

Flood 2020: Concerns about children are getting deeper

While flood water is residing the riverbank erosion is taking a new turn in both Padma and Jumuna basin. The suffering of the children and their families in this situation is becoming increasingly unbearable. Moreover the prevailing pandemic situation is making the circumstances more critical.

Discontinuation of schooling means exposure to increased risks of protection and violence including death due to the drowning, lightning, snake bite and gender-based violence.

Over 4 million effected children need life saving support and many million others are at risk of health crisis. Children are getting ill by waterborne diseases and getting prone to many other diseases particularly pneumonia and lung infection. **According to data compiled by Disaster Forum from 27 June to 17 August 2020, total 71 people died by the drowning in the flood water, among them around 55 children are died by drowning, the highest number of children died (24 children) who are from age group 5 to 10 and 20 children are from age group 1 to 4. Beside this, 45 people died by snake bite among them 23 are children, among them 13 children died who are from age group 1 to 18 and 5 children died by snake bite who are from age group 5 to 10.**



According to UNICEF, the most urgent needs for children are clean water, hygiene supplies to prevent the spread of diseases, food supplies and safe places in evacuation centres for children to play. Immediate support, more resources and innovative programs are urgently needed to address the challenges that these threats represents to the region's children.

According to the report from field, thousands of students of the affected areas have lost their books, school uniforms and other essential educational items. The PEC, JSC, Annual and Test examinations are hardly two and three months away. Disaster Forum and its member organizations are expressing deep concern for these students. If we failed to address the need of the school going children then they all will be at risk of school dropout, displacement, child labour, child marriage, trafficking and all possible exploitation.

As government is planning to open the educational institutions, now it's time to pay attention on hygiene and other educational support for students.

Some Recommendations

To continue the educational activities following steps are recommended;

1. **Relief packages should be focused on children's immediate need and strategic need so that they can start their life as usual. Books must be included in relief packages.**
2. **Ensure the access to school by cleaning and repairing the schools. Keep soap water for students in front of the Schools. Ensure to maintain the distance sitting arrangement at school.**
3. **Use chlorine powder (bleaching) to clean the surrounding area of school, and keep carbolic acid to keep the snakes out of the schools.**
4. **Take necessary steps to supply additional books from the warehouse where stocks are available.**
5. **Need referral or additional classes for the students of their upcoming exams.**
6. **Arrangement of Child Friendly Spaces helps to keep the child-hood activities going, keeping in mind the pandemic situation the number of children in every CFS should be not more than 10 instead of 20 children.**
7. **Arranging proper disposal of used sanitary napkins, masks etc.**
8. **Arrange orientation classes for teachers and parents on personal hygiene and primary health care.**