



VIETNAM

Comprehensive School Safety Country Implementation Snapshots

Vietnam: Advancing school safety through national commitment and regional collaboration

Comprehensive School Safety Implementation Snapshot (research conducted as part of an evaluation of GADRRRES in March 2025).

Disaster Context and Vulnerability

Vietnam is among the most disaster-prone countries in Southeast Asia, ranking 13th out of 193 countries on the 2023 INFORM Risk Index, and regularly experiencing hazards such as typhoons, floods, droughts, and landslides and increasingly the impacts of climate change like saltwater intrusion. On average, the country faces six to ten typhoons annually, many of which significantly impact rural and coastal communities.

For instance, in 2020, a series of nine major typhoons and two tropical depressions led to severe flooding in Central Vietnam, resulting in 192 deaths and 57 missing persons. In 2024, Typhoon Yagi, one of the strongest storms to hit the region in decades, caused extensive damage across northern Vietnam. The typhoon resulted in 299 deaths, 34 people missing, and economic losses estimated at approximately USD 3.31 billion, severely disrupting education services with infrastructure destruction including schools.

Globally, children born in 2020 are projected to experience unprecedented levels of climate extremes over their lifetimes—including nearly seven times more heatwaves and almost three times as many floods and crop failures compared to their grandparents—underscoring the critical need for Vietnam's education system to strengthen its resilience to climate-induced hazards.

Education System and Commitment to Resilience

Vietnam's education system is recognized for its strength and progressiveness. The country boasts a youth literacy rate of 98.6%, one of the highest in the Asia-Pacific region. The net enrolment rate in primary education exceeds 97%, and expected years of schooling have risen to nearly 13 years. However, beyond education achievements, vulnerability remains school infrastructures in many regions, especially remote and ethnic minority areas, are aging, poorly maintained and highly exposed to disaster risks.

Vietnam has a well-structured and centralized education system managed by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), with an extensive reach across the country, including remote and ethnic minority regions. The government has made significant strides in expanding access to education and has demonstrated increasing commitment to resilience and safety. MOET has launched initiatives to address these gaps, including programs supporting climate-resilient infrastructure (e.g., rainwater harvesting, zero-emission toilets, and solar panels) and flexible teaching modalities in emergencies.

These efforts are supported by both government investments and international development partners such as UNICEF, Save the Children, and Plan International. Over 40,000 schools have reportedly benefited from joint climate resilience and safe school initiatives, impacting over 20 million students.

Policy Evolution and Alignment with CSSF

Vietnam endorsed the CSSF in 2019. While Vietnam has not adopted a single comprehensive school safety policy explicitly aligned with the Comprehensive School Safety Framework (CSSF), it has gradually embedded key CSSF principles into various national policies and regulations.

Key policy documents include:

- Decree No. 80/2017/ND-CP on **safe, healthy, and friendly education environments**, mandating integration of disaster risk management and infrastructure safety in schools.
- Directive No. 24/CT-TTg (2021) instructing **flexible, safe teaching practices** during pandemics and disasters.
- Official Dispatch No. 3898/BGDDT-GDTH (2024), urging **inspections, infrastructure improvements, and preparedness plans** for school safety.
- Inclusion of **DRR and climate change adaptation into teaching curricula and training programs**.

These efforts demonstrate Vietnam's alignment with the CSSF's three pillars: safe learning environments, school disaster management, and risk reduction and resilience education. MOET also expressed interest in integrating CSSF further into long-term strategies such as the 2021–2030 Education Development Strategy and monitoring its implementation.

Institutional Leadership and Coordination

MOET plays a central role in coordinating education policy and implementing school safety initiatives. While its leadership in CSSF-aligned implementation is growing, structural and capacity constraints remain. The Disaster Risk Reduction Unit within MOET has overseen integration of DRR into policies and learning content, and MOET has led school safety activities, including curriculum development, teacher training, and infrastructure guidelines.

Inter-ministerial coordination is improving. MOET collaborates with:

- **Ministry of Health** on student health, food safety, and vaccinations.
- **Ministry of Construction** on safe school infrastructure design and inspections.
- **Ministry of Agriculture and Environment** on green schools and environmental education.

Challenges persist in ensuring uniform engagement across sectors, particularly at the sub-national level. Limited technical capacity, fragmented communication between agencies, and disparities in resource allocation continue to affect implementation.

Civil Society and Multi-Stakeholder Engagement

Civil society actors have been instrumental in advancing school safety across Vietnam. Save the Children, Plan International, and national NGOs have supported community-based disaster risk reduction (CBDRR) education, awareness campaigns, and school safety assessments. These organisations often serve as intermediaries between MOET and communities, especially in remote areas.

They also play a crucial role in piloting and scaling innovations such as inclusive education materials, training on climate adaptation, and community-based early warning systems. The education community's engagement

in joint projects, like the ASEAN Safe Schools Initiative, has fostered coordination among development partners and supported government capacity building.

Still, challenges remain in ensuring sustained multi-stakeholder collaboration, especially where roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined or where local CSOs lack sufficient resources and support.

Regional Cooperation and Advocacy Platforms

Vietnam has been actively involved in regional school safety efforts, notably through the **ASEAN Safe Schools Initiative (ASSI)**. Its participation in regional dialogues and technical working groups has facilitated alignment with CSSF principles and promoted policy learning across ASEAN member states.

MOET, in collaboration with partners such as the [APCSS secretariat](#), has contributed to advocacy and knowledge exchange at the regional level. Vietnam also participated in international platforms, including the 2023 Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, to elevate school safety in regional resilience strategies.

These platforms have amplified Vietnam's voice and enabled policymakers to adapt lessons from other countries while showcasing their own innovations.

Looking Ahead

Vietnam has made tangible progress in mainstreaming school safety into its education policies and practices. However, as climate change, pandemics, and other complex risks increasingly affect education systems, further strategic actions are needed to strengthen resilience and sustainability.

Going forward, Vietnam's education authorities have expressed interest in deepening alignment with the Comprehensive School Safety Framework (CSSF), particularly through integration into long-term strategies such as the Education Development Strategy to 2030 (with a vision to 2045). There is also growing recognition of the need to enhance monitoring mechanisms, including the development of CSSF-aligned indicators and implementation tracking tools.

To sustain and accelerate progress, MOET has identified several key priorities:

- **Strengthen infrastructure resilience** in disaster-prone areas, especially in remote and ethnic minority communities.
- **Enhance capacity building** through targeted training for teachers, school leaders, and education officials on disaster risk reduction and inclusive, climate-resilient education.
- **Promote inclusive approaches** by tailoring safety initiatives for vulnerable groups, including students with disabilities and those affected by displacement or extreme poverty.
- **Foster cross-sectoral coordination**, particularly with ministries of health, construction, and the environment, to create a more holistic and responsive education system.
- **Expand partnerships with global initiatives** such as GADRRRES to access technical expertise, share innovations, and strengthen international collaboration.

Continued engagement in regional platforms, such as the ASEAN Safe Schools Initiative, will be critical for peer learning and regional momentum. With strategic support from national leadership, development partners, and global alliances, Vietnam is well-positioned to serve as a leader in advancing safe, inclusive, and climate-resilient education in the Asia-Pacific region.



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