



Global Platform  
for Disaster Risk Reduction  
Third Session, Geneva, Switzerland  
8-13 May 2011

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**Name of Event: [Featured Event] Education and Safe Schools**

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**Reporter: Eli Rognerud, UNESCO**

**Contact Details: [e.rognerud@unesco.org](mailto:e.rognerud@unesco.org) / [elwr@hotmail.com](mailto:elwr@hotmail.com) / +33 645710354**

**Panellists:**

- Mr. Chris Talbot (Facilitator)
- Dr. Agnes Chan, UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador, Japan
- Mr. Amir Mohyuddin, Director, Disaster Risk Reduction, National Disaster Management Authority, Pakistan
- Mr. Cheng Feng, Deputy Director-General, Department of Development and Planning, Ministry of Education, China
- Mr. Milton Rondo Filho, General Coordinator of Fight Against Hunger, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Brazil
- Mr. Saroj Kumar Jha, Manager, Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery, World Bank

**1) Outline**

The event aimed to take stock of progress made at the national level in assessing and improving school safety and enhancing disaster risk reduction education. The event highlighted the urgent need for leadership, national commitment and increased investment in disaster risk reduction education and safe schools and called governments, civil society, UN, donors and other major stakeholders to invest more systematically in this field.

**2) Key messages, outcomes, recommendations**

- We are seeing slow progress towards the ambitious goals set at the Global Platform in 2009. To accelerate investments in this crucial field, we need stronger consensus on what constitutes a safe school; looking not just at structural safety, but also school disaster management and disaster prevention education and curriculum.

- Disaster risk reduction education and school safety must be more than a school programme promoted in the wake of disasters that already happen – it must be part of an ongoing effort to strengthen disaster resilience, preparedness and mitigation, especially in the context of slow onset disasters. Similarly, investments in safer schools go beyond securing physical safety of children – it is an investment in the whole community.
- Country examples from for example China, Pakistan, Japan and Brazil demonstrate ample opportunity for horizontal knowledge transfer, and the need to reduce unnecessary duplication.

### **3) Conclusions**

Investment in safe schools is a complex and multi-dimensional task, but the return on investment is manifold – financially and socially, and an absolute criteria for sustainable development. Governments and donors are responsible for safeguarding the development investment in education by investing more systematically in disaster risk reduction education and school safety. Quality education and safe schools are not only a right in itself – a comprehensive safe schools initiative will assist in the realisation of the other rights and reduce vulnerability of communities and countries. Governments, with the support of the international community, is ultimately responsible for ensuring that we can document progress towards these commitments at the next Global Platform. The refinement of a methodology and indicators for measuring progress will be critical, covering the various domains of schools safety: Structural school safety; School disaster management, Disaster prevention education and curriculum.