

# WORLDWIDE INITIATIVE FOR SAFESCHOOLS (WISS)

Vision: "By 2030, every school will be safe"

*In support of the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for  
Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*



**UNISDR**

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

In support of the Sendai Framework  
for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 - 2030



Global Alliance for  
Disaster Risk Reduction & Resilience  
in the Education Sector

## What is a Safe School?

The Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector, through the Comprehensive School Safety Framework, defines a “safe school” as a school that features all of the following technical components to be supported by Education policies aligned to disaster risk management plans:

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



## What is the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools?

The Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools (WISS) is a government-led global partnership that aims at securing political commitment and fostering safe schools implementation globally.

The Worldwide Initiative motivates and supports Governments to develop and implement national school safety policies, plans and programs in combination with the three technical aspects of comprehensive school safety.

The Worldwide Initiative offers technical assistance and particular expertise to support interested Governments in implementing comprehensive school safety at the national level, and promotes good practices and achievements in safe school implementation for replication in other countries and regions.

The Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools was developed in collaboration with partners from the Global Alliance on Disaster Risk Reduction Education and Resilience in the Education Sector as a response to the High Level Dialogue Communiqué at the 2013 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.

### Who has signed up to WISS? List of Safe Schools Leaders (as at November 2015-Evolving Group )

Algeria	Kyrgyzstan
Armenia	Lao PDR
Brazil	Lebanon
Cambodia	Madagascar
China	México
Costa Rica	Nepal
Croatia	Nigeria
Ecuador	Panama
Finland	Philippines
Georgia	Qatar
Honduras	South Africa
Indonesia	St Vincent & Grenadines
Italy	Thailand
I.R. Iran Tunisia	
Japan	Turkey
Kazakhstan	Turkmenistan
USA	

## Structure of the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools

The Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools is structured around three key components:

1. A Global Advocacy and Policy Support component to support Governments in making safe schools a national priority as part of their education sector and national disaster risk reduction strategies, policies, plans and budget by 2020.
2. A Technical Assistance component that implements a comprehensive approach to school safety through the following technical pillars of the Comprehensive School Safety Framework:
  - Safe Learning Facilities and safe access structural assessment, safe sites selection and design, reconstruction and retrofitting).
  - School Disaster Management including educational continuity planning, enhanced preparedness through drills and simulation exercises, safe access to potable water and sanitation etc.
  - Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Education through the integration of risk reduction, resilience and climate change into the school curriculum, informal education and consensus-based key messages for households and communities.
3. A Progress Monitoring and Reporting component to track down and report back on progress in implementing safe schools on the ground, including at technical, policy, institutional and legal levels.

global, regional, national and local levels.

- To support Governments in making safe schools a priority as part of their education policies and national disaster risk reduction plans by 2020.
- To facilitate technical assistance and technology transfer to Governments to implement all aspects of safe schools at the national level.
- To forge and mobilize new partnerships for safe schools implementation, including with the private sector, local governments, Parliamentarians, UN Resident Coordinators' offices , scientific and technical institutions, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, local communities, children and youth, parents and teachers.
- To build a knowledge base of good practices and share national experiences for exchange, transfer and replication across countries.
- To monitor and track safe schools implementation progress globally.

## Expected results

1. High-level political commitment is secured with appropriate budgetary allocation to facilitate safe schools implementation at all levels, with particular focus on domestic implementation.
2. National disaster risk reduction and education plans integrating school safety are in place for implementation by 2020.
3. High technical expertise and sharing of good practices effectively support Governments deliver safe schools at national and local levels.
4. A broader, highly interactive and mutually supportive Safe Schools Leaders group leads and promotes safe schools implementation at all levels.

## Key objectives of the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools

- To secure political commitments and motivate budgetary allocation for safe schools implementation at

5. Private sector, local governments, regional organizations are supportive and actively engaged in supporting the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools implementation at all levels.
6. A global monitoring and tracking system is in place and allows for reporting on safe schools implementation progress globally.

### Commitments into Action - Modalities for implementation

The delivery of the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools over 2015-2030 will contribute to the achievement of the outcome and goal of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The Initiative will specifically support the implementation of global target (f) to “substantially reduce disaster damage to critical infrastructure and disruption of basic services, among them health and educational facilities, including through developing their resilience by 2030”.

The Worldwide Initiative will also contribute to the achievements of the Sustainable Development Goals on Education (SDG4) and Innovation and Infrastructure (SDG9).

Building on Istanbul Roadmap adopted in Turkey (2014) and the Action Plan in Support of the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools adopted in I.R. Iran (2015), the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools will be delivered on the ground through the mobilization of a variety of partners as follows:

1. **The Global Advocacy and Policy Support** component will be implemented through world Leaders’ mobilization and engagement, the organization of policy discussions and exchanges of experiences, the formulation and promotion of advocacy messages by Safe Schools Leaders, Safe Schools Champions, the Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the

#### Technical Support Package Key elements of support by the Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education sector

##### Building an enabling environment

- Technical support and training on the development of education sector policies and plans that are risk sensitive
- Sharing good practice from regional organizations
- Mobilization of donors and private sector for school safety implementation at global, regional, national and local levels.
- Facilitating knowledge exchange and management Mobilization of in-country expertise through UN system

##### Assessment, Monitoring & Evaluation

- Support to the development of Targets and Indicators
- Education Sector Snapshot for CSS and EIE
- CSS Assessment Suite Digital tools linked to EMIS Global Monitoring and Tracking of Safe Schools

##### Safe School Facilities

- Schools Retrofitting
- Community Engagement in School Construction
- School safety risk assessment methodologies development (including crowdsourcing initiatives)

##### School Disaster Management

- Participatory School Disaster Management
- Training for school safety implementation

##### Disaster Risk Reduction & Resilience Education

- Guidance for curriculum developers on the integration of safety, resilience and social cohesion in the curriculum
- Public Awareness and Public Education
- Specific key messages and public awareness activities for school safety implementation
- Curriculum Scope and Sequence Development
- Lesson Plans and Informal Activities
- Educational materials (booklets, games, videos etc.)

Education Sector, the civil society, non-governmental organizations, regional inter-governmental organizations, and through the building of inter-linkages with existing global education-related initiatives (such as the Global Education First initiative, Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, World at School).

### 2. The Technical Assistance component will be delivered to interested countries through:

- The provision of targeted expertise and technical support among Safe Schools Leader countries, including technology transfer, twinning opportunities, and exchange of good practices.
- Technical support from the Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector around 1) developing education sector plans which address disaster risk reduction and resilience; 2) child-centred risk assessments, and 3) the delivery of technical pillars of comprehensive school safety.
- The mobilization of in-country partners including UN Country Teams and UN Resident Coordinators’ offices, private sector, local governments, NGOs, Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, local communities, children/ students, teachers and parents.

### 3. The Progress Monitoring and Reporting component will be delivered through:

- The organization of annual Safe Schools Leaders meetings and related Working Groups’ annual reports.
- The submission of national reports by Governments on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
- implementation through the Sendai

Online Monitor.

- On-the ground monitoring missions (by Safe Schools Leaders, Global Alliance members, etc.)
- Global tracking programme developed by the World Bank / GFDRR in the context of the Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector.

### New partnerships are being mobilized for safe schools implementation:

- UN Resident Coordinators’ system will help mobilize the expertise on school safety available within the UN Country Teams, support the identification and sharing of good practices at country level, integrate / prioritize safe schools as part of UNDAF, link to the SDGs process and UN Development Group’s work.
- National platforms for disaster risk reduction and Sendai Framework focal points will support a multi-stakeholder approach to foster a comprehensive approach to school safety at the national level.
- The private sector will be mobilized through existing private sector networks (ARISE, Global Business Coalition for Education etc.), private foundations, charity organizations and individuals.
- Scientific, technical and academic institutions will provide knowledge and training packages on related safety issues.
- Engineering, architect and masons associations will be trained to ensure safe schools design, site selection, construction, assessment and retrofitting, including access for persons with disabilities.
- Local authorities will be encouraged to integrate school safety as a key priority as part of local disaster risk reduction plans as a contribution to the Resilient Cities Campaign.
- Local communities, children,

students, parents, teachers will contribute to building the social demand for safe schools.

- Regional Inter-governmental Organizations will help scale up the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools implementation by reaching out to their member States and integrating safe schools as a priority in regional strategies for disaster risk reduction.
- National or international Non-governmental organizations committed to bring technical support and contribute to government plans.
- Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies are supporting school safety initiatives around the world.

comprehensive approach to school safety domestically and / or through technical support to other vulnerable or more disaster-prone countries. A Safe Schools Leader can also commit to serve as advocate for safe schools implementation at domestic, regional or global levels.

### Becoming a Safe Schools Leader – What does it entail?

When committing to the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools, Safe Schools Leaders are expected to:

- Mobilize Ministries of Education and their planning departments to integrate a comprehensive approach to school safety as part of education sector plans and national disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020 in close coordination with disaster risk reduction national focal points and key in-country partners involved and active in school safety implementation.
- Commit actions, allocate appropriate budget and mobilize resources for safe schools implementation at the domestic level or technical cooperation support at international and regional levels.
- Assess the status of school safety implementation at country level and foster the mobilization of students and youth, teachers and parents in building the social demand for school safety assessment, planning, risk reduction, response-preparedness and educational continuity planning.
- Share experiences and good practices in school safety implementation at country level (including at the local level) and with other countries for possible replication.
- Participate in Safe Schools Leaders Meetings and related working groups discussions to build a strong knowledge base on all aspects of

## Becoming a Safe Schools Leader

### What is a Safe Schools Leader?

A Safe Schools Leader is a Government interested and active in school safety that is committed to implement a

#### Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector (GADRRRES) – Who are we?

- The Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector is a multi-stakeholder mechanism composed of UN agencies, international non-governmental organizations as well as global and regional networks actively engaged and committed to school safety and disaster risk reduction education.
- The Global Alliance promotes a coordinated and comprehensive approach to school safety globally and a global culture of safety and resilience through education and knowledge.
- For more information, please visit <http://gadrrres.net>

#### First Meeting of Safe Schools Leaders, 30-31 October 2014, Istanbul, Turkey

21 countries' endorsement and commitment to the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools.

Formalization of Safe Schools Leaders group.

Adoption of the Istanbul Roadmap in support of the Worldwide Initiative for Safe School, guiding the steps towards the shaping of formal commitments to school safety to be announced at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (March 2015, Japan).

Offer from I.R. Iran to host the Second Meeting of Safe Schools Leaders in 2015.

- schools safety and to report on progress in advancing the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools at the national and local levels
- Report back on actions taken on school safety in support of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction implementation through the Sendai On-line Monitor.
- 2009 and 2011 Global Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction called Governments to assess all schools in disaster-prone countries by 2011 and to develop a national plan for school safety by 2015.
- May 2013: High-Level Dialogue Communiqué of the Fourth Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction urged to “start of 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.
- 2014: Development of a Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools, constitution of a group of Safe School Leader countries.

#### Second Meeting of Safe Schools Leaders, 4-5 October 2015, Tehran, I.R. Iran - Translating commitments into Implementation

24 countries committing resources and policy action for school safety implementation on the ground

Technical aspects of safe schools addressed in a peer-review process.

Offer for technical assistance for school safety implementation in four countries in 2016

Adoption of a detailed Action Plan in Support of the Implementation of the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools

Offer from Nepal to host the Third Meeting of Safe Schools Leaders in 2016.

(Key action points)

- October 2014: First Meeting of Safe Schools Leaders hosted by the Government of Turkey (30-31 October 2014, Istanbul) - 16 Governments endorsed the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools and adopted the ‘Istanbul Roadmap’ to guide national safe school implementation.
- Major commitments to support the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools announced by Governments and partners at the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (14-18 March 2015, Sendai, Japan).
- The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, adopted at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, recognizes the importance of school safety through global target (f) to “substantially reduce disaster damage to critical infrastructure and disruption of basic services, among them health and educational facilities, including through developing their resilience by 2030”.
- The World Education Forum (20-21 May 2015, Korea) recognizes the need to ensure safe learning environments.

- Second Meeting of Safe Schools Leaders hosted by the I.R. Iran (4-5 October 2015, Tehran) - 24 Governments adopt an Action Plan in Support of the Implementation of the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools, announce new commitments to invest in school safety and offer technical support to interested governments to facilitate safe school implementation at the national and local levels.

## Background and references

### Important milestones for safe schools

#### Safe Schools and Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Education Reference Materials

A set of guidance materials and tools as well as regional and multi-country initiatives have been developed by Safe Schools Leaders and the Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector to support the objectives of the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools. They are available as part of the Disaster Risk Reduction Education Library at [www.preventionweb.net/go/edumat](http://www.preventionweb.net/go/edumat) and [www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/edu-materials](http://www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/edu-materials).

Three self-assessment multi-hazard tools were developed and integrated as part of a Comprehensive Safe Schools Self-Assessment Suite that will facilitate data collection about all aspects of school safety. The data gathered will serve to assess safe schools status

and requirements, plan resources and influence decision-making for safe schools implementation in support of the Worldwide Initiative. The following tools can be used separately as appropriate:

- **A smartphone application** to increase school safety awareness through solicitation of crowd-sourced inputs from students and community members. The information collected is shared with the school community and local education administrators via email and an online geo-data visualization site for their information and to build the social demand for safe schools.
- **A tablet-based** school internal self-assessment application used by school safety committees and visiting education administrators to assess the three technical pillars of comprehensive school safety. The outputs include maps, school and district reports disseminated via e-mail and an online database search facility for use by administrators at the school, district and national levels.
- **VISUS Comprehensive School Safety application**, a tablet-based tool for on-site inspection of school facilities and data collection by trained surveyors. Individual school and summary reports, including budget estimations for safety upgrading, are produced using remote automated processing.

For more information, please visit [www.unisdr.org/we/campaign/wiss](http://www.unisdr.org/we/campaign/wiss) or contact [isdr@un.org](mailto:isdr@un.org)

#### How to become a Safe Schools Leader?

Please send a formal communication to UNISDR confirming commitment to the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools objectives and expressing interest to become a Safe Schools Leader.

**Address your letter / mail to:** United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools  
9-11 rue de Varembe - CH-1201 Geneva Email: [unisdr@un.org](mailto:unisdr@un.org)