

*For every new school to be safe from disasters”*

## Expected outcomes

1. At least 10 Governments engage as "Safe School Leaders" and announce commitment to the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools (WISS) at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (14-18 March 2015, Sendai, Japan).
2. At least 100,000 schools are preliminary assessed through crowd-sourcing initiatives
3. Growing social demand for safe school implementation, in particular from children themselves and communities
4. A digital platform is developed as a collaborative Safe Schools web-based monitoring platform to collect data and track progress on school safety implementation globally.
5. School safety is recognized as a priority in the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction, as part of the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2015 and in Regional Platforms' political declarations.
6. Regional partners support the development of tools and standards for school safety and support a coordinated delivery of the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools on the ground.

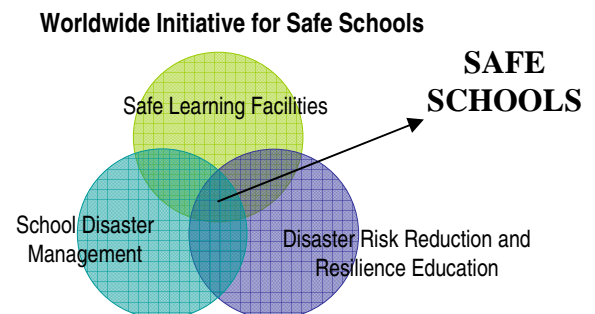
## 1. Why this Initiative?

- The 2009 Second Session of the Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction proposed that by 2011 national assessments of the safety of existing education and health facilities should be undertaken, and that by 2015 concrete action plans for safer schools and hospitals should be developed and implemented in all disaster prone countries. A range of initiatives and tools for school safety have been developed since then by a number of partners.
- The High-Level Dialogue Communiqué of the 2013 Fourth Session of the Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction proposed to “Start a global safe schools and safe health structures campaign in disaster-prone areas with voluntary funding and commitments to be announced at the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2015.
- A set of initiatives on school safety are being developed by various partners in an uncoordinated manner as a response to the High Level Communiqué’s call. UNISDR has the mandate and responsibility to ensure that a global holistic initiative for school safety that builds on key is presented at the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in March 2015

## 2. What is a safe school?

The Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector **defines a “safe school” as combining all of the following three components:**

- **Safe Learning Facilities** (disaster-resilient infrastructure)
- **School Disaster Management**
- **Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Education**



*Diagram: The Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools will promote action on all three pillars of school safety to ensure every new school is safe as of 2016*

## 3. Worldwide Initiative’s Objectives

- The Worldwide Initiative for Safe will focus efforts on motivating and supporting Governments in high risk and low capacity countries to implement school safety according to the three pillars highlighted as part of the Global School Safety Framework. No school will be considered safe unless all three pillars of school safety are implemented. A major global advocacy component will foster political commitment to school safety.
- Governments will lead action, with the support of technical partners as required, on the development of national strategies for school safety around the three key pillars of school safety.
- The main objectives of the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools are:
  - To promote Governments' good practices, expertise and achievements in safe school implementation for possible replication in other countries and regions;
  - To identify remaining challenges to effectively implement safe school;
  - To support Governments in developing national strategies for school safety as part of existing national disaster risk reduction or Education plans; and
  - To offer technical assistance and particular expertise as required by Governments, around the core three pillars of safe schools.

## 4. Key pillars of the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools

A school will be considered as safe if it combines all of the following components:

- **Safe School Facilities**

This component will aim at integrating structural safety in the construction of new schools and at retrofitting existing vulnerable ones. National Ministries of Finance will help to ensure that all new schools will be constructed according to building codes that ensure that they are structurally "safe". Children and communities will be encouraged to assess the safety of their school through crowd-sourced school safety assessment initiatives.

- **School Disaster Management**

This component will involve children in enhancing their school preparedness and contingency plans and building some "social demand" for safe educational facilities. Activities will include the conduct of evacuation drills, the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) as well as capacity-building and training exercises.

- **Risk Reduction Education**

This component will aim at mobilizing Ministries of Education to include disaster risk reduction as part of school curricula and at strengthening teacher education institutions in disaster risk reduction and resilience education to allow children to acquire critical thinking and life-saving skills in support of a global culture of prevention

Activities in the above technical pillars will be supported by a solid **global advocacy component** that will aim at mobilizing political commitment for school safety implementation. Activities will include:

- Identifying and engaging Governments interested and active in school safety to become "Safe School Leaders" and get prepared to commit actions and resources to school safety at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (14-18 March 2015, Sendai, Japan);
- Supporting Governments with the development of national strategies for school safety or the integration of school safety as part of existing Education plans with the relevant budgetary allocation; and
- Organizing specific discussions on school safety at WCDDR and at Regional Platforms to ensure the recognition of school safety as a priority as part of a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction and related negotiations, and as part of WCDDR and Regional Platforms' outcome documents.

**Coordination activities** will also be essential to:

- Develop further cooperation and partnerships among Governments, technical partners, civil society and private sector to implement safe school at all levels
- Promote common advocacy messages to motivate further Governments' action on safe school
- Support resource mobilization efforts at the global level for national and local level school safety implementation through targeted donors, the private sector, individuals and associations
- Map out and track actions in school safety in targeted countries, monitor and report on progress through a global digital platform on school safety implementation and Governments' own national reporting process..

## 5. What does it mean to be a Safe School Leader ?

Safe School Leaders will be expected to:

1. Commit actions and resources to school safety at the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction.
2. Allocate national budget for school safety implementation and in partner countries.
3. Mobilize Ministries of Education and Planning in the development of national strategies for school safety.
4. Assess the status of school safety implementation at country level.
5. Share experiences and good practices in school safety implementation.
6. Foster the development of national strategies for school safety as part of national disaster risk reduction strategies.

## 7. How can Governments participate ?

There will be three ways by which Governments will be able to participate in and commit to the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools. Governments will be encouraged to:

- Confirm the plans and commitments already made to safe school implementation as part of their on-going or forthcoming work programme or national strategy for disaster risk reduction;
- Make safe school implementation a priority as part of their national budget and allocate a portion of their national budget in support of the implementation of the school safety strategy in their respective countries.
- Pledge financial support and technical assistance to neighbouring or general high risk and low capacity countries with whom cooperation links already exist to help implement comprehensive school safety programmes.