



Leveraging Education Coordination for Climate change Adaptation and Mitigation

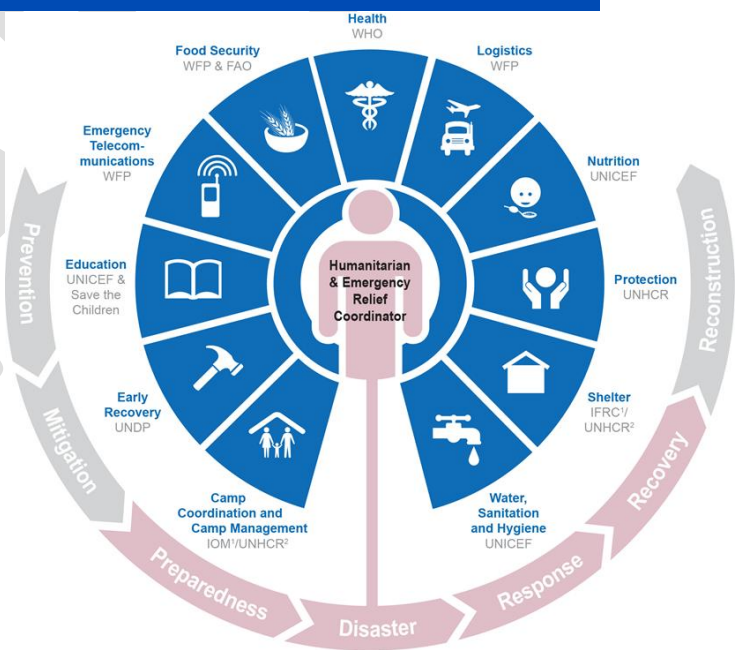
“Pollution – Bio-Diversity Loss – Climate Change”

What is the Cluster Approach?

The Cluster Approach ensues from the [Humanitarian Reform Agenda](#) (2005), which introduced several new elements to enhance predictability, accountability and partnership. Clusters are groups of humanitarian organizations, both UN and non-UN, in each of the main sectors of humanitarian action, e.g. water, health and logistics. They are designated by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and have clear responsibilities for coordination.

The [Global Education Cluster](#) (GEC), founded in 2007, is the only Global Cluster co-led by a UN Agency: UNICEF and an NGO: Save the Children.

The aim of the cluster approach is to **strengthen system-wide preparedness and technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies** and provide clear leadership and accountability in the main areas of humanitarian response. At the country level, it aims to strengthen partnerships, and the predictability and accountability of humanitarian action, by improving prioritization and clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of humanitarian organizations.



What is the added value of coordination?

GEC acts as an amplifier for impacts in the field as it enables countries' clusters and working group to work towards a predictable, holistic, equitable and well-coordinated response. Education clusters are platforms bring a diverse range of stakeholders together under one

umbrella to collectively identify needs and response priorities. Coordination is at the heart of a quality, consultative, and holistic climate response. Moreover, coordination plays a critical role in ensuring crisis preparedness, and formulating lessons-learned after response implementation. Crisis preparedness can be strengthened through through early warning reports, convening of partners, contingency planning, etc.

Climate change in the education cluster strategies

An education cluster strategy is a consultatively developed document that outlines the cluster's approach and operational plan for responding to an emergency. The strategy guides partners in their implementation of an effective, timely and quality emergency response. This document is quite comprehensive in terms of the education sector's needs, priorities and plans.

As of October 2023, 5 out of the 10 different education clusters with valid strategies (Afghanistan, DRC, Ethiopia, Somalia and South Sudan) already include climate change or environmental impacts in an ad hoc manner. These strategies feature climate change in their needs overview section. Besides, four contexts mention that the impacts of climate change jeopardize access to education, hence being addressed more or less explicitly in the response framework through different cluster objectives. It is also interesting to note that the different education clusters face various climate impacts, from drought to floods, including locust infestation, heavy rains and harsher winters. These impacts are reinforcing an already dire humanitarian situation. One particular context goes beyond the response framework and includes the engagement of the education cluster in developing a resilience and recovery framework, as part of the cluster's core function 3: strategic planning and implementing cluster strategy.

Two additional education clusters (Nigeria and Venezuela) mention natural disasters only once in their strategy, as an example of protection activity and in the sub-national contingency plan framework.

This overview highlights an appetite from various education clusters in different regions to include somehow climate change in the cluster strategies to be better prepared to respond to climate shocks. Featuring the different impacts of climate change in a strategy also acknowledges the recurring aspects of these events and their cyclical effect on the

Problem statement

Understanding the Big Picture

The interconnected and mutually reinforcing triple planetary crisis refers to the three main interlinked issues that humanity currently faces: climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss. It has put virtually every child in the world at risk ([UNICEF, 2023](#)). Each of these issues has its own causes and effects and needs to be resolved to have a viable future on this planet. Amongst them, climate change is the most pressing issue facing humanity today. According to the [World Bank](#), impacts related to climate change are evident across regions and in many sectors important to society, such as human health, agriculture and food security, water supply, transportation, energy, and biodiversity and ecosystems. Impacts are expected to become increasingly disruptive in the coming decades. There is very high confidence that the frequency and intensity of extreme heat and heavy precipitation events are increasing in most continental regions of the world. These trends are consistent with expected physical responses to a warming climate. The frequency and intensity of extreme high temperature events are virtually certain to increase in the future as global temperature increases. There is high confidence that extreme precipitation events will very likely continue to increase in frequency and intensity throughout most of the world. Observed and projected trends for other types of extreme events, such as floods, droughts, and severe storms, have more variable regional characteristics.

Natural hazards furthermore strain social cohesion, and conflict negatively impacts citizens and communities ability to anticipate and prepare effectively and efficiently for future climate induced hazards ([UNEP](#)). Hence the dictum that *climate is the reverse experience of peace*. According to [UNDP](#), climate change can

“...exacerbate food, water, and livelihood insecurity, with cascading effects such as increased competition over natural resources, social disruptions, and displacement. This can lead to increased tensions, conflict, and instability in a country or region. In settings where conflict already exists, the impacts of climate change can aggravate or prolong it, making it more difficult to reach and sustain peace. Conflict can, in turn, disrupt or impede climate action, either through the active destruction of energy, water, and agricultural assets or by delaying or blocking mitigation and adaptation interventions.”

Climate Change and Humanitarianism

Climate change is exacerbating *humanitarian* needs across the world. By driving new crises and intensifying existing ones, it acts as a threat multiplier, and the increase in both amplitude and frequencies of hazards are deepening the impacts especially on vulnerable communities.

Affected communities' abilities to deal with the threats are also impacted by their own resilience already strained during humanitarian crises.

Humanitarians are challenged to confront the climate change in a realistic, wholistic and disciplined manner, mindful that it is a long-term and multi-sectoral challenge; that humanitarian action must complement development action (and vice versa); financial resources for adaptation and mitigation are limited; and that interventions therefore need to be carefully prioritized for optimal effectiveness and efficiency. The following principles must guide Humanitarian Action for Climate Change.

- *Realism*: Humanitarians need to distinguish 'what they can achieve' from 'what they cannot achieve' – in the current context of increasing numbers of crises, and humanitarian funding cuts. It is unlikely that humanitarians will have significant leverage to stop carbonization or to install climate justice. However, they do have leverage to protect children's lives and rights through coordinating processes and promoting programmes that facilitate climate change adaptation, preparedness, anticipatory action, rapid response, and resilience.
- *Do No Harm*: Humanitarians must ensure that climate change responses, policies, and investment decisions do not inadvertently cause harm, for example by abandoning successful, previously effective (financially and operationally) crisis intervention practices. Diverting traditional emergency funding might further stress already strained social systems; and increase fragility. Money that is already invested well and doing substantial good should remain invested in time-proven practices.
- *Do More Good*. The "Do More Good" principle complements the "Do No Harm" principle by emphasizing a proactive approach to maximizing positive impact and achieving meaningful outcomes. It encourages going beyond the baseline of avoiding harm to actively contribute to positive change. In the context of climate change adaptation and mitigation, this could mean that humanitarian agencies lower their supply operations footprint; help governments and communities engage evidence-based risk preparation; as well as evidence generation and data sharing.
- *Leadership for Integration and a Fit-for-Purpose Humanitarian Architecture*: The humanitarian architecture is currently not fit-for- purpose to meet the intersectoral nature of climate change. Bottlenecks include 'siloed programming', pressure on humanitarians to focus exclusively on life-saving interventions; inflexible and short-term funding modalities (e.g. one-year-only funding cycles), as well as lack of meaningful complementarity between humanitarian vs. development programming. Strong leadership is required for forging alliances committed to jointly overcome the above-managed bottlenecks.
- *Localization and climate change*: Humanitarian interventions must empower local responses and local actors. The importance of the local impact of climate change and disasters must be recognized, as well as the importance of engaging with local actors in efforts related to climate action. For instance, it could be through increased advocacy and funding towards knowledge-sharing and capacity-building, as well as earmarking emergency funds for implementation through national and subnational CSOs

Climate Change and Education in Emergencies

In light of the escalating climate events, stakeholders involved in EiE are called to answer to the question how the education sector can contribute to wholistic efforts of climate change adaptation, mitigation and preparedness; as well as climate security. Education programme divisions as well coordination platforms such as the education cluster must cooperate in a complementary fashion to mobilize networks of education partners in ensuring that children’s right to quality education is protected - even in crisis settings ([Selby and Kagawa, 2023](#)).

As far as the Global Education Cluster is concerned, it does operate through the Humanitarian Programme Cycle’s 5+1 functions: needs assessment and analysis, strategic planning, resource mobilization and advocacy, implementation and monitoring, operational review and evaluation, and preparedness. When it comes to operationalization, it is helpful to

- look at each function at three different points in time: before the crisis, during the crisis, and after the crisis,
- look at the impacts climate has children’s (and teachers) social and physical environment, both natural and built,
- Through the application of the “do no harm” principle, education clusters can ensure that they do not negatively impact the social and economic service systems at the local level,
- Building on the “do no harm” principle, education clusters can also apply the sister principle of “do more good”, which ultimately encourages positive changes in the education systems and the adjacent community,
- Education plans must not focus exclusively on education interventions. They can open education platforms to other sectors offering strategic and resiliency-building inputs.

Proposed GEC Theory of Change

If

Education clusters integrate and operationalize climate change considerations into the Humanitarian Project Cycle [HPC] functions (5+1)

Then

Vulnerable communities will be better supported in light of climate-induced hazards and their children will receive education programmes for in safe, inclusive and child friendly schools and temporary learning spaces.

Because

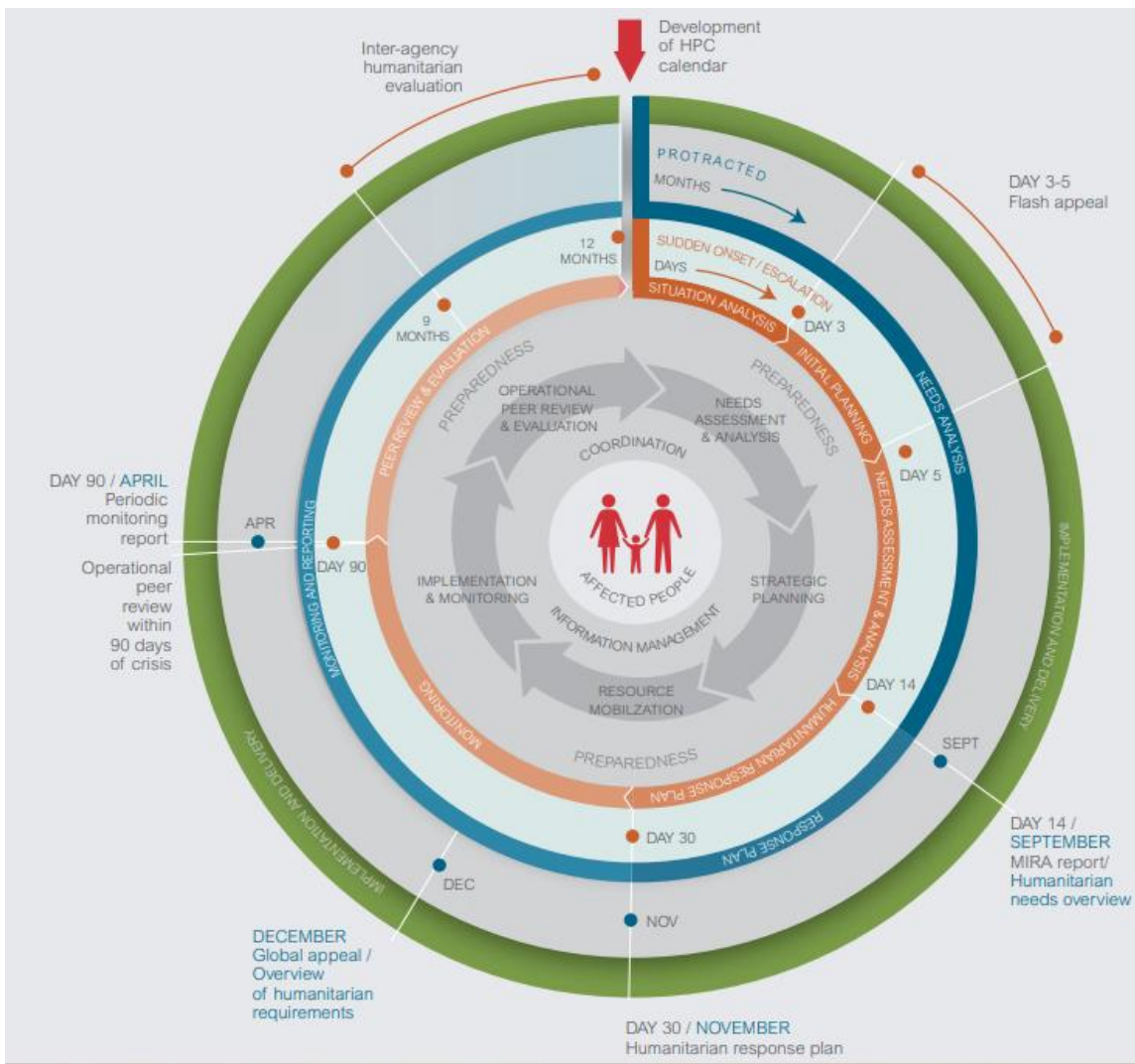
- Needs assessments will have retrieved data that highlight climate risks and available response capacities for ensuring access to safe and inclusive quality education - even in emergency contexts

- *EiE strategic plans* will use the evidence retrieved through needs assessments to propose education interventions that are (a) relevant for child education and protection – even in crisis settings; and (b) propose education measures for climate change adaptation-, mitigation- and preparedness (including the measure of building youth advocacy for effective climate change responses)
- *EiE resource mobilization and advocacy* will focus on consensus-building with donors on how to best leverage education platforms for child protection, learning, as well as climate change adaptation, mitigation, and preparedness
- *Implementation and Monitoring* will build education cluster partner staff- and institutional capacities for climate change-relevant programming, implementation and monitoring
- *Operational Peer Review and Peer Evaluation* will allow stakeholders to analyze lessons learned for improved preparation of responses to future climate change hazards.
- Preparedness
- AAP

Humanitarian Programme Cycle

The GEC has put together a Table that proposes how the education cluster mechanisms around the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (see Figure 1) could be leveraged towards climate change.

Figure 1:



HPC Phases	<i>Before Crisis</i>	<i>During Crisis (rapid-; slow-onset; protracted)</i>	<i>After Crisis</i>
<p>Preparedness: <i>Preparedness is considered a continuous effort and part of each component of the HPC; it is not a distinct phase of the cycle. Preparedness should be integrated into other cluster actions, contributing to capacity building, needs assessment, etc. to ensure it is complementary to cluster efforts and support long term sustainability of coordination group</i></p>	<p>Do more good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link up cluster with early warning communication systems (both climate and conflict risks), and subsequently draft contingency and preparedness planning documents that propose triggers and subsequent response mechanisms • Ensure that anticipatory actions and preparedness plans align with INEE Minimum Standards as well as GADRRES Comprehensive Schools Safety Framework (Pillar 2: School Safety and Educational Continuity Management) • Update key preparedness and anticipatory action documents with environmental and, if possible, social cohesion considerations to capture climate change and social corrosion events and impacts. • Assess the level of climate preparedness: Can it support resilience? Or is it insufficient and thus exacerbate the crisis? <p>Do no harm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid developing standard operating procedures, contingency and preparedness plans (e.g. school safety plan) to address only and exclusively the specific needs and targets of the education sector - without linking to other sectors (like for example WASH) • Avoid aid strategies that might undermine local actors 	<p>Do more good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cluster involvement in the activation of the rapid response mechanisms, as well as preparedness and contingency plans that operationalize climate change adaptation and mitigation responses and protect social cohesion • Engage other clusters from other sections to make use of education platforms for WASH, nutrition, health, and shelter responses <p>Do no harm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid operationalizing siloed education interventions that ignore pressing multisectoral resilience needs. • Avoid interventions that undermine local actors. 	<p>Do more good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect data (including on the financial and other benefits of investing in preparedness) to make a case for government funding and donor financial support • Collaborate with relevant stakeholders to develop long-term intersectoral strategies for efficiently rebuilding and strengthening the resilience of children, families, schools and communities, as well as community social cohesion, thereby preparing against future crises. <p>Do no harm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid the recommendation of preparedness modalities that are narrowly focused on education interventions while ignoring overall resilience building which also includes other sectors • Avoid recommendations that

HPC Phases	<i>Before Crisis</i>	<i>During Crisis (rapid-; slow-onset; protracted)</i>	<i>After Crisis</i>
<p>Needs Assessment and Analysis: <i>Needs assessment s provide the evidence base for humanitarian response. At the outset of an emergency, they provide the information needed to define the strategic objectives, and later for operational planning, and resource requirements.</i></p>	<p>Do more good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop, in consultation with partner agencies, age-relevant question banks, including questions on the environment, up-to-date climate trends/projections (if relevant), existing adaptation and mitigation practices, infrastructure, extreme temperatures, resilience, habits, curriculum, and nature-based solutions. • Propose a shadow-set of questions for climate preparedness: “What do I need to do to “do no harm”, and to leave a school community behind better prepared than it was beforehand?” • Question Banks also ensure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ querying about social cohesion risks and opportunities. ○ Questions are gender-conscious ○ Infrastructure / relief centers ○ Water availability / threats ○ Heat management ○ Climate change learning (extra-curricular) • Facilitate consultations with children and youth to express climate change needs / action priorities <p>Do no harm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not neglect time-proven data protocols which have served well in the past. • Avoid data protocols that ignore gender or social cohesion dimensions • Avoid questions that may trigger conflict or anxiety of authorities 	<p>Do more good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs assessments and Secondary Data Reviews [SDRs] conducted shall document crisis triggers, consequences, and proposed responses that align with protection, learning, inclusion, resilience and social cohesion priorities. • Ensure that needs assessments are conducted jointly, and include children’s voices, to achieve an assessment that is evidence-based, and that represents all voices. <p>Do no harm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not neglect time-proven data protocols which have served well in the past 	<p>undermine neglect the role of local actors.</p> <p>Do more good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update gender-sensitive and inclusive question banks based on lessons learned as required in order to upgrade Needs Assessment tools in preparation for forthcoming hazards and conflict risks • Include climate-related disruption of education services in current data collection and analysis protocol • Leverage education responses for social cohesion • Include RAPS data on climate change vulnerability in GEC’s data repository <p>Do no harm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not neglect time-proven data protocols which have served well in the past

HPC Phases	<i>Before Crisis</i>	<i>During Crisis (rapid-; slow-onset; protracted)</i>	<i>After Crisis</i>
	<i>Consult sources such as climate information services meteorological departments for current and future projections on regions where children are the most vulnerable to climate hazards</i>		
<p>Strategic Planning <i>Strategic planning helps the humanitarian community to respond more effectively to the needs of the people affected by a crisis– to focus activities and resources, and to ensure that organizations are working toward the same goals.</i></p>	<p>Do more good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the time children are out of school because of climate hazards • Propose intervention strategies that leave target group behind in better shape and better prepared than when starting intervention. • Make reference to relevant INEE Minimum Standards addressing climate change and climate change vulnerability data in the Cluster Strategy; as well as GADRRES Comprehensive Schools Safety Framework • Justify the necessity of environmentally-friendly school rehabilitation guidance, operationalized by ‘socially-conscious’ engineers • Highlight importance to align with other cluster • Acknowledge climate security considerations in the cluster strategy and whether and how these can be mitigated through education sector. • Highlight institutional capacity building strategies that consider teacher wellbeing as well as resiliency learning needs of children, teachers, schools and communities • Make education climate change- and coping-relevant (school greening, sports equipment) • Include climate change curriculum in the response framework (not meant as ‘new additional subject’ but as activities to put climate into student experience). • Teacher training on climate change • Include advocacy building skills within youth groups in the response framework. • Discuss nature-based approaches to encourage positive adaptation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Appropriate greenery in school settings can reduce heat and flooding, and in turn improve learning and health (physical and mental) ○ Gardening and forestry can contribute to children’s psychosocial wellbeing and teach sustainability ○ Green and sustainable school grounds can be a community asset <p>Do no harm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid strategies that over-emphasise climate change over other crises 	<p>Do more good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link thematic aspects of the response (e.g. MHPSS or CVA) environmental considerations • Education HNOs and HRP of education sections and flash appeals include environment and child resiliency considerations; and education indicators for the response, which can include where relevant climate change adaption and mitigation, including pollution, biodiversity loss <p>Do no harm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid strategies which over-emphasis climate change over other crisis which could negatively impacts children and community’s resilience 	<p>Do more good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on response monitoring and evolving context, as well as lessons learned, update and adjust key response <p>Do no harm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid strategies which over-emphasis climate change over other crisis which could negatively impacts children and community’s resilience • Avoid aid strategies

HPC Phases	<i>Before Crisis</i>	<i>During Crisis (rapid-; slow-onset; protracted)</i>	<i>After Crisis</i>
	<p>which could negatively impact children and the community’s resilience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinguish between child advocacy strategies that are harmful, and those that are useful / emancipatory • Avoid aid strategies that undermine local actors <p><i>Update cluster TORs and job descriptions of cluster coordinators to emphasize the importance of climate adaptation and mitigation leadership responsibilities</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid aid strategies that undermine local actors 	<p>that undermine local actors</p>
<p>Resource Mobilization and Advocacy Fundraising for the humanitarian response and raising awareness on the crisis and the needs of the affected population</p>	<p>Do more good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for MYRP strategies that invite climate response-effective proposals and eventually focus on the for triple planetary crisis hazards. • Frame disaster relief as investment for preparedness learning for forthcoming disasters • Proactive advocacy to i) include environmental considerations in education response (climate-change resilient school infrastructure, child protection, learning and coping, curriculum, school greening clubs, teaching and learning environment), ii) focus on the need for education response in environmental crisis, iii) involve organized youth movements in the response over predictable climate change occurrence, and iv) how education contributes to building resilience of at-risk communities to climate shocks, and v) the human and education costs of the climate crisis • Emphasis the protective and life-saving opportunities of education platforms) • Engage in resource mobilization, building upon existing preparedness and contingency plan for a specific climate-related event (e.g. El Nino),and make the case for better school infrastructure rehabilitation • Advocate for climate-change-sensitive education policy. <p>Do no harm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent harmful competition over resources between climate partners and clusters • Avoid siloed climate response advocacy 	<p>Do more good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy note directed to decision-makers (government, donors, heads of agencies) that convey, based on case studies from the field, how education in emergencies can be leveraged for climate change adaptation, and mitigating loss of biodiversity/pollution • Leverage clusters partners to hear the collective voices of children/communities on climate change mitigation/adaptation • Emphasize protective and life-saving opportunities of the education platform <p>Do no harm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid mistake of depleting crisis-response funds ear marked for other occurring crises 	<p>Do more good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy good practices for preparedness ahead of climate change crises, and coping with the onslaught of hazards and shocks • Advocate for education in RRM • Fundraising for risk-preparedness • Advocate for educational and environmental rights, including consideration of the linkages of the two • Emphasis on the protective and life-saving opportunities of the education platform <p>Do no harm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid mistake of depleting crisis-response funds year marked for other occurring crises simply for re-

HPC Phases	<i>Before Crisis</i>	<i>During Crisis (rapid-; slow-onset; protracted)</i>	<i>After Crisis</i>
		simply for re-investment in climate change responses, as this would provoke new fragilities related to non-climate change hazards	investment in climate change responses, as this would provoke new fragilities related to non-climate change hazards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procuring EiE resources with low carbon footprint (check for discussions with shelter cluster) 			
Implementation and Monitoring <i>Implementation of the response framework and monitoring of it, to ensure that sufficient progress are being made in reaching the strategic and the clusters' objectives</i>	<p>Do more good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop clusters' capacities to understand the implication of climate change and how to make emergency responses climate change prepared, climate change adaptive, or climate change mitigative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ climate change adapted school infrastructure that is learning-conducive ○ "Climate citizenship" (school curriculum and extracurricular activities) • Ensure effective monitoring on the basis of climate change preparedness indicators (What kind of indicators?) • Ensure that the 5W (cluster response monitoring tool) includes climate consideration <p>Do no harm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid academic and PSS curricula that make children passive recipients of inputs rather than activists for climate change 	<p>Do more good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When possible, include representatives of disaster management agencies, and other relevant partners, etc. in the cluster meetings • Ensure effective monitoring of the education response taking into account climate change indicators <p>Do no harm</p> <p>Avoid over-focusing on monitoring the climate change aspects of the crisis over the other aspects</p>	<p>Do more good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen clusters' capacities on climate change, based on the type of crises they faced • Ensure effective monitoring of risk preparedness measures taken ahead of potential crises and hazards • Refine the 5 W tool with lessons learned during the crisis <p>Do no harm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid leaving a place in a state worse than before the crisis

HPC Phases	<i>Before Crisis</i>	<i>During Crisis (rapid-; slow-onset; protracted)</i>	<i>After Crisis</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued coordinating year-round on preparedness, anticipatory action, climate change disaster response, etc. Capacity development in the areas of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, education asset protection, child/friendly infrastructure School / TLS Greening, coping with distress through positive action 		
<p>Operational Peer Review and Peer Evaluation <i>The operational peer review is an internal, inter-agency peer support tool, which helps determine whether adjustments need to be made to the collective humanitarian response.</i></p>	<p>Do more good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review most recent ‘lessons-learned’ analyses from previous climate change responses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have we avoided harm? Have we done good? Is education now (a) physically, and (b) socially better or worse off in terms of climate change preparation than at the beginning of the intervention? Is the education system prepared to respond to future climate hazards? <p>Do no harm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not underestimate the importance of ‘lessons-learned’ learning encounters, which are fundamental for future preparedness planning 	<p>Do more good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning encounters and lessons learned <p>Can you please provide me with access to this document?</p> <p>Do no harm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not underestimate the importance of ‘lessons-learned’ learning encounters, which are fundamental for future preparedness planning 	<p>Do more good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that peer evaluation includes a climate change component Learning encounters and lessons learned, taking forward any humanitarian system changes to be consistent with other clusters <p>Do no harm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not underestimate the importance of ‘lessons-learned’ learning encounters.

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