

INCLUDING YOUNG CHILDREN IN CLIMATE ACTIONS IN INDIA

A review of state's climate policies with recommendations

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Background



India is the seventh most affected country by climate change.



In 2021, only 38% of children accessed early childhood education.



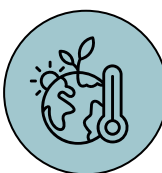
Extreme poverty and stunting contribute to poor health and nutritional deficits among children under 5.



India also has a high child population below 6 years of age, with more than 10% of the total population.



National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) and State Action Plan on Climate Change (SAPCC) are national and subnational plans addressing climate change.



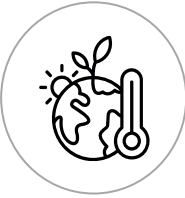
XDI's Gross Domestic Climate Risk and CEEW's Climate Vulnerability Index assess climate risk at the state level.

Selection of States

	XDI Gross Domestic Climate Risk Study	CEEW's Climate Vulnerability Study	Child population density (below 6-year age)
Bihar	✓	✓	18.38 %
Rajasthan	✓	✓	15.54 %
Uttar Pradesh	✓		15.41 %
Arunachal Pradesh		✓	15.33 %
Assam	✓	✓	14.86 %
Manipur		✓	13.14 %
Gujarat	✓		12.87 %
Orissa		✓	12.56 %
Maharashtra	✓	✓	11.86 %
Karnataka		✓	11.72 %
Punjab	✓		11.09 %
Andhra Pradesh		✓	10.81 %
Sikkim		✓	10.50 %
Kerala	✓		10.40 %
Tamil Nadu	✓		10.29 %

Methodology

Literature review



Identification of vulnerable states from climate change:

1. Bihar, 2. Uttar Pradesh, 3. Assam, 4. Gujarat, 5. Maharashtra, 6. Karnataka, 7. Punjab

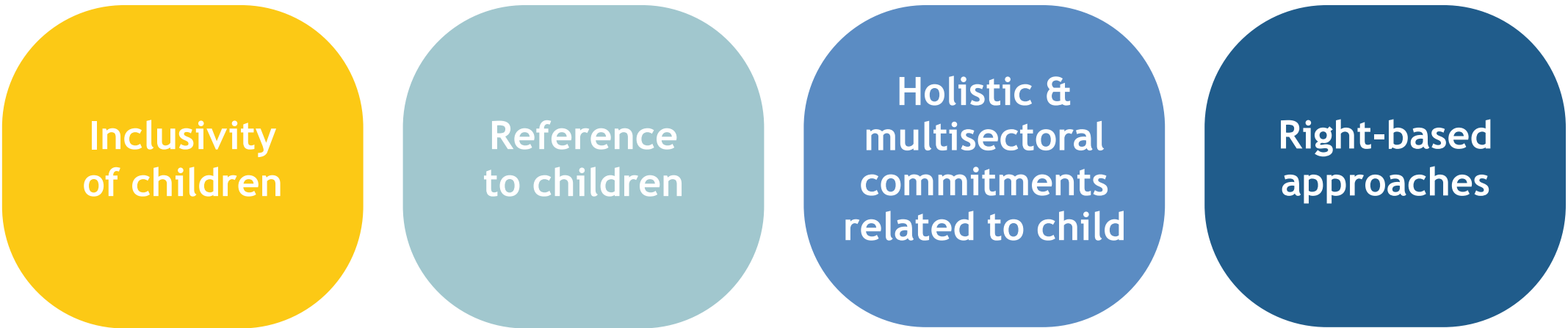


Review of state climate action plans through a young child-sensitive approach.

Reference of UNICEF study to evaluate NDCs of 151 countries.

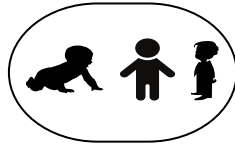
Categories	No. of Indicators
Inclusivity of children	07
Reference to children	05
Holistic & multisectoral commitments related to child	09
Right-based approaches	02

Findings



	Number of indicators fulfilled in the respective category				Total indicators
Gujarat	2	3	5	0	10
Maharashtra	2	2	2	0	06
Uttar Pradesh	1	2	2	0	05
Karnataka	1	1	0	1	03
Bihar	0	2	1	0	03
Punjab	1	1	0	0	02
Assam	0	0	1	0	01

Findings



Plans don't include age-wise separation, even though separate groups have specific needs.



No state has a dedicated section addressing young children's needs and challenges.

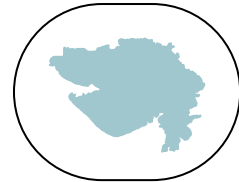


No state has explicitly considered sanitation, mental well-being, and social protection for young children in their plans.

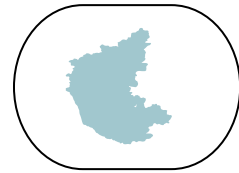


Plans are geographically uniform rather than state-specific.

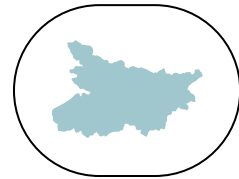
Findings



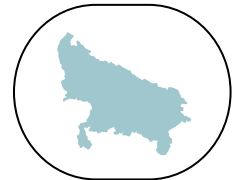
Gujrat is the only state that has included the Women and Child Development Department’s secretary in its SAPCC’s state-level steering committee.



Karnataka is the only state to emphasize the “Right-based approach,” citing social justice through its Child Protection Policy.

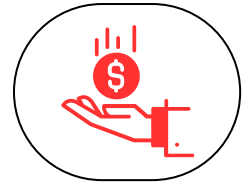


Bihar is the only state that mentions a disaster management-related curriculum in the school, but its climate plan lacks age group specifics.



Uttar Pradesh’s climate plan includes early climate education, annual workshops, and a health-focused curriculum to prevent climate-related diseases.

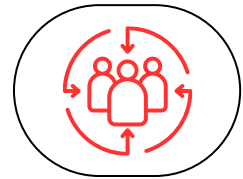
Challenges



Insignificant share of finance.



The siloed functioning of departments related to ECD and climate change.

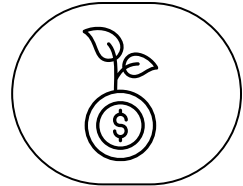


Limited involvement of ECD stakeholders in developing and implementing the policies.

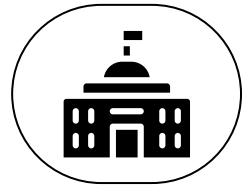


Climate change events often disrupt basic social services, often overlooked in policies.

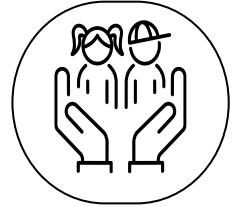
Recommendations for SAPCC policymakers



Leverage dedicated Multilateral Climate Funds like the Green Climate Fund, Global Environmental Fund, and Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage, especially in the first 1000 days of the child.



Women and Child Development and Child Rights Protection representatives should be on the SAPCC steering committee.



Integrating young child schemes & policies with SAPCC, including Integrated Child Development Services, Integrated Child-Protection Scheme, and Early Child Education in National Education Policy.



Paramedical staff, Anganwadi's staff, caregivers, and teachers should be trained for climate emergencies.



Prioritize remote and digital health and education services to mitigate climate-related disruptions.



Ensure climate-proofed infrastructure for young children, with separate girls' toilets and breastfeeding spaces for emergencies.

Recommendations for ECD advocates



Act as a “bridge” between the state and the young children's community by representing them and their needs.



Leverage expertise to train policymakers, Anganwadi staff, medical workers, teachers, and caregivers for climate emergencies.



Support the state in policy advocacy for drafting, implementing, and monitoring the climate action plans.



Enhance age- and state-specific research on climate change and its impacts on young children through academic collaboration.



ECDAN

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