**Children, Youth and Child-centered Organizations – PRESS RELEASE**

**1,000 children and young people call on Asian Governments to include children’s rights, needs, and capacities in disaster risk reduction**

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For Immediate Release

Young representatives at the 6th Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Bangkok on Tuesday called on their governments to recognise that they are not just victims of disasters, but also key to building a resilient and sustainable future.

Children and youth from Asian counties have spoken powerfully to representatives of their Governments asking that children and young people’s rights are included in international conferences and future intergovernmental agreements on disaster risk reduction, particularly the Post 2015 Framework for DRR, commonly referred to as the Hyogo Framework for Action 2, to be finalized next March in Japan.

“During flooding in Cambodia, people die. If children and youth participate regularly in local government’s planning, then we can make everyone understand better the risks that we face and how to protect ourselves ”, said Davith Mok and Srey Mom, youth leaders from Battambang and Prey Veng, Cambodia.

Since April, more than 1,000 children across the region have met in their towns and capitals to discuss the threat that disasters pose to their lives, communities and futures. Children in the Philippines complained of the disruption that frequent disasters wreak on their own development by interrupting schools and health services. In the Philippines, children are calling for safe and resilient evacuation centers equipped with child-friendly facilities.

In Japan, a 14 year old girls from Iwate Prefecture said, “If Prime Minister, I would create opportunities for children to express their opinions. Even in response to the earthquake, everyone’s hearts are wounded differently, so we need to share our experiences to ease our minds and to discuss better ideas for reducing disaster risk”.

Tran Cong Danh, 11 years old from Vietnam, implored governments to reach the most vulnerable at times of disaster, "Please train children with disabilities on disaster risk reduction, especially with children with hearing impairment because they cannot receive information of flood and storm. So they can evacuate before non-disabled people. For deaf children, you can invite their family members for the training as well so they can help the children to understand the information. "

However, due to circumstances in the lead up to the Asian Ministerial Conference today, many children were not able to travel in person to Bangkok, instead they hosted a Children and Youth Forum via video and virtual linkage to deliver their messages to government representatives and other stakeholders attending the meeting today in Bangkok. Youth who were present joined the children and young people call for:

* Their meaningful participation in disaster risk reduction
* Their right to access information and decision-making that will affect their lives
* Equity and access of children and risk-prone households to quality basic social services;
* Safe community infrastructures;
* Relief and reconstruction must help reduce future risk;
* Safe schools and for schools to be safe spaces in times of disaster
* Environmental protection and management
* Good governance on DRR

Notes for editors:

The Children and Youth Forum is organized by the children, youth, and child-centered organizations consisting of the Children in a Changing Climate Coalition, the Asian Coalition for School Safety, and the Disability-inclusive DRR Network.

For more information, please contact:

Ronilda Co - DRR Specialist, World Vision East Asia

Email: [ronildaco@wvi.org](mailto:ronildaco@wvi.org)

Mobile: +66827957907