



BEST PRACTICE



GADRRRES Regional Affiliates Champion Comprehensive School Safety

Regional collaboration in the Asia Pacific and Latin America and Caribbean regions animate policy advocacy and develop cross-country momentum for school safety.

GADRRRES Regional Affiliates

Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector (GADRRRES) was established in 2011 as a response to the growing need for a coordinated effort to address disaster risk reduction and resilience in the education sector. Recognising the importance of regional collaboration and learning, two Regional Affiliates formed almost simultaneously and affiliated themselves to GADRRRES: the *Asia Pacific Coalition for School Safety (APCSS)* and the Regional Education Group for *Latin America and the Caribbean (Grupo Regional de Educación para América Latina y El Caribe GRE-LAC)*.

GADRRRES Regional Affiliates have been on a captivating journey to achieving school safety in the Asia Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean regions, which are prone to a wide range of natural and climate-induced hazards as well as biological & health hazards, technological hazards, violence and conflict and everyday hazards. These hazards pose significant threats to child rights and resilience in the education sector. Like most regions, the struggle to ensure safety and educational continuity is challenged by outdated infrastructure, inadequate capacity, incomplete data, and limited resources for risk reduction and response preparedness.

Regional Education Working Group for Latin America and the Caribbean (GRE-LAC)

GRE-LAC, established in 2011, is a dynamic united front, dedicated to supporting organizations, Ministries of Education, and coordination mechanisms in addressing emergencies, disaster risk management, and migration issues in the region. GRE-LAC draws inspiration from the Sendai

Framework, the CSSF, the Global Education Cluster, REDLAC (The Risk, Emergency and Disaster Regional Coordination Platform from OCHA), international organisations, NGOs, multilateral agencies, donors, and various education stakeholders. Through regional coordination, information exchange, joint action, and mutual support, GRE-LAC supports education actors to strengthen sector coordination in their disaster risk reduction, preparedness, and response strategies with a focus on the most vulnerable children including migrants and refugees, children with disabilities, indigenous population among other groups, ensuring the right to education for all children and adolescents in Latin America and the Caribbean.

GRE-LAC Achievements:

- The [CSSF launch](#) for Latin America and the Caribbean.
- The [Sint Maarten Declaration on School Safety](#) was endorsed by 19 countries and territories of the Caribbean.
- [The Declaration of the countries of the SICA region](#) (Central America) on School Safety was signed.
- A [Caribbean roadmap for School Safety](#) was developed.
- The [CECC-SICA region roadmap with actions](#) for the coming years. There has also been progress on the [Roadmaps in the SICA region, by country](#).
- Six Caribbean Countries/territories (Antigua & Barbuda, Dominica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis) implemented a standardised school learning facilities multi-hazard safety assessment tool: [UNESCO VISUS](#).
- Consistent promotes translation and dissemination of global guidance documents into Spanish, English, French, and Portuguese for the Region.

Asia Pacific Coalition for School Safety (APCSS)

The Asia Pacific Coalition for School Safety (APCSS), established in 2012 as a Regional Affiliate of the Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector (GADRRRES), is dedicated to fostering regional dialogue and sharing technical resources, best practices, and model policies on Safe Schools. Through these efforts, APCSS aims to minimise the impact of disasters on children's education and promote advocacy for Comprehensive School Safety across Asia-Pacific countries. Collaborating with sub-regional platforms like the Pacific Coalition for the Advancement of School Safety (PCSASS) and the ASEAN Safe School Initiative (ASSI), as well as other partners such as Child Fund, UN Major Group of Children and Youth (MGCY), and the All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI), APCSS is committed to building a safer and more resilient educational environment for children in the region.

APCSS Achievements:

- A policy brief [Advancing comprehensive school safety for Asia and the Pacific](#) and a two-year [Strategic Plan](#) in were published 2016.

- The Coalition advocated for CSS in regional and sub-regional forums and called for national commitments to sub-regional initiatives, e.g., at the 2nd and 3rd ASEAN Conferences for [2nd and 3rd ASEAN Conference for School Safety](#) (2017 and 2019), and in the [APCSS Partners' session on Comprehensive School Safety](#) at the recent 2022 Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction.
- APCSS supported the implementation of the first global CSS Policy Survey in the Asia-Pacific Region, and the publication of [Comprehensive School Safety Policy: Trends in the Asia-Pacific Region](#) published in English and Chinese.

Lessons Learned from GADRRRES Regional Affiliates

Since their establishment, the APCSS and GRE-LAC have made significant strides in promoting safer schools and ensuring the continuity of education in the face of disasters and crises.

✓ **Advocacy for consistent school safety policy, shared targets and indicators, and long-term commitments to implementation of the Comprehensive School Safety Framework**
Regional Affiliates have played a crucial role in advocating for and influencing policies for disaster risk reduction and child rights and resilience in the education sector. They have had a significant role in promoting sub-regional initiatives to strengthen school safety (See *Best Practice: Sub-Regional Initiatives Empower School Safety*). This has resulted in the development of national strategies, action plans, and legislation that support safer schools and educational continuity under a wide variety of circumstances.

✓ **Evidence of hazards and crisis impacts on child rights in the education sector and advocacy for the most marginalized children**
The partners in Regional Affiliates have collaborated to demonstrate the impact of natural and climate change-induced hazards, biological and health, violence, conflict, and migratory crises on children and their access to education. Regional Affiliates consistently advocate for equity and inclusion in relation to gender, disability, social and cultural factors, and including refugees and asylum seekers.

✓ **Evidence-based best-practice guidance, and knowledge dissemination**
Regional Affiliates have contributed to developing and sharing research reports, guidance materials, and other co-developed knowledge products to guide the implementation of school safety policies, plans, and programmes at the national, regional, and local levels. They provide an open space for the exchange of relevant experiences both in education-sector development as well as during humanitarian emergencies and in anticipation of these.

✓ **Capacity-building and training**
Regional Affiliates have facilitated capacity-building efforts to strengthen the competencies of education sector leaders to guide school safety policy implementation. These initiatives have

enabled policy-makers to better assess risks, and develop and implement risk reduction and response strategies.

✓ **Mobilization of technical and financial resources**

Regional Affiliates help to assure the viability of work plans and implementation of school safety and risk reduction activities, finding synergies and economies of scale. They have become a technical support arm for sub-regional government initiatives.

✓ **Strengthening partnerships and coordination for “collective impact”**

The Regional Affiliates bring together IGOs, INGOs, and other regional actors (including researchers, private sector, and donors) concerned with child rights and resilience in the education sector. They then go on to foster partnerships and enhanced coordination among governments – especially by bringing together education and disaster management, climate change, and child protection authorities. This collaborative approach has been instrumental in leveraging resources and expertise to improve child school safety across the region.

By understanding the essential elements of the Collective Impact Approach and addressing potential challenges, practitioners and organisations can unlock the power of collaboration and drive meaningful, lasting change in their communities. If they did it, then you can too!

New Regional Affiliates are Developing

For information on new Regional Affiliates developing in:

- East and Southern Africa
- West and Central Africa
- Middle East and North Africa

Please contact GADRRRES.

gadrrres.net
gadrrres@gmail.com
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