

Climatic Hazards Programme

Engaging Children and Youth in Disaster Risk Reduction

Nurfashareena Muhamad,¹ Mohd Fairus Awang¹ & Sufyan Aslam²

¹SEADPRI-Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

²UNICEF Malaysia



Photo by SEADPRI-UKM

Activities such as school risk mapping, mudslides constructions, preparedness bag and a coloring contest were conducted to enhance disaster preparedness of children at Sekolah Kebangsaan Janda Baik, Bentong, Pahang.

Today's capacity building approach to disaster knowledge and experience are more focused on Youth and Young Professionals (YYPs) groups than children. Children are also among the groups that face the risk of disaster. Children are agents of change who have a special capacity to reduce disaster risk in their households, peers at school and communities. The main mechanism for harnessing that capacity is through disaster risk reduction (DRR) and resilience education that starts in schools. Schools are seen as an effective place for children to learn new skills and encourage behavioral changes. The implementation of the DRR education module in schools are one of the initiatives for students to gain exposure and initial knowledge about disasters that occur in their surroundings. The agenda of empowering the capacity of children in schools through their participation in various disaster-related activities can help this group to be more prepared in terms of knowledge and skills on DRR and resilience by actively participating in all related activities.

The *Bengkel Pemerkasaan Pengetahuan dan Kesedaran Bencana di Sekolah* was held on 29 August 2022 in Sekolah Kebangsaan (SK) Janda Baik, Bentong, Pahang. The workshop was organised under

the UNICEF Malaysia fund on YYPs Empowerment: Implementing SETI for Disaster Resilience led by the Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia's Southeast Asia Disaster Prevention Research Initiative (SEADPRI-UKM) and U-INSPIRE Malaysia@UKM in collaboration with UNICEF Malaysia with support from the Asian Network on Climate Science and Technology (ANCST), MERCY Malaysia and SK Janda Baik. The workshop began with an introduction to disaster through animation and "Tindakan Pantas" to explain disasters, safety measures and how to respond in the event of a disaster. Each student was given a pamphlet with brief information on disasters and preparedness measures to share with their households. Hands-on activities were conducted in the afternoon session covering various interactive disaster tasks such as school risk mapping, mudslides constructions, preparedness bag and a coloring contest. This workshop is one of the approaches that is seen to be able to educate children about disaster. The activities conducted captured the interest of all students and teachers showing that school children have the potential as agents of conveying information to their respective households, which is then more broadly disseminated to the surrounding local community.