



www.ebscohost.com  
www.gi.sanu.ac.rs, www.doiserbia.nb.rs,  
J. Geogr. Inst. Cvijic. 65(1) (127–129)



*Book review*

## **STAY SAFE AND BE PREPARED: A TEACHER'S GUIDE TO DISASTER RISK REDUCTION**

*Aleksa Popadić\* \*\*<sup>1</sup>*

\* Geography teacher at Primary School "Dimitrije Tucović, Kraljevo

\*\* Primary School "Svetozar Marković", Kraljevo

Guide Stay safe and be prepared: A teacher's guide to disaster risk reduction was published in 2014 in English and Spanish by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Paris. Electronic version is available at <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002289/228963e.pdf>.

This guide<sup>2</sup> is a part of a three-book compendium on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), that also include a student's guide and a parent's guide. The book has 57 pages, and the main text is followed by 12 photographs, 7 illustrations, 2 charts and 14 tables. This guide is aimed at introducing concepts, exercises and good practices on disaster preparedness and response to teachers, students and parents. Comprehensive disaster preparedness and resilience-building can only take place when the whole community is involved, including students, parents and teachers. Students contribute to disaster preparedness and resilience-building success by taking the lead on some of the activities.

This guide helps teacher to become an educator on disaster risk reduction in four steps and contains usefull resources and information.

The first chapter Knowing the Basics emphasize importance of disaster risk reduction learning and setting this topic high on list of teachers' priorities, due to an increase of global number of disasters, children's vulnerability to disasters and teacher's role in saving lives by providing students with appropriate DRR knowledge, skills and attitude. This chapter includes introduction to the concept of disaster risk, DRR terminology and the role of a gender and disability in disasters.

---

<sup>1</sup> Correspondence to: [aleksapopadic@gmail.com](mailto:aleksapopadic@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> This publication was prepared with the support of BASF Stiftung, a charitable foundation based in Ludwigshafen, Germany and Mr Daniel Petz.

Step 2 (Facilitating DRR Learning) gives an overview of the field of DRR education, followed by a note on DRR learning outcomes and facilitation approach. Many subjects (Arts, Biology, Civics/Citizenship, Geography, Health/Well-being Education, History, Language and Literature, Mathematics, Science and Technology and other subjects) are suggested as appropriate to teach DRR. This chapter provides examples on how to include DRR topics into subject's curriculum as well as DRR lesson and activity plan examples. The models of cooperation among colleagues to facilitate DRR learning are suggested, as well as involving parents and community members in DRR learning activities (seven family- and/or community-based activities introduced in the Students' Guide), DRR Club, DRR or School Safety Day and Parents' meeting/evening/workshop.

The next step (Making Your School a Safe Place) is focused on four group of activities that contributes to enhancing school's safety: appointing a school disaster management committee or a school safety community, multi-hazard risk assessment, disaster preparedness and evacuation drills, importance of inclusion of certain individuals and groups affected by the specific vulnerabilities (the special needs that students have according to their gender, ethnic/religious roots or health) for school safety.

Step 4 (Helping Students after a Disaster) addresses the issue of providing psychological and social help to affected persons (students, teachers, parents or other members of the community). In this chapter teachers' role is highlighted, since they are adult confidants whom students interact with on a daily basis after unpleasant events (death, injury, displacement and loss of home and livelihoods, despair and trauma). Teachers might be in better position to support students' psychosocial recovery than parents, because parents are likely to be affected and traumatized by the disaster themselves. Following overview of children's response to disasters, it is emphasized when and why teachers should help psychosocial recovery. This chapter ends with examples of psychosocial exercises and activities for students affected by disasters (expressing feelings, relaxation exercises, talking about what happened, drawing feelings, engaging parents in psychosocial issues and artistic and expressive activities).

The chapter Ready, Set, Go! provides teachers with some tips on how to overcome some of the challenges they are facing during DRR teaching. Checklists in this section of the guide will help teachers to assess their DRR teaching skills. These checklists will show current situation and improvement of

DRR teaching skills over a year. Building partnership and connecting with nearby schools (or even with schools from other countries) are necessary during the process of creating safe schools. Examples of well organized activities should be promoted by the media in order to inspire teachers in other schools. This chapter ends with DRR education resources (websites, e-books, guides, games) on various aspects of disaster risk reduction teaching (knowing the basics, school safety, facilitating DRR learning, and psychosocial well-being).

The guide has an appendix with several useful texts and illustrations: The Five Dimensions of DRR Education, How the Topic of Climate Change Could Be Taught in Several Different Subjects, Comprehensive School Safety chart and Five Stages of a Multi-hazard Risk Assessment.

Especially useful part of the guide are singled out tips for the implementation and evaluation of the conducted activities, debrief suggestions and examples of successful activities that can serve as ideas for implementation of various activities in the field of disaster risk reduction. Although the book has not been translated into Serbian, it represents an interesting source of useful information and materials for the successful inclusion of content on disaster risk reduction in the daily work of teachers, building and maintaining culture of prevention.