## **Sample Terms of Reference for National School Safety and Education in Emergencies Coordination**

(This document is part of the GADRRRES [CSSF Quickstart Guide](https://gadrrres.net/files/css-quickstart-guide.pdf) 2024. It is intended to be reviewed at national level for contextualization and localization)

**1. Background and Rationale**

The National School Safety Coordination Group is established to ensure a collective impact approach to comprehensive school safety (CSS) and child rights and resilience in the education sector. The group is co-convened by the [National Ministry of Education] and the [National Disaster Management Organization], bringing together multiple stakeholders to align efforts, coordinate actions, and measure progress in making schools safer, ensuring education continuity, and fostering resilience among children and educators.

The [GROUP NAME] operates under two primary global frameworks:

**1: Comprehensive School Safety Coordination in Regular Times** – guided by the Comprehensive School Safety Framework (CSSF) developed by the Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector (GADRRRES). The CSSF takes an all-hazards, all-risks, all-vulnerabilities approach to school safety.

**2: Coordination for School Safety During Emergencies and Humanitarian Response** – informed by the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA), the Global Education Cluster (GEC) co-chaired by

UNICEF and Save the Children, and the Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE).

**2. Objectives**

The overarching goal is to take a participatory, risk-informed approach to:

* Protect learners, educators, and school staff from death, injury, violence, and harm in schools and learning spaces.
* Plan for education and protection continuity, minimizing disruptions from hazards, shocks, and stresses.
* Promote risk reduction, resilience-building, and sustainable development through knowledge and skill-building.

**3. Roles and Responsibilities**

**3.1 National Coordination Structure**

The [GROUP NAME] is structured with the following key components:

* National Coordination Body: Co-led by the Ministry of Education and the National Disaster Management Organization, responsible for policy alignment, strategic oversight, and national-level planning. Technical Working Groups (TWGs) as needed: Focused on specific areas such as risk assessment, school safety infrastructure, educational continuity (including emergency preparedness, anticipatory action, and emergency response).
* Regional/Sub-National Coordination Groups as needed: Ensure localized implementation and feedback loops to the national body.
* Stakeholder Forum as needed: Engages civil society, UN agencies, NGOs, academia, private sector, and community representatives, with attention to equity, diversity and social inclusion.

**3.2 Stakeholder Responsibilities**

Stakeholders commit to:

* Participating in quarterly coordination meetings and annual strategic planning sessions.
* Contributing to risk assessments, monitoring, and reporting.
* Aligning activities with the national Comprehensive School Safety Plan.
* Supporting knowledge-sharing and technical assistance.

**4. Regular Coordination for Comprehensive School Safety**

**4.1. Key Areas of Work, Objectives, and Responsibilities**

The [GROUP NAME] supports the implementation of the Comprehensive School Safety Framework (CSSF), which uses a risk-informed, all-hazards approach to school safety. It aligns national planning with global standards and identifies gaps and priorities using CSSF indicators.

**Area of Work Objectives & Responsibilities**

**Systems and Policies**

* Develop and implement education and disaster management policies that address all hazards and vulnerabilities.
* Promote child rights, education continuity, and sector resilience through leadership and sustainable funding.
* Use risk-informed planning to improve equity and reduce risks.

**Pillar 1: Safer Learning Facilities**

* Ensure all new and existing school buildings meet national and international safetystandards.
* Prioritize safe site selection, construction, and retrofitting of unsafe structures. Include accessible infrastructure (e.g. WASH, evacuation routes, early warning systems) to support safety and learning.

**Pillar 2: School Safety and Educational Continuity Management**

* Establish inclusive, multi-hazard preparedness and response plans at all levels.
* Focus on continuity of learning and protection through anticipatory action and recovery planning.
* Engage communities and ensure accountability to affected populations.

**Pillar 3: Risk Reduction and Resilience Education**

* Integrate safety, climate risk, and child protection education into formal curricula and extracurricular activities.
* Train educators in delivering resilience education.
* Provide quality materials and measure learning outcomes, including psychosocial well-being.

**4.2 Key Outputs and Indicators**

* Children are not killed, injured or harmed in or on the way to school
* Educational continuity is maintained
* Education sector investment losses are minimized

**5. Coordination During Emergencies and Humanitarian Assistance**

**5.1 Key Areas of Work, Objectives, and Responsibilities**

The [GROUP NAME] aligns with the UN OCHA Cluster system, the Global Education Cluster, the national Education (in Emergencies) Cluster, and the broader humanitarian response framework.

**Area of Work Objectives & Responsibilities**

**Leadership and Planning**

* Develop EiE policies and plans across disaster phases (preparedness, response, recovery).
* Emphasize the critical role of education from the onset of crises.

**Coordination and Partnerships**

* Facilitate collaboration among education actors and humanitarian partners to deliver rapid and equitable responses.
* Avoid duplication and ensure inclusion. Coordinate with other clusters for integrated responses.

**Information Management**

* Collect and share accurate data on education needs post-disaster.
* Strengthen systems for tracking DRR, climate, and conflict impacts in education.
* Provide timely reports for decision-making.

**Capacity Building**

* Strengthen skills of government and partner agencies to implement responsive and resilient EiE programs.
* Support learning exchanges and sub-national capacity development.

**Resource Mobilization**

* Secure funding for EiE responses.
* Coordinate donor engagement, track resource use, and support efficient allocation across partners.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

* Evaluate the impact of EiE interventions.
* Document lessons learned, challenges, and good practices.
* Track progress against response plans.

**5.2 Key Outputs and Indicators**

* Minimized school days lost due to disasters and conflicts
* Reduced education sector investment losses due to hazard impacts
* Increased access to early warning systems for schools
* Strengthened coordination between the Education Cluster and humanitarian response actors

**6. Collective Impact Approach to Coordination**

The [GROUP NAME] applies collective impact principles to build a social movement for school safety and resilience:

* Common Agenda: Align stakeholders with the CSS Framework and national priorities.
* Shared Measurement: Use CSS Targets and Indicators for progress tracking.
* Mutually Reinforcing Activities: Encourage stakeholder collaboration and knowledge-sharing.
* Continuous Communication: Issue quarterly newsletters and updates.
* Backbone Support: Ensure dedicated leadership and resources for sustained coordination.

**7. Strategic Planning and Coordination Process**

To ensure effective and sustained collaboration, the [GROUP NAME] follows a four-step planning cycle:

**Stakeholder Engagement**

* Maintain an updated stakeholder database
* Use standardized tools for mapping and consultations

**Context Monitoring and Analysis**

* Conduct regular CSS Policy Surveys
* Update school safety context analyses every 2–3 years
* Use shared indicators to track progress

**Strategic Planning**

* Host planning meetings every 1–2 years
* Align national priorities with global frameworks
* Develop coordinated activity roadmaps

**Backbone Structure and Coordination**

* Hold quarterly [GROUP NAME] meetings
* Foster collaboration across humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding sectors

**8. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Accountability**

The [GROUP NAME] will establish an M&E framework aligned with CSSF targets and indicators and INEE Minimum Standards

* Annual reports will assess progress in policy implementation, safety infrastructure, risk reduction education, and emergency preparedness.
* Accountability mechanisms will ensure clear roles and commitments among stakeholders.

**9. Governance and Review**

The [GROUP NAME] structure will be reviewed every 3 years to assess effectiveness and refine coordination mechanisms. Stakeholders will update strategic priorities based on new evidence, emerging risks, and lessons learned.

**Conclusion**

The National School Safety Coordination Group is a critical platform for aligning national efforts to create safe, resilient, and inclusive learning environments for all children. Through strong collaboration, data-driven decision- making, and sustained commitment, the [GROUP NAME] will support national progress towards achieving comprehensive school safety and educational resilience.