

UNICEF Statement
Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction
Geneva, 5-6-7 June 2007

Mr. Chairman, Dear Delegates,

UNICEF reaffirms its commitment to global disaster risk reduction initiatives. We are especially glad to announce that UNICEF is now officially a member of the ISDR system, and is committed to supporting disaster reduction efforts and partnerships at national, regional and global level. Particular attention is given to disaster risk education and education in emergency situations.

With partners, UNICEF is currently refining its global strategy for disaster reduction, which focuses on protection and risk reduction for those who are most vulnerable to disasters: children and women. Children and women almost without exception suffer the heaviest burden from disasters, including loss of life, psychosocial trauma, disruption of education and impact on livelihoods. Therefore, awareness, preparedness, mitigation and response measures need to be adapted to their specific contributions and vulnerabilities.

UNICEF encourages a comprehensive approach to risk management from prevention, risk mitigation, preparedness and early warning through to response and recovery. UNICEF holds that in all aspects of risk reduction, the specific needs of women and children should be integrally addressed, their capacities enhanced, and their participation encouraged and facilitated. In the end, risk management cannot be fully effective without the full contribution and participation of women and children, through family and community mobilization, training, and utilization of the educational system. Underpinning this child focused approach is a belief that our effort should enhance capacities of families, communities, national institutions and civil society organizations.

UNICEF believes that education, public awareness, community-based preparedness, as well as disaster-resilient public infrastructures constitute some of the most important objectives of the Hyogo Framework for Action to support risk reduction for children and women.

Thank you.