



Islamic Relief

Climate Action Policy Paper:
Children & Climate Change

Children are often seen as being the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, but they can also be effective agents of action and contribute to efforts to mitigate and adapt to its impacts.

Children are particularly susceptible to climate change which threatens their physical, social, emotional, intellectual and creative development both directly and indirectly, and are less able to survive disasters caused by extreme weather events.

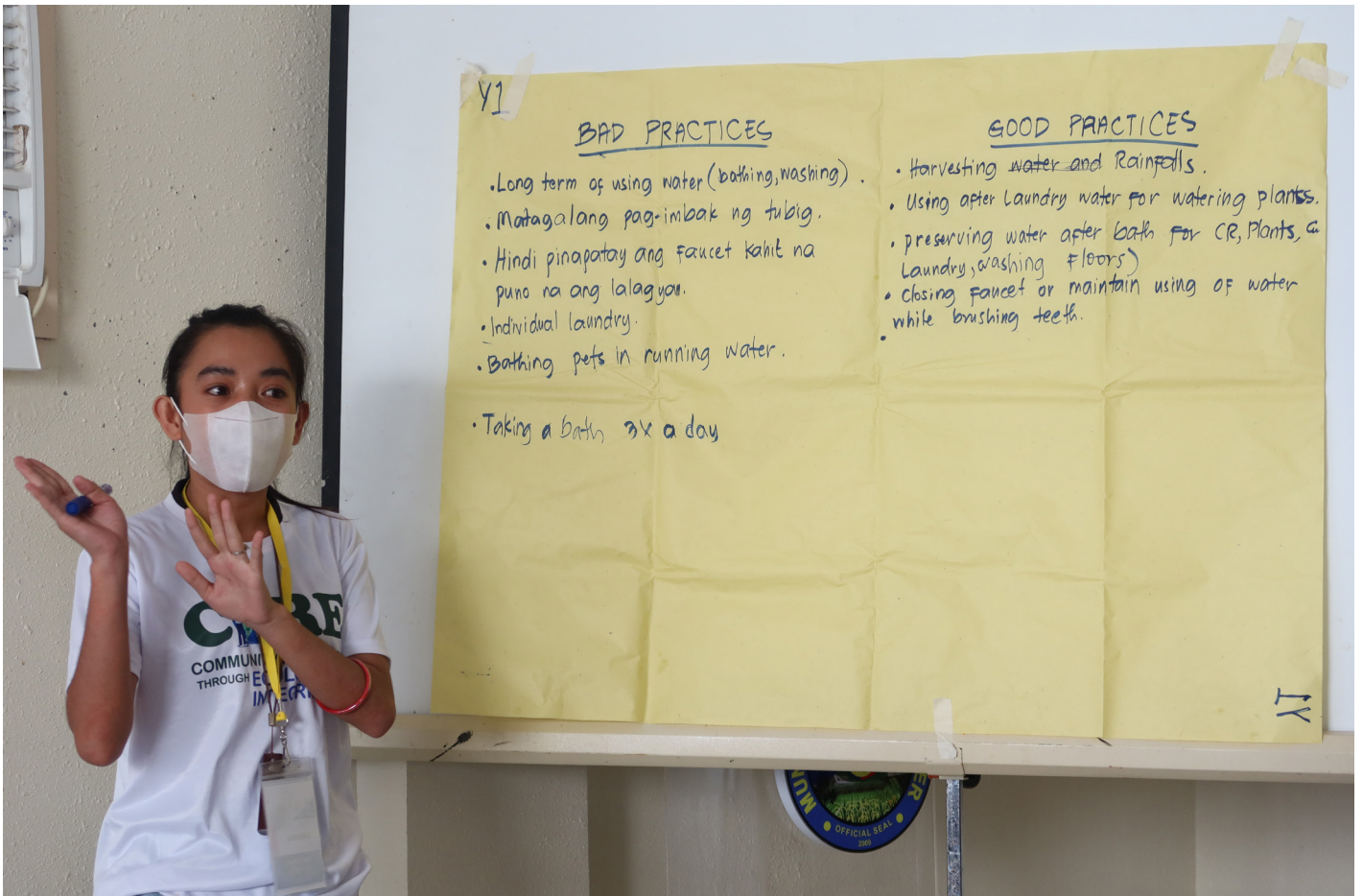
Children require proper nutrition to support their growth and development and are especially harmed by food shortages and malnutrition. Children are less able to cope with the heat stress, air pollution, and infectious diseases associated with climate change.

Climate change puts children's rights at risk, seriously restricting healthcare, food, water, clean air, education, participation and protection. Climate induced displacement can disrupt access to these essential services and can lead to increased exposure to violence and exploitation. Economic and social impacts on children and well-being also affect access to education, healthcare and other essential services.

Climate change can also have significant impacts on children's mental health, including increasing the likelihood of developing anxiety, depression, and stress. Extreme weather events, displacement, and migration can all contribute to feelings of stress and uncertainty, while also disrupting social support networks.



Devastating impact of prolonged drought on children in East Africa Picture: Islamic Relief Ethiopia.



Youth capacity building on climate change action.

Picture: Islamic Relief Philippines.

'Children are victims of extreme weather, cyclones, floods, river erosion, sea level rise and other climate change-driven environmental shocks. Many end up in city slums, their lives and prospects shattered. Millions are trapped in child labour, child marriage and trafficking'. Islamic Relief Bangladesh

Mainstreaming adaptation in policy, plans, and social safeguards at all scales involves 'ensuring child-centred adaptation measures are in place to protect children from their unique vulnerability to climate change.' USAID Climate Strategy.

'Taking a child-centred approach to climate change adaptation means: focusing on the specific risks faced by children in a changing climate; ensuring children's needs, rights and capacities are central to adaptation planning and implementation; and increasing the voice and agency of children in adaptation decision-making processes.' Children in Changing Climate

Children are much more than victims of climate change. They are powerful agents for action at all levels: from household to international.

By advocating for action, learning and innovating, and collaborating with others, children contribute to building a sustainable future for themselves, their families, their communities and society as a whole.

Children have an important role in addressing the challenges of climate change, bringing unique perspectives and experiences to the conversation and

advocating for their rights and needs in the face of climate impacts. Children’s rights can also enhance climate action. Under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, all children should be prepared for and included in climate decision-making to ensure that their best interests are protected. Children can make a strong contribution to risk reduction, adaptation and building the resilience of their communities by undertaking climate risk assessments, planning and implementing adaptation and raising awareness of climate risks and solutions.



Climate Strike 2022 Picture: Islamic Relief Bangladesh.

Children have contributed least to creating the climate emergency, yet it is their futures that are at stake. While it is important that responsibility for solving the climate crisis is not left solely to children, their part in community-wide involvement and as powerful activists for climate action is an essential contribution.



Global Climate Strikes Picture: Islamic Relief Pakistan



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