and it motivates others to take part in such community work. However, the exercise work is performed in a far place, and due to the organization's short budget, participants receive less amount of travel allowances. This slightly demotivates them that require attention. Nonetheless, such courtyard meetings or play rehearsals increase participation and yield effective outcomes.

The children, on the other hand, help in household-level activities during disasters. They help in stockpiling dry foods, dumping bricks and bags in the river, disseminating information among neighbors, and looking after siblings.

A local community leader of the Bheduriya union of Bhola said that teenagers' and children's participation is essential in disaster management. They must be taught how to cope with calamities. He observed that the role of children and young people in terms of risk reduction in disasters is very effective, transparent, and time-saving. Children and youth have a role. Their joint efforts

with the government and NGOs will speed recovery. Children and teens were seen rehearsing to cope with disaster management risks in their region. The benefits of incorporating children and youths in disaster management include increased awareness. Because they are a demographic force, if they are motivated, the harm will be mitigated. To ensure effective participation, lessening politicization of youths, recognition of the works of the children and youth, and awareness building among the family members are the key tasks. With the help of the upazilla administration, these things can be done and once done, damages will greatly be controlled, the locals believe.

4.5 Sunamganj

Vulnerability Context

Sunamganj District is in Sylhet division and has an area of 3747.18 sq km, located between 24°34' and 25°12' north latitudes and in between 90°56' and 91°49' east longitudes. It is bounded by the Meghalaya state of India on the north, Habiganj and Kishoreganj districts on the south, Sylhet district on the east, and Netrokona district on the west. According to the Sunamganj district website, [\[1\]](#) the Total population is approximately 2.4 million with almost a 50-50 balance between males and females. More or less 26 rivers are flowing among the 12 upazila of this district. The major rivers here are Surma and Kushiya. The average population density here is 659 per sq. km.

In mid-June 2022, Bangladesh and the northeastern states of India faced incessant rains causing extreme flooding in several parts of both nations. In Bangladesh, Sunamganj was affected and the severity was enormous. It was the worst flood to hit the districts of Sylhet and Sunamganj in 122 years. [\[2\]](#) This one example clearly states the vulnerability of Sunamganj to flood.

The flood-ridden Sunamganj district of Bangladesh had also been ranked the most lightning-prone place in the world on account of the number of lightning strikes between March and May of 2017. [\[3\]](#) The northeastern district was riddled with the most lightning strikes during the approximate three-month span of time in a study conducted by NASA and Maryland University in the USA. NASA's Steve Godman led the study team that researched lightning data for the past 10 years. Between March and May of 2017, a total of 25 lightning strikes hit per square kilometer of Sunamganj due to the geographical positioning of the region. The number of lightning strikes is increasing steadily. In 2014, a total of 918 lightning strikes hit the country. In 2015, the number increased to 1,218 and that rose to more than 2,500 in 2016. According to the disaster management department of Bangladesh, a least 1,152 people were killed by the thunderbolt strikes between 2010 and 2017

Risk Reduction Approach

To tackle the disasters critical for Sunamganj, ‘World Vision’ works exclusively since 2015. In this area, through initiated the ‘Sunamganj Area Development Program’ project operates in Sunamganj municipality.

This project aims to enhance the capacities of the most vulnerable community people, children, women-headed families, disabled families, including the unemployed person's family, and most helpless the orphan families. The key activity under this project includes (a) preparing a beneficiary list, (b) validating the beneficiary list by comparing the government list, (c) providing free of cost venue for storing commodities and distribution, (d) sharing distribution messages to the community, (e) assisting in the distribution of aids, (f) monitoring in distribution, post distribution, and end use phase, and lastly, (g) feedback of the project and lesson learning through the workshop.

Key stakeholders of this project are two DRR Committees at the Ward level formed by Sunamganj Municipality, 21 Village Development Committees (VDC), 25 Child Forums, one youth committee, counselors, and government officials.

Children and Youth Engagement Components

World Vision Bangladesh works with the local DRR committee to help them handle disasters. We have a child forum committee that also educates them about DRR to persuade the municipal committee and mayor to work on DRR efficiently. Whenever the Upazila DRR committee needs us, aid them, and vice versa. The Upazilla committees received SOD licenses in 2022 and trained the members of the world vision child forum and youth forum to swim so they may save themselves, and younger family members.

Apart, from these fora, the members are taught about different management strategies that they perform during any disaster. These include but are not limited to repairing tube-well for ensuring safe drinking water during flood and waterlogging, keeping paper secure, putting furniture at higher levels to protect them from flood water, storing LP gas, motivating people for going to shelters, storing dry foods, and keeping the children safe from diseases and drowning. This forum also provides disaster predictions that also help the locals to plan efficiently. About these fora, the local AP manager of world vision informed that,

“World Vision Bangladesh works with the local DRR committee to help them handle disasters. It also has a youth and child forum committee. These fora educate them about DRR to persuade the municipal committee and mayor to work on DRR efficiently. Whenever the Upazila DRR committee needs us, aid them, and vice versa.”

Youth involvement in Sunamganj has been strongly encouraged and found efficient. As they get more knowledgeable and involved, the situation will improve. In addition, they have a good chance

of carrying out their duties. Youth involvement in recent catastrophes has been concentrated in relief distribution through boats among the affected people. Youth involvement increases project success since they're more aware of the need of the locals and can work bias freely. They are not politicized, and this eventually reduces the practice of nepotism and uneven distribution of relief goods. Youth engagement also directly helps in reducing violence in that area since they are more into social work. One of the respondents said,

“Child and youth participation in different activities of disaster response in the region is yielding benefits. This program adds additional aspects to both awareness raising and social harmony.”

World Vision Bangladesh engaged the children, particularly in disaster management tasks through their child forum. Children of this forum can interact with the mayor, police, and other officials whenever necessary. Hereby, they directly can participate in policymaking and policy implementation. Along with youths, they also participate in seminars and raise awareness. The children who work in the forum also yield some other benefits like lessening school dropout and child marriage. They also raise money for community development, disaster relief, and impoverished students. They oppose child abuse, drugs, and trafficking.

Outcome

In Sunamganj, the community bonding is strong as reflected in the words of the stakeholders. The local government is not much active in DRR in the Sunamganj area. Therefore, before, during, and after the disaster, community members are required to be united to support themselves and recover from the hazards of the disaster. The interventions in Sunamganj by World Vision have been found enormously triumphant in engaging children and youth in DRR activities.

Firstly, through this project, a list of beneficiaries was prepared and validated. It helps efficient allocation of resources to the most needful during a disaster.

Secondly, providing a cost-free storage facility. While a proper beneficiary list facilitates effective management of DRR activities, providing free of cost venue for storing commodities and distribution ensures efficient and transparent distribution of commodities and proper mobilization of resources.

Thirdly and most importantly, through these activities, both children and youth are being engaged in DRR activities. This capacitates the young generation in understanding the modality of performing amid a disaster. they are now capable to bring meaningful deliberate change n the society. They are motivated to work with dedication. This project made the children and youth selfless in their deeds toward the community. Before the intervention, DRR activities were done by every stakeholder from their position without any communication and coordination among stakeholders. The interventions attempted to reduce this gap to some extent by collaborating with different stakeholders for example- the upazila committee helped train the child and youth forum. The establishment of several forums has given a sense of empowerment among the locals and has

been proven effective in managing disasters. However, the participation of women was dormant in the scenario and requires further escalation of activities to engage them.

Another major merit of this project is it mostly capacities the most vulnerable community people, children, women-headed families, disabled families, including the unemployed person's family, and most helpless the orphan families. In a nutshell, through the WVB forums, through these activities, and through capacitating the most vulnerable people, WVB is successful in reducing disaster risk in Sunamganj.

Good Practices

1. The establishment of multi-layer forums is a very effective approach. This gives a visible opportunity for escalation in the community. This community support network is very effective and unique in this model that motivates the children and youth to remain engaged and work dedicatedly. Because of this multilayer modality, people of different ages remain connected with the local elites and policy makers which also helps keep everyone connected.
2. Making beneficiary list. This helps to ensure transparency and effective distribution to a great extent. Community people praise this initiative very much.

Challenges

There are a couple of obstacles to children and youth engagement. First of all, the members of the children and youth forum need to spend time in meetings which causes a loss of studies. Secondly, the members are bound for early homecoming owing to rigorous parental supervision. Another issue is about earnings. Many youths, who are engaged in income-generating activities, can't afford the luxury to get engaged in voluntary work. They need to earn for their families. Some guardians feel social engagement unsafe for their offspring and don't want to let them participate. If young people are sent far away or need to remain engaged for a longer period, NGO officials need to ask the guardian's permission. Despite the intervention of NGOs, it still hinders the engagement of the youths in such activities, let alone the children. In such volunteering activities, both boys and girls work together, which some guardians don't think appropriate and restrict their children to engage. About this issue, one of the respondents stated

“From this forum of World Vision, we learn many things and can work for society. It helps us develop ourselves as well. despite, our parents often restricting us from engaging in such activities. Greater awareness is needed for them. If parents are informed, children and youth will be able to participate more. Thus, everyone in the community should raise awareness.”

In the case of motivating the young community, there may have some measures. Here, a respondent stated,

“Motivating teens and youngsters might increase their participation. A present or gratitude gift might stimulate DRR workers. A pen, school bag, or an annual picnic can be arranged to incentivize them. No need to offer cash, but a gift may help.”

Then again, only motivating the youths will not suffice, the members of the fora argued. The members are more or less motivated for working in this regard. What is significant here is to motivate the family members, the parents, and the members of the community so that they let their offspring contribute. Community members sometime titter at the volunteers and consider their engagement as childish. These odd behaviors demotivate them largely and when these are associated with family restriction, they often lose the spirit to continue these good works. Thus, the guardians and the community members both have to be given proper information about the activities, about the efficacy of their engagement. Less, it will be hard to manage the consent from the parents for youth and children's engagement in DRR activities. Motivating the youths to continue these good works will be impossible as well. Families also have concerns about the politicization of their offspring through such activities that the NGOs must address. NGOs should ensure that the members of these fora will not be politicized.

Youths can offer a bunch of possibilities and greater outcomes in eliminating disaster risk. Thus, NGOs and local governments should take steps to increase their engagement by raising even more awareness among community members.

4.6 Bagerhat

Vulnerability Context

Bagerhat is situated at the fringe of the Bay of Bengal with the plentiful bounties of the Sundarbans. It is bounded on the north by the Gopalganj district, on the east by the Pirojpur and Barguna districts, on the south by the Bay of Bengal, and the west by the Khulna district. It lies between 21°49 and 22°59 north latitudes and between 89°32 and 89°98 east longitudes. The total area of the district is 3959.11 sq. km. of which 1912.82 sq. km. is under forest. It has 9 upazillas and 1.47 million residents among which 1.2 million lives in rural areas.

Being a coastal region, Bagerhat is prone to several disasters. ‘Bagerhat Disaster Prone Area Atlas’[\[1\]](#) suggests that this district is prone to cyclones, tidal surges, coastal floods, windstorms, thunderstorms, waterlogging, and tornadoes. Among these, this project dealt with cyclones and tidal surges.

In Rampal Upazilla where the study was conducted, 15 cyclone shelters and 58 other infrastructures are there which altogether are capable of providing shelter to 1.5 lakh people. In Bagerhat, 5.5 lakh people are highly prone to cyclone among which nearly 1 lakh people belongs to Rampal upazila. In tidal surge, 1.8 lakh people of Bagerhat are vulnerable but in Rampal upazila, the number is only 10 thousand.

Risk Reduction Approach

One of the most well-known international nongovernmental organizations (INGO), World Vision, has begun a project called "Youth Led DRR by Using Digital Platform" in the Rampal Upazilla of the Bagerhat district to mitigate the devastating outcomes of natural disasters.

The initiative intends to improve the capacities of community members who are most susceptible to catastrophes and to give particular care to pregnant women, children, disabled groups, and the elderly. Aside from assisting individuals living along the river's edge and in low-lying areas to recover from the calamity.

Key activities this project undertakes are (a) mobilizing local government and community, (b) forming Youth Volunteer groups, (c) capacitating youth volunteers on the basics of DRR, (d) developing mobile-based software/apps, (e) capacitating youth volunteers to utilize software, and (f) data collection and analyzing. In this project, officials periodically perform monitoring and share experience with management.

Key stakeholders of this project include the UDMC, the village development committee, the community-based disaster management committee (DMC), the Upazilla disaster management committee, and the shelter management committee.

Children and Youth Engagement Components

World Vision Bangladesh claims that one of the most innovative dimensions that they include in their action plan is engaging children and youth in their activities via digital platforms. The success of this argument is however reflected in the words of all the interviewees. Both children and youth are spontaneously engaging in DRR activities. Children and Youth volunteers were engaged in digital monitoring in pre, during, and post-disaster separately.

Pre-Disaster: Volunteer communicates with CBDRM Committee, VDC, Child Forum, Youth Forum, and DRR Volunteer Group by providing them with information about the most vulnerable HHs. CBDRM Committee and other stakeholders can take appropriate decisions during pre-disaster preparedness planning and allocate resources by using that information. Besides that, those volunteers will collect information about the targeted community who stay outside of their homes like fishing in the sea or big rivers to disseminate disaster message. They also update their monitoring/follow-up information in the mobile-based software and AP collects those

During Disaster: Volunteers communicate with the Shelter Management Committee (SMC) and UDMC/UZDMC to take updates about the presence of targeted vulnerable HHs among the shelters. Also, they update the CBDRM Committee and DRR Volunteer about the present situation of those targeted vulnerable HHs to take any further action required. They also update all information in their database (about how many of the vulnerable HHs have taken shelter, what

kind of support they already received, and what kind of support they need more, etc.) accordingly and share updated information with AP to develop a situation report. Besides that, women volunteer will take extra responsibility to take care of the security and essential health/WASH support for adolescent girl, pregnant and lactating women, elderly female, and children.

Post Disaster: The volunteer will support conducting JNA (Joint Need Assessment) and post-disaster assessment to determine the damage and support needed for the community.

Database development is developed and managed for youth volunteers. It is developed with the support of the MEAL team and IT Specialist. After developing this software, it was installed in the Android mobile of volunteers by following IT Protocol. After installing the software, a detailed training/orientation session will be organized with the support of the IT Specialist of WVB. The software is managed through the WVB knowledge management Hub.

GIS software is used here and serves and is managed by the youths. It is installed in the Android mobile of volunteers by following IT Protocol. After installation, a practical orientation session is arranged for the volunteer with the support from IT Specialist of WVB. After mapping, the information is preserved in WVB Knowledge Hub. After collecting this information, a digital map is being, develop with the demarcation of the most vulnerable HHs who are highly inundated by disasters. That will help with resource allocation and DRR preparedness for the community-based various committee.

AP also supports organizing training on Core Humanitarian Standard, HAP, and SPARE Standard following the Guidelines of the HEA Dept. to capacitate volunteers on timely response and scale-up action on disaster mitigation. AP will also support organizing training on monitoring software (which will develop by WVB) and using GIS by engaging IT specialists and the MEAL team.

The young people also go door-to-door and provide the people with the helpline number of community clinics. Before the disaster, they help to reach “emergency alert” door-to-door. During the cyclone, they help aged people and pregnant women to reach community clinics or cyclone centers. In this regard, the Union Parishad help them out as they said. The Union Parishad provides them with dry foods and medicine which they distribute among the affected.

Regarding gender balance, during the formation of the volunteer group participants' ratio was considered Male: Female = 60:40. Considering the vulnerability of women and adolescent girls, AP provides training on Menstrual Hygiene Care, Emergency Health Care and WASH for the women volunteer. Thus, women volunteer can extend their support during the disaster in the cyclone shelter special to adolescent girls, and pregnant and lactating women when they take shelter in cyclone shelter.

Outcome

The intervention of World Vision in the Bagerhat area is not only successful but also a very unique one. Using mobile software for maintaining the database is something that is not found in any other study area covered in this study. This invention has increased the digital capacity of the youth and children of Rampal and also made the task easy and considerably time-saving. In a crisis, time is what costs most and any such time-saving intervention indeed enhances the capacity of management, and that reduces the risk of vulnerability to some extent since the data was shared among multi-stakeholders. Participants from the Youth FGD-

“We carried out surveys, collected data, analyzed data, and found out which households are affected the most and need more assistance to rehabilitate. These data were later disseminated to all the other stakeholders working in this respect.”

Another significant outcome of this project is the spontaneous participation of the youth. In fact, after the ‘Emergency Training response’, the majority of DRR activities are carried out by the youth. Through these activities, they are affiliating with leadership, empathy, responsibility towards the community, gender equality, promptness in emergencies, and so on. Building these qualities in youth can establish a sustainable outcome of the interventions. The engagement of children is also considerable. Children are engaged in awareness campaigns and training programs which enable them to contribute to DRR activities inside the walls. For example-before the disaster they helped their family members to prepare for an upcoming disaster, during a disaster they worked efficiently to contribute to the maintenance and discipline in the shelter. Overall, this project along with capacitating the locals, provided an important database to other stakeholders that also ensured effective management. Altogether, disaster risk in Rampal has been reduced significantly because of this project.

Good Practices

Social capital in the Rampal area of Bagerhat is an enriched one. Community ties are very strong here. As the area is disaster-prone, people help each other in all the inconvenience brought by the disaster. Local community leaders have sound knowledge of the situation of the community members. They even know the most vulnerable households, and so are children and youth. Local government is also well-bridged with the community. They align their activities with other stakeholders and are open to suggestions from the community members. The children and youth are facilitated through unique strategies like the usage of digital software, media, peer outreach group, and so on. Besides, the youth committee maintains equal distribution of male and female members. However, Women, especially, pregnant and disabled women are given focus but not empowered enough to participate.

Challenges

Children are eager to contribute to DRR programs. They think that they are capable of contributing significantly to this respect. To prove their claim, they mentioned their contribution during the Covid-19 pandemic when they engaged in awareness campaigns and mask distribution. They also actively participated in tree plantation campaigns previously with the elders. Thus, they think that they can be a valuable addition to the DRR programs.

However, they face immense resistance from their parents and their surroundings. The parents do not encourage their participation, especially during the disaster because of safety and security issues. Besides, elders do not like the children to stay outside the home after dark and kill their time to study by doing all these. The elders indulge in gossip when any child participates in these activities which further puts pressure on the parents.

The youth claimed that they have an upper hand in DRR activities. They are physically and mentally strong and fearless. They volunteer for these activities without thinking about themselves and caring more about their villagers. Besides, they have an advantage in reaching people faster than the GOs and NGOs. They can work more spontaneously at the field level. Therefore, they think that their participation can multiply the efficiency of DRR attempts. Such thoughts have also been reflected in the words of community leaders and NGO officers. They think that after engaging youth

in DRR, it has been easy to tackle disaster losses and risks. They are more efficient, active, and quick to respond than the elders.

However, they face the obstacle of proper financing in this matter. Besides, the young volunteers, especially the girls face tantrums in the surroundings, if not from families, because of participating in these activities. But they do not pay heed to them and focus on their contribution. That is why, a lack of female volunteers is felt during the disaster for female disaster victims. Another prominent problem is that safety equipment is scarce for the volunteers. They participate in all these activities without having safety measures and cautions. They do not have helmets, boots, torches, or hand mics in ample amounts. Therefore, they are providing services risking their own lives.

The organizations dedicated to this arena face some challenges also in engaging youth. For example- dropout from education has become a concern for them. As the youth are not paid, they often face a lack of incentive of doing these works. Often young members shift from the local area for education and job. Despite these challenges, the organization has a range of plans for young volunteers. For example- providing capacity-building training, first-aid training, and rescue training to increase the skills and efficiency of the youth, forming and activating the Red Crescent group, integrating youth with Fire Service providers, creating a blood bank group, creating resource mapping for proper resource management, running CRA (community risk assessment),

providing youth with necessary safety equipment, engaging local govt in this respect and finally, expanding their programs in other areas like- Rampal.

Both the children and youth think that arranging more training sessions, meetings, and awareness campaigns can increase their efficiency in DRR activities. The children expect the organizations working in the arena to change the view of parents and guardians about their participation so that they can be valued members.

To make DRR activities stronger, steps should be taken that are sustainable. Change should be brought into the mentality of the people. Children and youth should be given importance in rehabilitation work. There should be a different set of relief for children and youth because their needs are different than elders.

The youth volunteer's safety and security should be prioritized by all groups of stakeholders. Ample safety equipment should be handed over. The works of the volunteers should be acknowledged and rewarded so that they can sustain their enthusiasm for working in DRR activities.

4.7 Kurigram

Vulnerability Context

Kurigram District is located in the northern region of Bangladesh along the border of [India](#). The area of this district is 2,296.10 km² and the population is 1,782,277 (2001 national population census). This district is surrounded by the Cooch Behar district of India in the north, the Gaibandha district of Bangladesh in the south, the Assam state of India in the east, and, the Lalmonirhat and Rangpur districts of Bangladesh in the west. The weather in the Kurigram district is a bit different from the middle or southern part of [Bangladesh](#). During summer, the temperature is higher and during winter is lower than in the middle or southern part of Bangladesh. The average maximum temperature is about 32-33 degree Celsius when average minimum temperature is about 10-11 degrees. Heavy rainfall is usually observed during the rainy season like in other parts of Bangladesh and the average annual rainfall is about 3000 mm. Several rivers are flowing through the heart of this [district](#). The major rivers are Brahmaputra, Dharla, and Tista with minors being Dudhkumar, Phulkumar, Gangadhar, Jinjiram etc.

Kurigram is a riverside area close to the Indian border. Disasters are common phenomena in this area. Among them- flash floods, cold waves, and waterlogging are common. Flood is the deadliest disaster that emerges every year around June-July. Each flood stays for one week to one month and causes heavy damage to the locality.

During floods, the transportation and communication system gets interrupted tremendously. Therefore, it creates obstacles to people's livelihood, education, healthcare, and so on. The flood water ruins harvested crops which causes huge financial loss and food insecurity throughout the

year. Flood water causes the death of cattle. In the shelter, often there is no space to keep the cattle. Sanitation is a noteworthy problem during a disaster. Women, children, and old people suffer most from sanitation problems. Women face health issues by being unable to maintain menstrual hygiene during disasters. Besides, women and children face safety and security issues, especially while residing in the shelter. Even after the disaster, it takes a long time for people to go back to regular lives with broken houses, schools, shops, and lost assets and lives. There is also an outbreak of different diseases and scarcity of safe drinking water, especially after the flood water is gone.

In the winter, a cold wave is the name of another fear here. It hit children and elderly people the most. In 2021, around 800 to 900 patients took treatment from Kurigram General Hospital every day. The severity of cold is unparalleled higher.

Risk Reduction Approach

Plan International Bangladesh, operates in the Nageshwari Upazila of the Kurigram district to combat the aforementioned disasters. Plan in association with ESDO, RDRS, MJSKS, and Solidarity, implements projects like SRHR in disaster risk management, emergency response, and flood anticipatory pilot action.

These projects improve the capabilities of children and young adults by engaging them in a safe school and community efforts concerning disaster risk management; help capacity building of UDMC, STF, Youth groups, and Girls' clubs; perform multi-hazards mapping; create community awareness; organize disaster risk management volunteers training, and perform mothers' group, and young girls' group consultation.

Key actions that are carried out by this initiative in Kurigram include safe school and community initiatives on DRM, flash floods, river erosion, menstrual health and hygiene, SRHR, and disaster response and recovery.

There are Union committees and Ward committees dedicated to DRR in the area. They integrate youth and women representatives into the committee. The Union chairman monitors their activities, progress of the assigned responsibility, transparency, and so on. Local govt plays a significant role in spreading the warning signal before any disaster. They keep themselves updated with weather forecasts with a toll-free hotline number. The updated news is sent to the Kurigram Monitoring Board and the employed people of the local govt in different points of the village. From there, the news reached the villagers. They also collaborate with NGOs in DRR activities. To reduce the intensity of the flood, the union chairmen built a dam, but it was not able to resist flood water entering the locality. After the disaster, the local govt distributed relief and financial assistance. Community leaders keep themselves updated with weather news from the same hotline number and spread weather news. They also conduct an awareness campaign to teach people how they can minimize the loss of disasters. They identify vulnerable groups and families of the area

during a disaster, make a list and give it to Union parishad so that the more vulnerable people get more attention from the administration. The leaders themselves help these vulnerable people to heighten their house or tube well, take the aged and children to shelter, ensure their healthcare, and so on. They work as a mediator to coordinate the activities of WDMC, SDMC, and UDMC. After the NGO intervention, the people of the area became aware that youth can play a significant role in DRR.

Children and Youth Engagement Components

ESDO facilitated the engagement of children and youth in DRR activities. They conducted awareness campaigns, training, and drills on what to do before, during, and after floods. These drills and campaigns are conducted for all groups of people including the youth, women, school children, etc. They provided umbrellas to school students with written hotline numbers of weather forecast channels. One of the most prominent successes of ESDO is to integrate children and youth into DRR activities. ESDO facilitated the youth of the village to create a team of 25 to dedicate themselves to DRR. This team of young people with the instruction of ESDO goes door-to-door to let people know the weather news, give instructions to minimize loss, and gather information about the condition of vulnerable households. ESDO and Mohideb provide training on DRR and gender role discrimination reduction respectively.

Plan International also focuses on post-disaster activities. They engaged the youth in distributing food support, water purification tablets, and menstrual hygiene kits after a disaster. Besides, they engaged the youth and children in resistance activities all year round. For example- awareness about climate

adaptation, DRR, School-safety, arranging student-teacher discussion meetings at the school level to teach them about DRR, project DRR skills through plays and drills, etc. To ensure sustainability, their focus is not only on DRR, but rather they work to ensure increased knowledge, gender role transformation, and safe school learning environments for children and youth. To serve this purpose, they aim for long-term planning. They created a task force with youth and children, formed a teacher-student management committee, developed yearly action plans, etc.

NGOs have been giving training to the youth on DRR. Now the youth of the village has a team of 25 members. They call on meetings every month, communicate with each other, distribute responsibilities, and actively participate in DRR activities. They raise funds from rich people and even contribute to the fund with their own money to support their contribution. With this fund, they buy saline, paracetamols, bleaching powder, and many other emergency necessities among the affected. Before any disaster, they go door-to-door and make people aware of upcoming disasters and how to tackle them. For example- they conduct an awareness campaign where people are instructed to build their house on a strong and higher foundation, keep dry foods, medicines, water filter tablets, and saline ready with them, keep cattle in a safe place, arrange boats for emergencies, and so on. They also use hand mics to spread out the news all over the area. They

spontaneously take part in collecting data on the condition of every household, identify vulnerable groups, and report to the authority. They help women, children, and old people reach shelter. After the disaster, they helped with the rehabilitation work. Recently, they rebuilt a road after the flood.

With the intervention of Plan International, the children in the area have been organized into 6 groups- a warning and awareness group, search and rescue group, first aid group, children safety group, transfer and replacement group, Forestry group, and social group. Each group has 4 members and a teacher as leader. They work for their assigned purpose. They also keep themselves updated with the hotline number.

Outcome

The interventions in Kurigram have proved to be effective in building and enhancing relations among different stakeholders. For example- the activities of Plan International created strong relationships between teachers and students, children and youth, local govt, and the community. Besides, they attempted sustainable changes by increasing knowledge, developing skills, reducing gender roles, establishing school safety, unionizing children and youth, providing hands-on experience by arranging drills, and so on. All these activities lead to empowerment and capacity building of the community.

Additionally, the activities were dedicated to finding out the most vulnerable groups in the community. The youth committee powered by the local community leaders mapped out such vulnerable households and reported to the local govt for a more effective outcome. The community leader said in this regard

“We know our community well. It is easy for us to reach the most affected people. We help reach their suffering to the Union Parishad so that those in need of help the most can get help.”

By building task forces, youth and children committees, and teacher and student management committees, the NGOs enabled the community to become self-sufficient in combating the disaster risk and hazards. Funds are raised from the rich households of the community, and distributed accurately among those in actual need. People of all ages and backgrounds are helping each other to minimize the suffering of disasters.

Children and youth engagement is a massive outcome of the interventions in this arena. Children and youth have their committees, are given training, engage in DRR activities, are guided and monitored, and are encouraged by elders. Children and youth are being aware of their responsibilities and growing with leadership and management quality. Besides, unlike other districts, this district has seen a visible change in the thinking pattern of society regarding child and youth participation in DRR activities. The community leader stated-

“Initially parents refused their children to participate in these activities. Now they are aware that it is a good initiative not only for the community but for their children as well. Now we do not face

such resistance from the parents. We see encouragement for the children and youth from people all over the community.”

These good practices, this community support, and these interventions altogether contribute to reducing disaster risk in Kurigram. These interventions have increased the capacity of the locals which in return reduces the risk and vulnerability.

Good Practices

- (a) Building task force,
- (b) Building youth and children committee,
- (c) Forming teacher and student management committees,
- (d) Raising funds from the rich households of the community, distributed accurately among those in actual need.

Challenges

According to the youth and children group, they are doing all these works very successfully. At the initial stage, their family and even the elder members of the village did not want them to participate in these activities. But the NGOs conducted an awareness campaign to let everyone know that youth and children can make significant contributions and it will also create many life skills among them. After that, acceptance was raised among the elders. Later witnessing the efficiency of the children and youth, families and elders started encouraging them to take part in such activities.

The local manager of Plan International stated that the youth have played a major role in their actions during the recent flood. The spontaneousness of the youth at the field level is unmatched and they can accomplish something more easily than the elders. After getting training, they not only have become efficient in DRR but also learned the gender sensitivity issue of a disaster-prone environment. The Union chairman sang the same. Youth are more active in DRR activities than elders in the community. They are compassionate to help the villagers, therefore, they do all these works with integrity.

However, the scenario was not this much favorable in the beginning. There was strong resistance from the family members and other community members for the youth to participate in these social works. When a disaster emerges, it comes to the security and safety of a person’s life. Parents were worried about their children. Besides, the community members were not very encouraging. Especially, the challenge was bigger for the girls. First, the village society did not approve of the girls mixing with the crowd so much and working outside. Second, both male and female youth needed to work together as a team which was stigmatized in the village society. Third, talking about menstrual hygiene openly was not comforting for either males or females. But the NGO

worked hard to bring change in these stigmas. Now the community is aware that the participation of youth in these works can make their lives easier. The participation of females is way more accepted now than before. People are concerned about menstrual hygiene and understand its importance. The change is reflected in the words of all the groups that have been interviewed. However, the key informant said that it is just the beginning, and the acceptance rate is still not enough. Bringing a prominent change is a long-term process and they are working for it.

The interviewed children, youth, community leader, union chairman, and NGO officers- all of them agreed that the participation of the youth and children can be raised. To do that, recommendations have come from the child and youth. They think that they can further enhance their efficiency if they are provided necessary training, equipment and given a reward for their contribution. The Union chairman stated the same. He states that acknowledging the contribution of youth is encouraging them. They will be more eager if they are rewarded and given an identity as actively working volunteers. The NGO officer follows his words. She thinks that we should be careful that these works do not get monotonous for children and youth. There should be versatility, incentives, and arrangement of entertainment in the action plan. The community leader on the other hand showed concern for the security of the children and youth. He feels the necessity of helmets, life-jacket and other safety equipment for the volunteers.

4.8 Cox's Bazar

Vulnerability Context

Cox's Bazar, a coastal district, situated in Chattogram division. It is located at the fringe of the Bay of Bengal with an unbroken beach which is probably the longest one in the world. It is bounded on the north by Chattogram district, on the east by Bandarban district and Myanmar, on the south, and the west by the Bay of Bengal. It lies between 20°43' and 21°56' north latitudes and between 91°50' and 92°23' east longitudes. The total area of the district is 2,491.85 sq. km. (962.10 sq. miles) out of which 940.58 sq. km is under forest. The total population of Cox's Bazar is 2.2 million with 9600 people living in each sq km. This district has seven upazillas and this district is currently accommodating more than 1 million Rohingya population.

The coastal district of Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh is located in the southeastern part of the country. Cox's Bazar and other coastal districts in Bangladesh are vulnerable to tropical cyclones. After a devastating cyclone in 1970 that killed about 500,000 people, a Cyclone Preparedness Program (CPP) was undertaken across the coastal districts of Bangladesh in 1973. The CPP included the development of an early warning system and the construction of many cyclone shelters. The CPP contributed significantly to the reduction of loss from tropical cyclones. For example, the death toll was significantly reduced from about 500,000 during the cyclone of 1970 to about 3000 during a similar cyclone "Sidr" in 2007. However, earthquakes and related tsunamis are considered as other devastating natural disasters in South and south-east Asia. Bangladesh also anticipates the adverse effects of earthquakes and tsunamis.

This district, as the ‘Cox’s Bazar disaster-prone area atlas 2021’^[1] suggests, is prone to cyclones, excessive rainfall, coastal flood, windstorm, and thunderstorm. However, this project dealt with the conflict situation that has emerged in the region due to the influx of Rohingyas.

Risk Reduction Approach

ActionAid Bangladesh works to prevent disaster risks in Cox’s Bazar. Due to Cox’s Bazar’s vulnerable weather and the expansion of the Rohingya community the people of this district face extreme situations in any type of natural disaster. Youth participation in Cox’s Bazar takes place in deep tube well installation in the camp and host community for addressing water scarcity, plantation for addressing landslide in the camp setting engaging young people, young people participation in disaster response in implementing contingency plan at Union and Upazila, cohesion building in a community in refugee settlement.

The stakeholders here are the local government, the host community, the Rohingyas, and the youth. The children and the youth especially contribute to awareness building. The local government along with the NGOs provides relief and funds. But in the case of cohesion building in the community in refugee settlement, significant success is not reported.

Children and Youth Engagement Components

For combating disasters, community engagement is high in Cox's Bazar. The local populace upholds the disaster prevention and response protocols. The UP officials and parliamentarians give the disaster-affected individuals the resources and money they need. The NGO also offers the youth community training and suitable facilities to connect them with other stakeholders. Additionally, women are involved in various forms of social work, both in programs for the Rohingya and in disaster-prone areas.

But when talking about the ongoing humanitarian crisis, community participation is nearly invisible. Because of the strict presence and restrictions imposed by law enforcement agencies, locals hardly find a way to interact with the Rohingya people. If there exists a way, which in reality is rare, however, families impose an embargo to let their children interact with them to protect them from being exposed to illicit drugs. The locals consider the Rohingya people as a threat to their job since they work for far less wages than usual. Also, this exodus has caused a high rise in livelihood expenditure. That brings us to the understanding – instead of cohesion, only conflict exists between the Rohingya and the locals.

Despite all these odds, Action Aid Bangladesh tried to engage local children and youth variously. They trained 200 young people on Social Cohesion and Protection. This training has capacitated them to understand the rationale of making social cohesion for the greater good. Apart, they have also received training in PVA Analysis, Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation, and Budget Advocacy.

Another major activity AAB conducted is youth-led evidence generation on youth and gender-responsive public service, this has developed their existing skill set, providing access to public service and finance, and allowing them to understand and formulate gender-responsive budgets and planning. Under this project, the youths of Cox's Bazar have conducted seven advocacies with local government authority for planning and delivering services to address climate vulnerabilities, and five youth-led advocacy with the service providers for enhancing access to services and finance at the local level for market-oriented skill development and developing entrepreneurship.

They have also generated evidence on the impact of climate vulnerabilities on marginalized young people in fragile contexts and conducted advocacy with service providers. In addition, eleven youth-led awareness development campaign on GBV for the host community, Rohingya community, and community in fragile context has also been conducted.

All these interventions are found to be enhancing children and youth engagement in the disaster risk reduction process. However, further escalation of such projects with a clear focus on DRR may be proven effective in this regard.

[\[1\] chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/http://203.112.218.65:8008/WebTestApplication/userfiles/Image/Atlas/Cox's%20Bazar%20Disaster%20Prone%20Area%20Atlas.pdf](http://203.112.218.65:8008/WebTestApplication/userfiles/Image/Atlas/Cox's%20Bazar%20Disaster%20Prone%20Area%20Atlas.pdf)

Challenge

In terms of conflict resolution between the locals and the Rohingyas, there exists nothing but challenges. The existence of Rohingya causes multilateral problems ranging from security to livelihood. Coherence building with Rohingya as such is a very tough task to accomplish and if it is something ought to, a whole new modality to be introduced.

4.9 Donor Mapping

The youth population consists of about 30% of the total population (45.9 million)[\[1\]](#) in Bangladesh. These youths are motivated, energetic, and enthusiastic towards different social activities. Hereby, this large proportion of youth can be a prominent human resource in disaster risk reduction activities. Earlier, children and youth were commonly considered as mere beneficiaries but recent interventions of disaster management that engages children and youth in different capacity have been proven effective in different countries. Therefore, the DRR plans of the NGOs are focused on the youth. Donors are also prioritizing children and youth engagement in this regard. Most of these DRR projects are funded by different governments, international governments funds, and international NGOs mostly. To understand the recent trends and to find

out their future plans, we have talked to three INGOs namely European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), EU in Bangladesh; The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Australia; and Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office, UK. *European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), EU in Bangladesh* informed that they were funding disaster preparedness (DP)/ disaster risk reduction (DRR) activities for a long. For the last six years (2017-2022), the amount of funding was ever increasing except for the year 2020 due to the outbreak of covid-19 pandemic. The following graph exhibits the trend of DRR funding in Bangladesh from 2017 to 2022.

[1] [https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/o9i009req1#:~:text=One%20fourth%20of%20the%20country's,Bureau%20of%20Statistics%20\(BBS\).](https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/o9i009req1#:~:text=One%20fourth%20of%20the%20country's,Bureau%20of%20Statistics%20(BBS).)

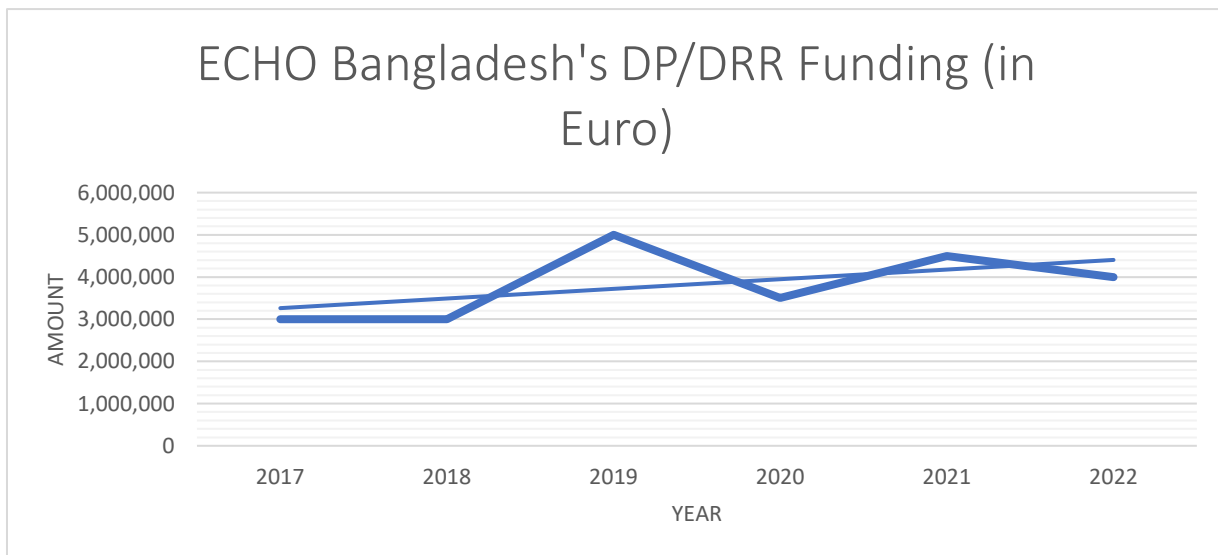


Figure - ECHO Bangladesh's DP/DRR Funding (in Euro)

A representative from ECHO said that currently, they have no initiative on children and youth engagement in DRR but they are highly interested in this area. They prepare their work strategy at the beginning of a year and thus, they require project proposals from NGOs and INGOs prior to setting their year-strategy plan. In disaster, ECHO Bangladesh is mostly interested in disaster preparedness. They are highly interested in innovative projects that include children and youth (though both children and youth were mentioned, a major focus is on youth) in the disaster preparedness programs in Bangladesh. Implementing organizations like NGOs or INGOs can explore this opportunity with their innovative proposals that include children and youth in disaster preparedness programs in Bangladesh. In the coming years, funding for ECHO Bangladesh, as reported, may either increase or remain static. There is less possibility of reduction of funding unless any unavoidable circumstances take place.

A representative from *the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Australia* said that Australia is a trusted partner of Bangladesh for a long. Currently, a good number of projects are being funded by DFAT in the form of Development Assistance. He mostly focused on trilateral collaboration among the government, NGOs, and DFAT. Currently, he informed me, most funding is provided to like-minded NGOs and think tanks. But such trilateral collaborations can be proven more effective in attaining Bangladesh's development goals.

He, thus, strongly suggested enhancing the magnitude of such collaboration for continued and enhanced support (especially funding) from DFAT.

In regard to Disaster funding, he said that environment, climate change, and DRR are important key issues of the Australian Government. Especially, the present Government is highly committed to the Environment, climate change, and DRR issues. For instance, the Australian parliament passes the first climate change legislation in a decade. [\[1\]](#) Australian Official Development Assistance budget for Bangladesh for FY 2022-23 is 30.8 million AUD of which, 3 million AUD will be invested for climate change and DRR. In fact, in the future, the investment has a good chance to increase considering the current Government's commitment and the Climate change severity in the world.

In terms of engaging children and youth, he said that children and youth engagement are not adequate in Bangladesh. They should be effectively engaged in these tasks. He also raised the issue of engaging LGBTQ and vulnerable youths in this process for making it comprehensive. He identified a major gap in concurrent practice which he strongly suggested to fill.

In terms of preferable approaches, he first talked about the edutainment approach. For him, educating the mass people about disaster risk reduction and disaster management is a priority for most of the donors and DFAT is no exception. Educating them, he thinks, can most effectively be done through an edutainment approach which includes drama, and theatre. DFAT is mostly interested in this aspect where the youths and children will be taught about the gender difference, responsibilities, and other relevant activities. DFAT also considers cultural values and social norms. Hence, while planning projects, he suggested taking care of that and avoiding generalization in terms of selected approaches. DFAT also promotes engaging policymakers, local government officials, religious leaders, and community leaders in DRR activities. If projects are planned keeping all these points in consideration, he thinks, collaboration with and funding from DFAT is possible and chances are higher.

The *Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office, UK*, on the other hand, focuses on the national priorities of Bangladesh in terms of funding. A representative from FCDO informed us that they helped to make the comprehensive master plan to tackle disasters in Bangladesh. FCDO as a donor mostly focuses on resilience and capacity building. Climate-induced disasters like salinity intrusion are their area of interest where they are willing to work in the future. They had a program named 'Prokash' where they tried to create a bridge between the national and global youths with the local youths of Barisal and Bhola to increase their capacity. These sorts of activities are the potential to get funding from FCDO in Bangladesh.

FCDO considers that Bangladesh has a good amount of policies to tackle disasters, and these are to be implemented effectively. To implement, they highly prefer the engagement of local communities including children and youth. He thinks, for effective engagement, capacity building is the primary concern which will let them understand their roles, responsibilities, and method of performing amid such emergencies. FCDO also promotes creating a bridge between locals with decision makers through the intervention of NGOs and other implementing agencies.

[1] <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2022/sep/08/australian-parliament-passes-first-climate-change-legislation-in-a-decade>

5. Key Findings and Challenges

This section presents key findings from the ongoing research. The findings are based on the synthesis of the information collected from various categories of stakeholders. The following section also presents the major challenges of engaging children and youth in DRR activities.

5.1 Key Findings

- **Children and youth show high awareness and interest:** The study finds that the children and youth are aware of the significance of their involvement in DRR activities; they are also found to have a high interest in participating.
- **Children and youth are more effective in the pre-disaster phase:** It was found that children and youth could be more effective in the pre-disaster phase. They are found to be active and interested in undertaking activities like hazard mapping, database building, awareness raising, disseminating early warning, helping vulnerable households prepare for shelter, solid waste management, identifying risky buildings, and so on. Due to high enthusiasm, and motivation, children and youth perform their roles very sincerely. Community members, including local government leaders, were informed that children and youth could contribute more during the pre-disaster phase compared to post-disaster rehabilitation activities. Their role is more beneficial in risk reduction activities including enhancing the capacity of the community.
- **Children and youth are quick learners:** Children and youth are found to be quick learners of DRR activities and the lessons they were delivered. It is found that children and youth comfortably take up DRR activities which are usually not considered ‘fun activities’. They are providing a series of activities both before and after disaster phases, including volunteering during different disasters, distributing relief, repairing and reconstructing in the post-disaster phase, taking vulnerable populations (e.g. PWDs, pregnant mothers, the elderly) into the shelter, and so on. The important thing about them is that they learned the process and method of delivering these sensitive activities very quickly and proved their efficacy in being engaged in DRR.
- **Community leaders are found to have a positive attitude:** Community leaders think the engagement of the young generation in DRR activities is helpful for the community in general. According to them, this group of the population can be mobilized quicker and is able to deliver responsibilities faster. They are honest and efficient. Community leaders consider that their increased engagement would bring positive results for the community. However, parents are skeptical to send their sons and daughters to such activities. Community leaders also think that such engagement will help them avoid bad associations like drugs.
- **Multi-faceted impact of CYLDRR on overall DRR program:** The impact of children's and youth's engagement in DRR activities on the overall DRR program ecosystem is quite significant. One of the considerable impacts here is a change in the attitude of community members towards children and youth in society. Children and youth are, in general, considered to be

‘non-productive’. However, the community leaders have acknowledged that the youth and children proved their worth in serving the community. As a result, an overall positive attitude has been developed in the community, which in turn could enhance the community's resilience and thereby contribute to achieving the goal of the project in the respective community.

- **Major obstacles to participation:** One of the major obstacles for children and youth to participate in DRR activities is *the discouragement of parents*. It is mainly because the parents think that such engagements hamper their regular studies.
- Another important issue raised by the parents is that they are afraid of their children's political engagement. They think that these young children and youth could be *manipulated by the political parties* in the process of their volunteerism in community activities. They, therefore, show skepticism to allowing them to go out and be engaged in community activities, including DRR activities offered by respective projects.
- Apart from the above-mentioned issues, conventional mentality, the prevalence of poverty, the presence of child labor, lack of both financial and non-financial incentives, and involvement in income generation activities (IGAs) are also obstacles to being a volunteer in DRR activities. Often, their activity is termed *childish activity* which also demotivates them. In cyclone-prone areas in particular, parents don't want their children to work amid adverse weather by risking their own lives.
- **Obstacles for the girls:** For girls in particular, major obstacles include disapproval from parents for safety and security concerns. Parents often think their daughters may be exposed to sexual harassment. Religious norms also play a critical role in forming disapproval among the parents regarding the girls' participation. Apart, from the negative attitude of society, teasing by peer members outside the group, child marriage, and forced participation in political activities also cause poor participation of girls in such activities. In some places, eve teasing is also found as another major obstacle to girls' engagement in DRR activities.
- **The Innovations.** The innovations found in the approaches are (a) raising awareness using social media, (b) developing an online database through cell phones, (c) making different teams named 'Shishu-dol,' 'Shishu-Sangbadik dol' where different issues are discussed, and (d) survey after a disaster occurs to measure loss and damage.

5.2 Key Challenges

- **Parental Prohibition.** The primary obstacle to children's and youth's engagement in the DRR process in Bangladesh is the restriction on families. Major reasons for this are, but are not limited to fear of politicization, adverse weather, and hampering academic studies. Parents hardly want their children in peril.
- **Social and Religious Stigmatization.** Volunteering activities, especially by girls in many societies of Bangladesh are still stigmatized. These stigmatizations cause poor women to participate in DRR activities in different fields.
- **Criticism from Peer Group.** Sometimes volunteers are even criticized by their peer groups including maternal and paternal cousins. Often, such engagements are labelled a 'time waste'

by their peers. Such criticism from peer groups exponentially demotivates youths remaining engaged in such activities.

- **Reluctance of an Elected Local Representative.** In a few study areas, engagement of children and youth with elected local representatives was found to be poor. In a few places, local councilors and UP chairman are completely unaware of the programs and approaches. These are the areas where families remain furious about the politicization of the volunteers. These particular local government officials are found to be prone to being a critical component for the successful engagement of children and youth in the DRR process. Their involvement and engagement with children and youth have to be accelerated with priority.
- **Absence of incentives and Recognition.** The children and youth who voluntarily participate in such activities, never want any monetary benefit. But, since they are mostly students, they are *required to be provided with basic expenses*. If not, it becomes difficult for them to participate given the fact that they have no source of income and their parents are not very willing to fund such activities. Apart from that, *recognition* for them is significant. If the volunteers are recognized by society, it will definitely motivate others to participate. In addition to these two, *time* is another factor. Students supposedly have classes and other educational commitments that they are required to fulfil. If they remain engaged in such activities, the education process gets hampered. Here, neither education nor social activities are negligible. We have a common understanding that incentives are usually monetary but they are not. If these activities can be implemented, students will definitely be motivated to participate in these sorts of activities and eventually they will be citizens decorated with a sense of responsibility.
- **Lack of Resources.** In some of the study areas, it was found that volunteers are motivated, but they can't take part because of a lack of money. To attend the events, these students require transportation and food expenses, which are hard for them to manage. For this particular reason, some
- **Volunteers become demotivated to work on such activities.** When we asked the local NGO officials about it, they informed me that they require more financial allocation for meeting these needs. Currently, they lack funding for which they can't meet this demand.

5.3 The Drivers of Success

In the districts under the study, different projects with varied aims and objectives are being implemented by different INGOs. Their implementation modality is not the same. The volume of resources allocated for these projects also varied. Despite all these diversities and variances among the projects, one thing is common all these projects aim to facilitate the engagement of children and youth as an important and resourceful section of the community in Disaster Risk Reduction activities. Having taken these very common objectives of the projects into consideration we tried to develop a comparative analysis primarily to understand what aspects or features of the studied projects contributed to reducing disaster risks for the respective community through enhancing the participation of children and youth successfully within the given project environment.

This comparative analysis has identified the vital aspects of the successful outcome of any DRR model or approach. Here, instead of the individual child and youth engagement component, the overall outcome of a project implemented in a district has been analyzed. However, we must not forget that this is not a comparison among these districts or the interventions, or the implementing

agencies. Rather, this exhibits the individual outcome of each project implemented in different districts.

In this comparative analysis, we have considered *opinions about reduced risks of disaster for the target community* as the outcome of the intervention. And this is disaggregated into three levels i.e. High, Medium, and Low. These opinions were taken from the participants in FGDs and key informants' interviews. It means we constructed this outcome assessment through the subjective opinion of the research participants and the observations of the research team members. Similarly, having reviewed the project activities, we have identified five vital aspects of the interventions that may cause variation in the achievement of the outcome. And these aspects are also disaggregated on a scale of High-Medium-Low. These assessments are done in consultation with the research team members. In doing the analysis we followed the *Comparative Case Method* proposed by Charles C Ragin (1991). Therefore, the following comparative analysis has been subjectively constructed analysis drawing on evidence collected from the field.

Based on the evidence collected, we argue that these outcomes are associated with the five vital aspects. The magnitude of these aspects is correlated with the magnitude of the outcome. The purpose of the analysis, as we mentioned earlier, is to identify the key drivers for the success of any intervention. This comparison has multiple variables for which we used the multiple conjunctural causation model commonly known as the Ragin model.

Table 2: Comparative Analysis of the Drivers of Success

Project Site	INGO	Relation with the Community	Relation with the Local Government	Relation with other Stakeholder	Women Participation	Innovation	Outcome		
							H	M	L
Dhaka	SC	H	L	H	M	M		X	
Chattogram		H	H	H	M	M	X		
Satkhira	AAB	H	L	L	L	L			X
Bhola	PIB	H	L	M	L	H		X	
Sunamganj	WVB	H	H	H	M	H	X		
Bagerhat	WVB	H	H	H	H	H	X		
Kurigram	PIB	H	H	H	H	H	X		
Cox's Bazar	AAB	H	L	L	L	L			X

Note.

H= High, M= Medium, L= Low.

SC = Save the Children

WVB = World Vision Bangladesh

PIB = Plan International Bangladesh

AAB = Action Aid Bangladesh

This model suggests that relations with local government officials, relations with other stakeholders, and the magnitude of innovation are three vital factors that made projects successful in Chatto gram, Sunamganj, Bagerhat, and Kurigram.

Relationships with the community have had no impact on the overall outcome here. This is because, in such community engagement projects, a relationship with the community is a very common aspect that rarely brings about any change in the outcome. Another way around, a good relationship with local government officials gives entitlement and power to the volunteers, which are pivotal to upholding the motivation and confidence of their parents. In this sense, confidence in the parents finding means that recognition from local government officials ensures safety and security.

Relationships with other stakeholders, which mainly refer to community leaders, and local elites, help to remove stigmatization and accelerate the motivation of the volunteers. They are critical to creating awareness among parents and can stop the taboos that are still in play.

The magnitude of innovation is important because it ensures efficacy. Our young generation in this era of digitization is interested in technology. Technology brings about changes in youths who are more comfortable adopting. These changes bring a fruitful outcome that improves the situation, in this case, reducing disaster risks. Women's participation, though found moderately important in this analysis, can't be ignored at any given length.

Women's participation keeps them in the same loop. In the DRR process, there are issues that require women's intervention and if they are not accustomed to the process then the outcome is presumed to be ineffective to many extents.

6. Recommendations

This section suggests an inclusive model for children's and youth's engagement in the DRR process in Bangladesh. While conducting this study, we have found certain good practices in different study areas, as some challenges. Incorporating good practices and addressing the challenges is the key to developing such an inclusive model. The challenges are obviously not applicable to every corner of the country. With different geographical settings, the genre of obstacles is assumed to change. But broadly, the cited challenges are both the most common and the most triggering in the process of engaging children and youth in DRR activities in Bangladesh. However, it is to be understood that this model is generalized one and requires context-specific modification whenever necessary.

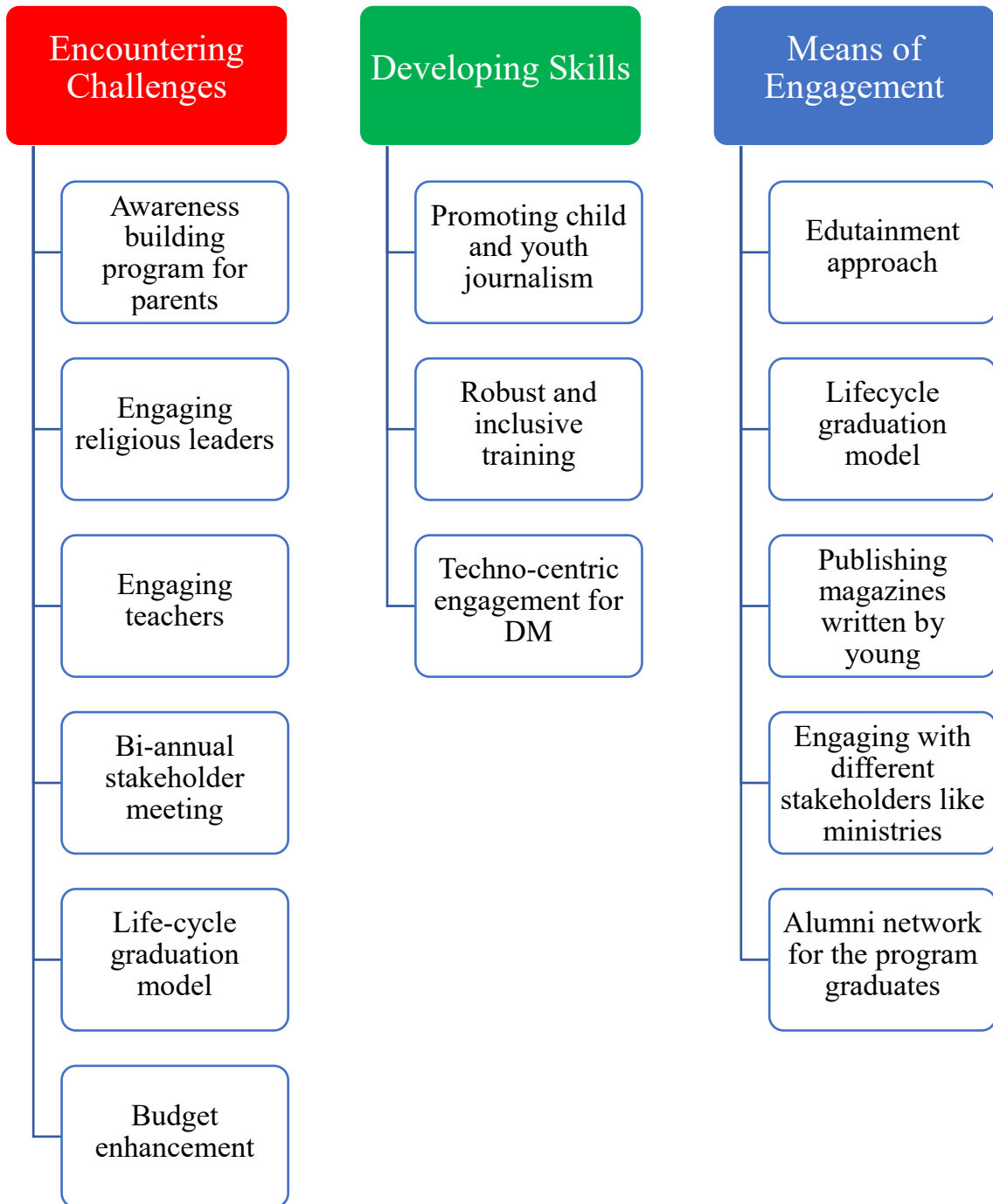
These challenges require prompt and prudent actions, which eventually led us to come up with a set of recommendations. These recommendations are necessary for scaling up the concurrent DRR approaches in Bangladesh. The recommendations will help escalate the efficacy of their concurrent practices with special reference to engaging children and youth in the process. Since the nature of challenges in this regard is subject to change, actions to encounter those challenges will vary from context to context. However, broadly, this model provides a sort of guideline to address the common challenges that hinder the process of child and youth engagement. There are certain factors that restrict the engagement of children and youth in this process of disaster risk reduction and disaster management.

Table 3: Common Challenges those Restrict Children and Youth Engagement in DRR Activities

Restricted Engagement of Children and Youth in DRR Activities	Parental Prohibition
	Religious Stigmatization
	Lack of Societal Acknowledgement and Incentives
	Criticism from Different Social Groups
	Poor engagement with the Local Government Officials
	Lack of Financial Resources
	Fear of Politicization

The factors shown in the table are discussed in a detailed manner in the key challenges section. Thus to avoid redundancy, these are not discussed here. Rather, the required actions for encountering these challenges are discussed. The following model may be implemented to encounter the challenges and enhance children's and youth's engagement in DRR activities.

Method of Enhancing Children and Youth Engagement in DRR Activities in Bangladesh



Under these three broad spectra, there exist a number of activities that may contribute to enhancing the engagement of children and youth in DRR activities in Bangladesh. Each of these activities has its own merit and can contribute in this regard in any of the three ways. Activities that have the potential to encounter key challenges are put under the first spectrum. Activities that contribute to developing the skills of the volunteers are put on the second spectrum. In the third spectrum, those activities are listed that have the potential to ensure meaningful engagement among children and youth. A brief description of these recommendations is given below.

- **Awareness building program for parents** as we argue, is the first thing to do for escalating children's and youth's engagement in DRR activities. In every field other than Sunamganj, parental prohibition is the major obstacle to children's and youth's disengagement from such activities. This issue requires immediate action.
- **Engaging religious leaders** in such awareness programs can be considered. It is a strategic move to eliminate religious hindrances from society in terms of engaging young people in volunteering activities. Especially women encounter more such religious obstacles. Thus, the focus of this program may be to eliminate the barriers for girls in particular by convincing their families and local elites as well.
- **Engaging school and college teachers** in such activities may also be considered. In many fields, we have seen that the young generation is not ready to join such programs because of educational pressures. If educational institutions can be engaged in such programs, it will help in a manifold manner. It will help in but not be limited to, (a) eliminating the social stigma, (b) eliminating the fear of security of the volunteers about which parents are mostly a concern, (c) removing religious stigma, (d) neutralizing partisan use of the volunteers, and (e) ensuring acknowledgment of the volunteers.
- **Area-specific mock drills for children at school** can be on disaster preparedness, warning dissemination, forecast interpretations, the meaning of different signals/ levels of hazards/ disasters, and other associated factors. So that they can be aware of their family members and help evacuate to a safer shelter.
- **The child and youth journalism** model of Save The Children is one of the most impactful approaches for engaging children and youth in the DRR process. The 'Projonmo' magazine is an innovative approach. It simultaneously creates awareness among local residents, CSO members, and local administrative officials. Given the advantages, the wider circulation of this magazine may accelerate administrative engagement and the exposure of the writers.
- **Periodical publication and wider circulation of 'Projonmo' magazine** among the Department of Fire Service and Civil Defense, Department of Disaster Management, Ministry of Disaster Management, Ministry of Social Welfare, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, UNESCO, UNDP, different donor agencies, other NGOs, and Department of Disaster Management in different universities may be effective. This will give the writers exposure and make them interested in taking part. The other way around, this will keep the policymakers in the same loop, and they will remain informed about the real-time scenario.
- **More robust and inclusive training** for urban community volunteers is necessary. This training should be comprehensive. Engagement of (a) the Ministry of Women and Children Welfare to train them on the aspect of gender-based violence amid disasters, (b) the Ministry of Health for addressing health aspects amid disasters, (c) House Building Research Institute for address-

ing post-disaster reconstruction, (d) development experts from universities and research institutes for addressing environmental aspects, (e) Department of Livestock for cattle management amid disasters can be considered. This training can be for a few hours for each party, and it shouldn't be longer than seven working days per training program. For effective results, such a comprehensive approach is something to consider with priority.

- **A bi-annual stakeholder meeting** is suggested where children and youth, their parents, elected local government officials, local administrative officials, community leaders, and NGO members will attend. The major objective of this meeting will be to ensure the non-politicization of the volunteers. In front of all these parties, the dominance of any singular actor. In fact, the establishment of a wider consensus on any such sensitive issue in such a forum will not be easy for any given actor to break. As such, the efficacy of this meeting will be significant in terms of stopping the politicization of the volunteers, which is in fact one of the major barriers to children and youth engagement in the DRR process.
- A careful initiative needs to be taken to **prohibit the misuse of volunteer forums for partisan purposes**. This concern is found in almost every field. This issue is a matter of constant fear among the parents. Hence, to ensure uninterrupted engagement of children and youth in such activities, strict prohibition of such misuse is a must.
- **The edutainment approach** of Plan International in Bhola is found to be very effective in terms of achieving the target. It's a very popular approach for both – the local people, and the donors. This refers to theatre and other similar activities that have the potential to teach through entertainment activities. This sort of activity is poorly practised in Bangladesh, but it has very high efficacy.
- **Budget enhancement**. As mentioned in the challenges section, due to the lack of funding, volunteers can't be provided with basic transportation and food allowances. The local NGO officials informed us that they require more financial allocations to meet these needs. Hereby, we recommend looking into this matter since without these basic needs fulfilled, child and youth engagement in DRR activities will surely be in jeopardy.
- **The life cycle graduation** model for community volunteers is an important issue to consider. The volunteers mostly offer their services out of goodwill. They don't look for any kind of monetary or materialistic gain. What they value most is recognition. The current life cycle model practiced by World Vision Bangladesh is found to be very effective in terms of creating a sense of ownership. If there is a process and opportunity for graduation from one layer to the next, it greatly motivates the volunteers to work efficiently. This model can be replicated by other implementing agencies.
- **Alumni Network for the program graduates** in these types of volunteering activities, no individual serves for their lifetime. Volunteers look for better employment opportunities. Many of them are currently serving at different places. If they can be engaged with their very own predecessors, the current volunteers will be motivated to work efficiently. In addition, it will also attract other non-volunteer children and youth of the locality to work under the program.
- **Digital technology needs to be leveraged among** the volunteers, which has already been proven effective. The volunteers may be equipped with digital devices to collect data, make a list of vulnerable households, spread the forecast of any disaster, raise awareness, and communicate with others in different stages of the disaster. Technocentric engagement is both time-

saving and cost-effective, which makes the whole process of disaster management very effective. This, hereby, is highly recommended in any DM intervention.

7. Conclusion

The need to integrate humanitarian and development issues in a broader framework of disaster risk reduction (DRR) is emphasized throughout the 2030 Agenda. However, the conventional community-based approach to disaster risk reduction (DRR) lacks a vision of children as important contributors to building community resilience. Children are not part of the structure of decision-making processes in pre and post-disaster risk management. The absence of children signals the presumption that adult-dominated organizations still treat children as incapable agents. The shift towards a child-centered approach to disaster recovery and response (DRR) reflects a growing recognition that children have an important role to play in communicating risks or in reducing risks. Children can also be dynamic agents for change with their unadulterated views and often 'politically free position.

Considering these, a good number of countries have adopted policies that include children and youth in DRR activities. For example, the Philippines, Nepal, and El Salvador are classic cases where children and youth are directly incorporated into national policies.

Bangladesh is considered one of the most successful countries in terms of managing disasters. However, children are not considered active agents. Disaster management in Bangladesh is still mostly top-down. Community-based approaches are yet to be widely addressed. In such an approach, children are difficult to address. The youths are to some extent incorporated into some of the activities that also require further scaling up.

The children and youth in the Changing Climate Coalition seek to challenge the traditional paradigm of children as passive victims. They should not be perceived as hapless victims but as agents with the ability to cope and demonstrate resilience. Child-centered approaches reflect the understanding that DRR and CCA efforts cannot properly account for children's needs or secure their rights unless specific attention is paid to this during the design and implementation of any policy or programmatic intervention. Investment in Child-Centered-DRR may yield higher benefits and future savings than when adults acquire the same skills. DRR is the ability to reduce risk behavior within households and at the community scale. It should be adapted in a way that it can expose children's capacity to mobilize adults and external policy actors to effect change on wider determinants of risk and vulnerability (Tanner et al 2009; Mitchell et al, 2008). Greater resources should be channelled toward children's agency, including enhanced efforts to incorporate their perspectives and potential for action.

The benefit of involving children in disaster risk reduction (DRR) programs was experienced during the 2004 tsunami caused by an ocean earthquake. On 26 December 2004, Tilly Smith, a 10-year-old girl, saved the lives of hundreds of tourists at Maikhao Beach, Thailand, raised the alarm that a tsunami was coming after learning about the phenomenon in her geography class a few weeks earlier. Representing the largest segment of the population in developing countries, children are the first victims of natural disasters, making it important to study disaster risk reduction (CLDRR).

However, children and youth are not the only victims. They are not only passive recipients of services and relief. Instead, they are to be considered active agents in society. They are resourceful, and creative and are very much able to contribute to the causes of the community. The main pur-

poses of these projects are to enhance the participation of children and youth in disaster risk reduction activities because they need to be heard, and they need to be allowed to be engaged in affairs that impact their lives. These studied projects are well on track in that direction. Issues are there which can be improved further. However, evidence suggests that up to now significant achievements have already been made on the ground.

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