

UNICEF Says Nearly 700 Million Children Exposed to Climate Change Dangers



Paris, November 24 (RHC)-- Some 700 million of the world's 2.3 billion children live in areas that are most vulnerable to climate change, suffering from higher rates of death, poverty and disease from global warming, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) says.

Nearly 530 million children live in areas with extremely high flood occurrence and tropical storms, mostly in Asia, the UNICEF said in a Tuesday report ahead of climate talks in Paris next week.

An extra 160 million kids are living in countries suffering from severe droughts, mainly in Africa, the report said, adding that the sheer number of children exposed to the danger of climate change is shocking.

"Children will bear the brunt of climate change. They are already bearing a lot of the impact," said Nicholas Rees, one of the report's authors. It is essential for governments to urgently reach an agreement on curbing greenhouse gas emissions, Rees noted.

"We know what has to be done to prevent the devastation climate change can inflict. Failing to act would be unconscionable," UNICEF's executive director, Anthony Lake, said. A major source of concern is

exposure to diseases that could become deadlier due to climate change and growing temperatures, such as malaria, pneumonia, diarrhea and malnutrition.

Furthermore, long droughts can severely affect agricultural products, leading to malnutrition, which is the cause of nearly half of worldwide deaths of children under five.

Coastal areas in South Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean as well as Pacific islands, the Horn of Africa and equatorial Africa are the areas most vulnerable to climate change.

The 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference will be held from November 30th to December 11th in Paris.

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