



# Vijana Tuwajibike!

## Join us on October 13th for the International Day for Disaster Reduction

Disaster loss is on the rise with grave consequences for the survival, dignity and livelihood of individuals, particularly the poor and hard-won development gains. Disaster risk is increasingly of global concern and its impact and actions in one region can have an impact on risks in another, and vice versa.

The current Kenya drought and the recent Nairobi fire tragedies, Nairobi Embakasi collapsed building and flooding along the Turkana river to name but a few are an indication that Kenya will continue to experience negative disaster impacts on lives and livelihoods unless measures are taken to provide long term solutions.

In the past two decades, on average more than 200 million people have been affected every year by disasters. Children and young people form the bulk of this number. However, they can and should be involved in providing solutions to this problem and not just be seen as victims.

### ***International Disaster Risk Reduction Day!***

As in previous years, the **International Day for Disaster Reduction** to be held on **13 October 2011** will aim to raise awareness about current disasters and both present and future interventions required to manage and/ or reduce disaster risk. The event will be marked at the University of Nairobi – Chancellor’s Court – from 09.00am. Apart from highlighting the current disaster risks in Kenya’s urban and rural areas which are both technological and natural, this year’s celebrations will be a continuation of the campaign to ‘end drought emergencies’ in order to draw the attention of decision makers and planners to the need to find lasting solutions to the problem of drought and food insecurity in the Country. The global theme for this year’s celebrations has a special focus on Children and Youth in order to step up their role and involvement in finding solutions to these disaster risks.

***VijanaTuwajibike – Youth Step up for Disaster Risk Reduction*** – is a Swahili phrase that has been adopted as an edge to rally young people’s commitment to disaster risk reduction in line with the global focus:

- Children and youth could get organized to lobby for more investment in disaster risk reduction at the local and community level by governments, organizations and companies.
- Their actions to reduce disaster risk need to be recognized, including how these actions link into national and community development such as achieving the Millennium Development Goals.
- Governments, organizations, companies and communities need to systematically include children and young people's participation in their decision-making processes for building disaster resilient societies.

- Policy makers should recognize that children and young people-led organizations and initiatives are available resource and involve them in DRR efforts.
- Children and young people's networks and partnerships need to be encouraged across cultures.
- Children and young people need to be empowered and supported as agents of social inclusion and safety

### **Key planned activities.**

This year's event will include among other activities an exhibition during which agencies will be allocated stands to showcase to the general public the kind of interventions they are engaged in to address Drought and other Disaster Risks. It will be a great opportunity for agencies to interact with the youth to promote the DRR agenda. The event will be graced by the Prime Minister, Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga. Government agencies, schools, universities, youth initiatives, NGOs, the private sector and various UN agencies will be participating.

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### **Children and Young People Commitment to Disaster Risk Reduction**

During this year's Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Geneva, three young people told more than 2600 representatives from governments, the private sector and civil society WHY and HOW children can be involved in reducing disaster risk, and keeping themselves and their communities safe. 16-year old Andre and 14-year old Tricia, from the Philippines, and 17-year old Johnson from Kenya, were selected to participate in the Global Platform by their communities because of their keen interest in disaster risk reduction. Before a house packed with government and community leaders from around the world, they put the interests of children and young people on the agenda at the largest Global Platform ever held.

They also launched a five-point **Children's Charter for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)**. The Charter highlights 5 priorities identified through consultations with more than 600 children in 21 countries. Education, child protection and access to basic information were the main issues the children believed necessary to reduce the impact of disasters and climate change on their families and communities. [www.unisdr.org](http://www.unisdr.org)

**For more information about the International Day for Disaster Reduction please visit:**

<http://www.unisdr.org/2011/iddr/>