Submission to the Select Committee Inquiry into Australia's Disaster Resilience

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Executive Summary

UNICEF Australia welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the Select Committee into Australia's Disaster Resilience. It is increasingly clear that we are living in an era of simultaneous, interdependent crises with compounding impacts on lives, livelihoods, and the natural environment, both in the short and long-term. The age of the polycrisis demands that Australia considers and builds national resilience across economic, social, and political domains.[1]

Building disaster resilience for a future likely to be punctuated by increasingly frequent and intense climate disasters is a key facet of this approach. Children and young people are key stakeholders in this endeavour, both because they are highly vulnerable and uniquely exposed to natural hazards today, and because they will bear the brunt of more frequent and intense events in the future.

This submission is based on UNICEF Australia's recent work understanding the needs and priorities of children and young people in droughts, bushfires, and floods across Australia, supporting local partners to address these needs through targeted, scalable programs, and advocating for child-friendly policies and practices in disaster response, recovery, and preparedness. It is also grounded in decades of work responding to the needs of children and young people in global emergencies, including natural hazards of all kinds.

The focus of this submission is on four recommendations that we believe will have tangible, near-term impacts on the resilience of children and young people in the fact of more frequent and intense natural hazards. We hope that, if taken up, the development of a National Framework for Children and Youth-Focused Disaster Recovery, will spur much larger discussions about system-wide medium and long-term resilience of our social, healthcare, and education systems to climate change as-a-whole.

Summary of Recommendations

1. Make investments to ensure that all children across Australia have access to child-friendly spaces and emergency psychological care in the immediate aftermath of a natural hazard.

2. Invest in evidence-based, long-term programs to enable the recovery of children and young people after exposure to a natural hazard.

3. Invest in developing a national disaster resilience education (DRE) plan that can be used as a basis for consistent, practical DRE across Australian schools, and for teacher training.

4. Develop a National Framework for Child and Youth-Focused Disaster Recovery that can be adapted for different natural hazards and operationalised at all levels of government.

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[1] UNICEF (2023), Prospects for Children in the Polycrisis: A 2023 Global Outlook.

Detailed Recommendations:

1. **Make investments to ensure that all children across Australia have access to child-friendly spaces and emergency psychological care in the immediate aftermath of a natural hazard.**

Children and young people are highly exposed and uniquely vulnerable to the effects of natural hazards. The *Our World Our Say (2020)* survey of children and young people in Australia found that 90% had experienced at least one natural hazard event in the preceding three years.[2] In the summer of 2019-2020 alone, 2 in 5 children and young people were personally impacted by bushfires; 3 in 10 were personally impacted by drought; almost 25% were personally impacted by floods.[3]

The impacts are multi-dimensional. For example, children are less able to withstand or absorb temperature extremes and other physical impacts of natural hazards.[4] Children and young people also experience trauma and shock from the experience of the hazard itself, manifesting in a range of ways, including insomnia, loss of concentration, anxiety, depression, anger, and behavioral regression.[5] Children and young people may lose loved ones, homes and property, pets and possessions, lose power, water, phones, and the internet.[6] They may also experience displacement, lose access to learning and education both in early childhood education and care (ECEC) and school settings, to recreational spaces, and to access to healthcare, and may have to deal with flow-on effects of heightened stress and anxiety among adults around them, including increased incidence of domestic and family violence (DFV).[7]

Despite these impacts, children's needs are often invisible or misunderstood in the immediate aftermath of a natural hazard, both at individual and community levels. There are a range of reasons for this, including:

- that emergency relief efforts inevitably focus on saving lives, livestock, and property, providing water, food, shelter, and medical care to affected communities and coordinating information provision;
- the prevalence of the assumption that addressing the needs of adult family members will ensure that children's needs are also met;
- that challenges experienced by children, including trauma, lost learning, and loss of recreation or social engagement are considered less urgent, and therefore, can be addressed at a later stage.

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[2] UNICEF Australia et al (2020), *Our World Our Say: National survey of children and young people on climate change and disaster risk,* Pg. 16, <youth-survey-report_2020-08-12_v1-2.pdf (worldvision.com.au)>

[3] UNICEF Australia and Royal Far West (2019), *After the Disaster*, Pg. 10 <https://www.royalfarwest.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/After-the-Disaster-Recovery-for-Australias-Children-produced-by-Royal-Far-West-UNICEF-Australia.pdf>

[4] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2020), "How Children Are Different", < How are Children Different from Adults? | CDC>

[5] UNICEF Australia and Royal Far West, After the Disaster, Pg 13.

[6] Ibid., Pg. 12

[7] Ibid.

However, we know that addressing children's needs early and in a targeted manner, prevents initial impacts from worsening over the medium and long-term.[8] Moreover, in a context in which communities are being hit by multiple shocks and hazards in succession, early intervention after each specific event is key.

Child-friendly spaces

Children and young people need safe, appropriate spaces ('Child-friendly spaces') in evacuation centers, community hubs or online settings to connect with other affected children and young people, to take part in social or recreational activities, to obtain age-appropriate information about the hazard and how to cope with its impacts to access psychosocial support, and to obtain referrals for specialist care at a later point in time.

Where children are affected by the natural hazard, child-friendly spaces should be activated as soon as practically possible and be equipped to provide the above supports to children and their families. Child-friendly spaces should be managed by skilled, specialized agencies with connections to Primary Health Networks (PHNs) and local youth services, and be supported by pre-trained community members, educators or wellbeing professionals or youth liaison officers attached to local councils.[9] They can also be offered online through a variety of social media platforms, with in-built capacity for follow-up with individual children and families.[10]

Governments do fund specialist organizations to deliver specific forms of support to children and young people in impacted communities,[11] including child-friendly spaces and support programs in evacuation centres, however coverage is not universal across states, LGAs, or events. UNICEF Australia's needs assessment in ten New South Wales (NSW) communities after the bushfires in 2019-2020 ('the bushfire needs assessment') found that there were child-friendly spaces, psychosocial first aid services, and services to adolescents and young people in some locations, but not all.[12]

In the absence of such support, small community-based services, educators, and community leaders are often left to coordinate and address the needs of children and young people in addition to the many other responsibilities they already carry.[13] UNICEF Australia's needs assessment in NSW and Queensland after the 2022 floods ('the floods needs assessment') found that educators were providing social, emotional, and physical wellbeing support for children, and that many were feeling overwhelmed and fatigued as a result.[14]

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[8] McFarlane A; Van Hooff; M,"Impact of childhood exposure to a natural disaster on adult mental health: 20-year longitudinal follow-up study" *British Journal of Psychiatry* Vol 195, (2009) Pg. 142 – 148;

[9] NSW Government (July 2022), *2022 Flood Inquiry: Volume Two, Full Report,* Pg. 208, < 2022 Flood Inquiry (nsw.gov.au)>

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid.

[12] UNICEF Australia and Royal Far West, After the Disaster, Pg. 19

[13] UNICEF Australia (2022), *2022 Flood Response and Recovery: Children's Needs Assessment*, Pg. 12 – 13, < UNICEF Australia Publications>

[14] Ibid.

Governments should ensure that specialist child and youth-friendly spaces and programs are delivered in every disaster-affected community, no matter how remote or isolated the community is. Achieving such a goal requires Federal, State and Territory and local governments to work with emergency services, specialist agencies, experts local community leaders, and children and young people themselves to build tailored community capacity and preparedness across the country, and to allocate preparedness and activation budgets for future scenarios in which natural hazards are likely to become more frequent and intense. Any such community capacity-building approach should include the specific perspectives and participation of children and young people with disabilities, First Nations children, and children from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

Recommendation 1.A: Train and fund specialist agencies and local communities to activate child-friendly spaces in all disasters where children are affected.

Emergency specialist psychological care

Child-friendly spaces offer relief, connection, and safety in the immediate aftermath of a natural hazard. However, children and young people who are affected by the event also need urgent specialist psychological care to deal with the effects of loss, grief, and trauma. This is a critical need, and, if left unaddressed can worsen and affect a child's wellbeing across multiple wellbeing domains over time.

A key finding in both of UNICEF Australia's recent needs assessments was that access to specialist psychological support in the aftermath of the disaster was either inaccessible or unavailable. After the bushfires, UNICEF Australia spoke to community members and services in Towamba, a small community in the Bega Valley Shire on the south coast of NSW. Pre-bushfires, 35% of children under five were already considered vulnerable; 18% of children under the age of 15 were affected by mental illness, and 20% of young people between the ages of 15 and 18 were affected by mental illness.[15] With specialist services not available in the local community, and travel limited by the fires and the damage caused to infrastructure, families could not go to larger hubs to access specialists.[16] Telehealth appointments were not always available, and even those who could to make it to larger towns such as Eden found that appointments were hard to come by, in part because there were not enough specialists present or available there too.

Similarly, after the 2022 NSW and Queensland floods, UNICEF Australia found that "mental health professionals such as psychiatrists, psychologists, and counsellors are hard to access in most communities, with a lack of specialists, long waits, and costs being significant barriers to access. In many cases, the floods have only worsened what was a mental health service crisis before."[17]

Although psychosocial support is key component of emergency service responses across the country, it is important that Federal, State and Territory, and Local governments have available and qualified workforces and budgets to scale deployment into impacted communities as required, and not rely exclusively on pre-existing local capacity to manage psychosocial and psychological needs. This could take

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[15] UNICEF Australia, After the Disaster, Pg. 20.
[16] Ibid.
[17] UNICEF Australia, 2022 Floods Needs Assessment, Pg. 10

the form of a state-based or national roster of skilled psychosocial professionals to deploy as required. This is especially important in remote and rural communities, where resources are already lacking.

Additionally, Federal, State and Territory and Local governments should also collaborate with designated specialist organisations to build workforce capacity in schools, local government areas, and primary health networks to address emergency psychological needs of children, young people, and their families in communities across Australia when a natural hazard takes place. Such a commitment requires holistic, sustainable, evidence-based investments in the right blend of mental health first aid, child-centric psychosocial care, and specialist training and support for a variety of first responders over multiple years. Where feasible, these trainings can be embedded into teacher-training, professional development programs for social workers, and for staff at local councils.

Recommendation 1.B: Create a state-based or national roster of psychosocial professionals who can be deployed to provide additional specialist support to affected communities in disaster zones.

Recommendation 1.C: Work collaboratively with specialist agencies to building professional capacity in-community to provide emergency psychosocial care in the immediate aftermath of natural hazards.

2. **Invest in evidence-based, long-term programs to enable the recovery of children and young people after exposure to a natural hazard.**

In the medium and long-term, children who experience natural hazards are particularly susceptible to mental health issues, which in turn can cascade into lower educational attainment, and affect wellbeing and employment outcomes well into adulthood.[18] Research on the 2009 'Black Saturday' bushfires shows that impacted communities were reporting symptoms of psychological distress and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) three to four years after exposure.[19] For children and young people, these mental health issues had lasting impacts on progress in literacy and numeracy, which translated to lower academic scores up to the end of high school.[20] These impacts are particularly detrimental to individuals and communities already grappling with pre-existing disadvantages, but also to employment, productivity, and national debt in the long run. In the realm of mental health, for example, we know that up front investments in school-based interventions to prevent depression and anxiety alone can return $1.19 for every $1 invested in the long run.[21]

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[18] See spotlight case study for more detail For background, see: Gibbs, L; Nursey, J; Cook, J; Ireton, G; Alkemade, N; Roberts, M; Gallagher, C; Bryant, R; Block, K; Molyneaux, R; Forbes, D: "Delayed Disaster Impacts on Academic Performance Of Primary School Children," Child Development, Vol 100: No 0, Pg. 1 – 11; McFarlane A; Van Hooff; M, "Impact of childhood exposure to a natural disaster on adult mental health: 20-year longitudinal follow-up study," British Journal of Psychiatry (2009) Vol 195; Pg. 142 – 148;.

[19] Gibbs L, Molyneaux R, Harms L, Gallagher H C, Block K, Richardson J, Brandenburg V, O'Donnell M, Kellett C, Quinn P, Kosta L, Brady K, Ireton G, MacDougall C, Bryant R (2020), *10 Years Beyond Bushfires Report 2020*, Pg. 11 <BB-10-years-report_spread.pdf (unimelb.edu.au)>

[20] Ibid., Pg. 17.

[21] National Mental Health Commission (2021) *The economic case for investing in mental health prevention: Summary.* <https://www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au/getmedia/ffbf9cc5-f815-4034-b931-dfc0c1ecb849/The-economic-case-for-investing-in-mental-health-prevention>

Children's recovery is also inhibited when broader community needs remain unmet long after a natural hazard has taken place. The recovery of children and young people is further inhibited when broader community needs remain unmet long after the hazard has taken place: when affected communities remain in temporary shelters or housing for years; when schools, health clinics, community spaces, and recreational areas take longer to rebuild than expected; and when local businesses find it challenging to reopen, affecting jobs supply, service provision, and incomes. UNICEF Australia's floods assessment found that many children and families were living in tents, caravans, cars, parks, or with friends and relatives many months after the fact.[22] Those who lost their homes have been unable to find safe and secure temporary accommodation, in part due to a pre-existing housing shortage, and the rising costs of living.[23] A study on the long-term impacts of the 2009 bushfires shows that life stressors such as loss of income and accommodation were associated with poorer mental health outcomes over a ten year period.[24] More broadly, long-term displacement, homelessness, and entrenched poverty trap children and families into a cycle of material and psychosocial disadvantage.

Children and young people in hazard-affected communities require evidence-based, context-specific, and targeted investments in recovery over many years. Federal, State and Territory, and Local governments should continue to invest in multifaceted programs that support the long-term recovery and resilience of children and their families affected by natural hazards as a priority. Expertise, institutions, and programs should be identified across the key domains of need and wellbeing for children and young people, and funding should be available for long-term interventions (5-10 years) tailored to the needs of specific communities, and ideally, in collaboration with local community services.

Programs such as the Bushfire Recovery Program in NSW, which provide a community led, multidisciplinary wraparound model of healthcare support to children, parents, care givers and communities, are key examples of interventions, and Future Proof in Victoria, which supports rural young people to lead local bushfire recovery and build resilience in their own communities are examples of programs that could be expanded. Governments should be prepared to significantly scale-up investments in these programs across the country as the frequency and intensity of disasters increases.

Recommendation 2.A: Invest in multifaceted programs that support the long-term recovery of children and families affected by disaster in all key social and developmental domains.

Developing the evidence-base

Federal, State and Territory, and Local governments should develop systematic approaches to better understanding the recovery needs and priorities of children and young people affected by natural hazards over time.

Firstly, when natural hazards take place, governments should incorporate multidimensional approaches to identifying children's needs. There are a number of well-established processes and coordination mechanisms, which form part of emergency responses when natural hazards occur. Furthermore, affected

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[22] UNICEF Australia, 2022 Floods Needs Assessment, Pg. 12.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Gibbs L et. al, 10 Years Beyond.

communities clearly indicate their needs and priorities when they apply for recovery grants from State and Territory or Federal Governments. However, for reasons mentioned above, the needs and priorities of children can often be invisible or misunderstood in these contexts. A child-focussed approach to understanding both emergency and recovery needs not only prefaces better targeted and more effective recovery investments, but builds a body of knowledge and understanding over time that can assist preparedness in Australia.

One effective tool that can be utilised now in disaster affected communities is UNICEF's Needs Assessment, it is built on UNICEF's longstanding presence in emergencies around the world, and our unique ability to bring a child rights and wellbeing lens to these contexts. In turn, the Needs Assessment takes a child rights and wellbeing approach to understanding the needs and priorities of children and young people affected by disasters, in ways that are both comprehensive and safe for them. Needs assessments of this nature are conducted in collaboration with local, affected communities, and with a view to develop a cross-domain picture of the recovery interventions required across sectors and geographies within a natural hazard zone. These assessments can provide a useful complementary tool for communities, local governments, and national governments to test pre-existing evidence and analysis of recovery needs.

Second, evaluations of individual programs such as the Bushfire Recovery Program already exist and help assess effectiveness against stated, context-specific objectives. However, a national-level stock-take or audit of child-focussed recovery programming across geographies and hazard-types over the last ten years will help governments develop a much clear picture of the status quo in terms of child-focussed disaster recovery programming in Australia and help clarify the kinds of interventions that can and should be scaled-up and mainstreamed into disaster response and recovery frameworks and plans across the country, going forward. Such a review could be undertaken by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), with the support of relevant organizations with expertise working with and for children in disasters.

Recommendation 2.B: Invest in holistic needs assessments and national audits of existing interventions to systematize understandings of children's recovery needs in disaster settings across Australia.

More broadly, Australia currently lacks a comprehensive national dataset which tracks the holistic wellbeing of children across Australia. In response, UNICEF Australia and the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) have developed the Australian Children's Wellbeing Index, which uses an evidence-based framework for child and youth wellbeing ('the Nest'), and available data to describe how Australian children are faring across a broad range of wellbeing indicators.[25]

Ongoing Federal Government investment in the Index would allow it to be updated regularly as new data is released in order to maintain an accurate picture of children's wellbeing. It could also be further developed, with reference to the impacts of natural hazards, disasters, and climate change on children and young people, as a means to make more targeted investments in child-focused disaster recovery and

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[25] UNICEF Australia and the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) (2021), "The Wellbeing of Australia's Children," < The wellbeing of Australia's children | UNICEF Australia >

preparedness over time Ultimately, it would allow decision-makers and policy professionals to track Australia's progress towards improving child wellbeing over the long-term, regularly feeding back into the budget process to ensure our investments in Australia's next generation are producing their desired outcomes.

Recommendation 2.C: Invest in refreshing the Australian Children's Wellbeing Index in line with new data in order to better inform child-focused disaster recovery and preparedness in Australia.

3. **Invest in developing a national disaster resilience education (DRE) plan that can be used as a basis for consistent, practical DRE across Australian schools, and for teacher training.**

Children and young people want to be better equipped to respond to more frequent and intense disasters. The 2020 *Our World Our Say* report found that 88% of children and young people in Australia feel that they should be learning more about natural hazards.[26] Although most respondents are taught about how and why these hazards occur, they are not taught about how to respond, and felt "unprepared, under-educated, concerned, and increasingly scared by the prospect of a disaster."[27] Children and young people want to learn more about how to plan and prepare for, and how to prevent or reduce the risk of disaster in their communities.[28] 69% of respondents specifically asked for education on where to access emergency warnings and alerts.[29]

DRE has the potential to transform children and young people from passive victims of disasters to active respondents. It enables increased awareness of the nature of hazards, higher levels of planning and preparedness, and increased knowledge about what to do when a disaster takes place, and lower levels of anxiety about disasters.[30] Investments in effective DRE programs assist prevention and mitigation efforts, which are also much less costly than rescue, and recovery operations.[31]

Australia has made significant progress on DRE in recent years. The importance of educating children and young people about disasters is acknowledged in the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience (2011) and recognised as a priority by the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission (2009). Australia's National Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Framework 2018 recognised the importance of formal and informal education to increase awareness of the impacts of disasters,[32] as did the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience (NSDR) 2011.[33] Disaster response, risk reduction, and resilience programs are also available to primary and secondary schools across Australia. Often, they are co-designed and delivered by/with organizations

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[26] UNICEF Australia et al (2019), *Our World Our Say*, Pg. 17 <youth-survey-report_2020-08-12_v1-2.pdf (worldvision.com.au)>
[27]
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (AIDR) (2021), "Australian Curriculum Review 2021: Submission by Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience", Pg. 3 <AIDR's submission for 2021 Curriculum Review>
[31] Gibbs L, Sian K-L, Block K, Baker E, Nelsson C, Gilbert J, Cook A & MacDougall C 2015, "Cost and outcomes associated with participating in the Community Fireguard Program: Experiences from the Black Saturday bushfires in Victoria,"] *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 13, Pg. 375-380.
[32] Department of Home Affairs (2018), "National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework," <National Disaster Risk Reduction (homeaffairs.gov.au)>
[33] Council of Australian Governments (COAG) (2021), "National Strategy for Disaster Resilience," < National Strategy for Disaster Resilience (aidr.org.au)>

such as the State Emergency Service (SES), the Country Fire Authority, Fire and Rescue NSW, and the Queensland Centre for Perinatal and Infant Mental Health (QCPIMH).[34]

Nonetheless, Australia lacks a clear plan to provide the foundations for common knowledge on responding practically to disasters and that can be mainstreamed into national, and state and territory curriculums at primary and secondary levels. As the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (AIDR) noted in a submission to the Australia Curriculum Review 2021, "the lack of a shared vision and overarching strategy for DRE contributes to the vulnerability of children and young people [in natural hazard settings] and represents a significant gap in our national efforts to enhance Australia's capacity to withstand and recover from emergencies and disasters."[35]

The Federal and State and Territory governments should commit to collectively developing and resourcing the implementation of a national DRE plan. Such a plan should make provision for overarching principles, core content, transferrable teaching and learning materials, place-specific, action-oriented key messages and activities, and accredited professional development for educators.[36] It should also be mainstreamed into S & T curriculums at primary and secondary levels through identified touchpoints throughout the year. Some of these touchpoints already exist courtesy of an increase in lessons connected to disaster resilience in Australia's most recent curriculum (Version 9.0, 2022),[37] however can be strengthened further under the umbrella a national plan that is oriented towards practical preparedness, and safety, in line with Pillars 2 and 3 of Comprehensive School Safety Framework (CSSF).[38]

Recent research shows that one of the key reasons why many existing, voluntary DRE programs are not implemented consistently is because teachers and other educators do not feel confident or knowledgeable enough to deliver it.[39] All levels of Government should invest significantly in resources to ensure that teachers at all levels are provided with accredited professional development opportunities to disseminate these programs. Teacher education curriculums should also incorporate DRE within them. State and Territory curriculum authorities can work with emergency services agencies and the AIDR to design and trial these resources.

Recommendation 3.A: Invest in developing a national disaster resilience education (DRE) plan that can be used as a basis for consistent, practical DRE across Australian schools, and for teacher training.

4. **Develop a National Framework for Child and Youth-Focused Disaster Recovery that can be adapted for different natural hazards and operationalised at all levels of government.**

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[34] Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre (BNHCRC) (2020), "School-based education for disaster risk reduction," <School-based education for disaster risk reduction | Bushfire & Natural Hazards CRC (bnhcrc.com.au)>

[35] AIDR, 2021 Australian Curriculum Review, Pg. 13.

[36] Ibid., Pg. 21.

[37] Australian Institute For Disaster Resilience (AIDR) (2022), "Curriculum mapping: Disaster Resilience Education in the Australian Curriculum 9.0," <DRE Curriculum Mapping Australian Curriculum 9.0 (aidr.org.au)>

[38] Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) (2022), "Comprehensive School Safety Framework 2022 – 2030," <Comprehensive School Safety Framework 2022-2030 | INEE>

[39] Ronan K, Haynes K, Alisic E, Avianto A, Petal A, "Child-centred disaster risk reduction: can disaster resilience programs reduce risk and increase the resilience of children and households?" Australian Journal of Emergency Management, 31:3 (July 2016), Pg. 55.

Without an overarching framework for addressing the needs and priorities of children and young people in natural hazards, it is hard to systematically implement specific plans and earmark significant investments in child-centred disaster preparedness, response, and recovery across Australia. Australia currently lacks such a framework. Existing child-focused national plans such as the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children make no explicit reference to natural hazards or disasters. Similarly, neither Australia's National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework nor Australia's Disaster Risk Resilience Index make any reference to the needs or priorities of children.

A new child and youth-focused national disaster response, recovery, and resilience-building framework would serve as a national reference point for addressing the needs and priorities of children and young people before, during, and after a natural hazard. It would create a set of common principles, and standards which could then planning and policy-making across geographies and sectors, incorporating issues such as emergency response, psychosocial programming, and education. The core points could be interpreted and operationalized at Federal, State and Territory and Local Council levels and across sectors.

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) is well placed to lead the development of such a framework, which should begin with the publication of a discussion paper and public consultation process, involving children and young people who have been affected by disasters in Australia, including those from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and marginalized migrant communities.

The creation and implementation of the framework should also be guided by an expert advisory group of specialist agencies, including National Emergency Management Authority (NEMA), relevant Federal Government departments, state authorities, local council representatives, members of the Federal Government's new Youth Steering Committee, NGO and academic experts, and children and young people themselves.

Recommendation 4.A: Release a discussion paper and organise public consultations for the development of a National Framework for Children and Youth-Focused Disaster Recovery

About UNICEF Australia

UNICEF believes in a fair chance for every child and we are the world's leading organisation working to protect and improve the lives of children in over 190 countries. At UNICEF Australia we work to protect and promote children's rights by advocating for the rights of children in Australia and overseas.