



drishti

Children's Climate Risk Index: UNICEF

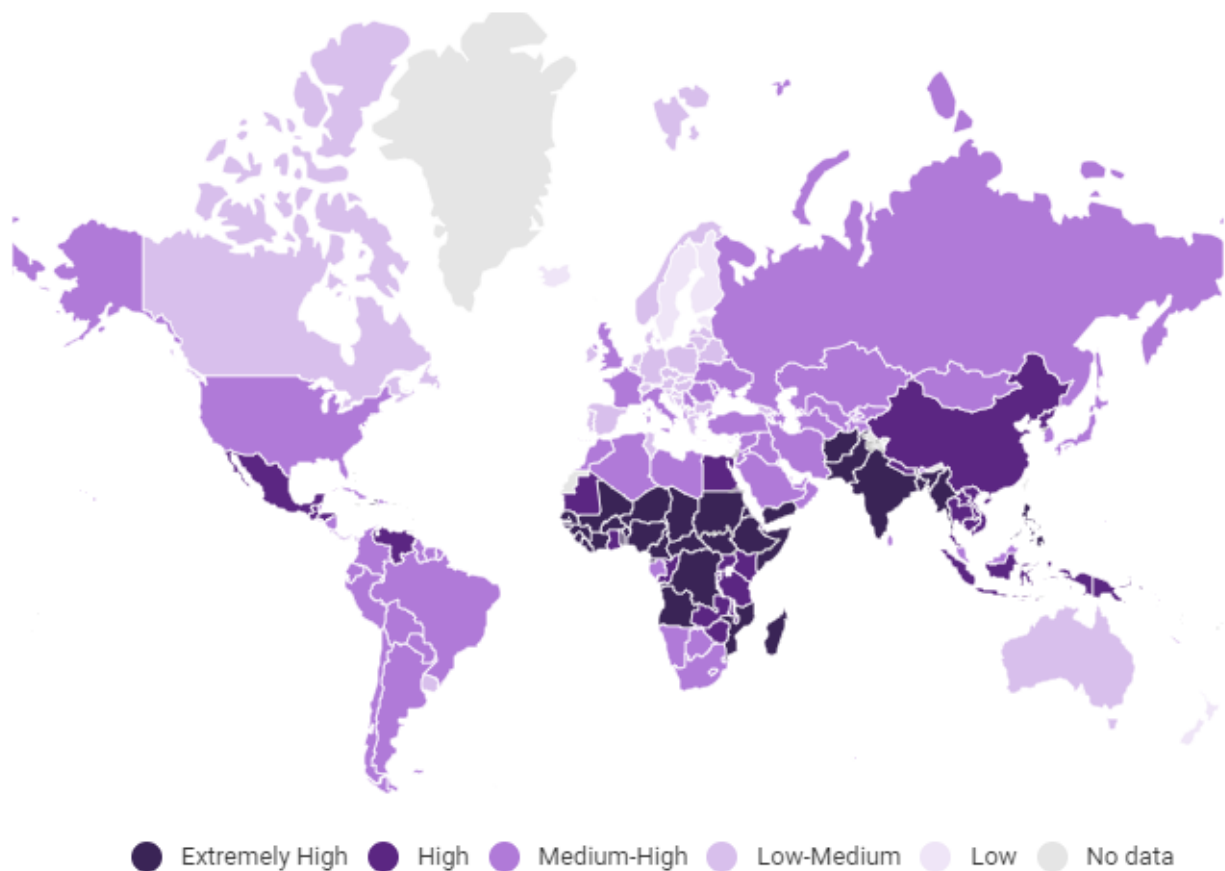
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Why in News

Recently, the **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)** in collaboration with **Fridays for Future** launched a report named '**The Climate Crisis Is a Child Rights Crisis: Introducing the Children's Climate Risk Index**'.

- It is the **first comprehensive analysis of climate risk from a child's perspective**.
- Earlier an analysis, based on **Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative (ND-GAIN) index**, had shown the impact of **Climate Change** on children across the world.

Level of Climate Risk on Various Countries



Key Points

- **Children's Climate Risk Index:**

- It ranks countries based on children's exposure to climate and environmental shocks, such as **Cyclones** and **Heatwaves**, as well as their vulnerability to those shocks, based on their access to essential services.
- **Pakistan** (14th), **Bangladesh** (15th), **Afghanistan** (25th) and **India** (26th) are among four South Asian countries where children are at **extremely high risk** of the impacts of the climate crisis.

- **Indian Scenario:**

- **India is among four South Asian countries** where children are most at risk of the impacts of climate change threatening their health, education, and protection.
- It is estimated that **more than 600 million Indians will face 'acute water shortages'** in the coming years, while at the same time **Flash Flooding is to increase significantly** in the majority of India's urban areas once the global temperature increase rises above 2 Celsius.

Twenty-one of the world's 30 cities with the most polluted air in 2020 were in India.

- **Global Scenario:**
 - **Countries With Maximum Vulnerability:**
 - Young people living in the **Central African Republic, Chad, Nigeria, Guinea, and Guinea-Bissau** are the most at risk of the impacts of climate change.
 - These children face a deadly combination of exposure to multiple climate and environmental shocks with **a high vulnerability due to inadequate essential services, such as water and sanitation, healthcare and education.**
 - **Impact of Climate and Environmental Hazards:**

Nearly every child around the world is at risk from at least one of the climate and environmental hazards which are **Coastal Flooding, Riverine Flooding, Cyclones, Vector Borne Diseases, Lead Pollution, Heatwaves and Water Scarcity.**

 - An estimated 850 million children – 1 in 3 worldwide – live in **areas where at least four of these climate and environmental shocks overlap.**
 - As many as 330 million children – 1 in 7 worldwide – live in **areas affected by at least five major shocks.**
 - **Inequitable Impact:**
 - There is a disconnect between **where GreenHouse gas (GHG) Emissions are generated**, and **where children are enduring the most significant climate-driven impacts.**

The children from **countries least responsible will suffer most of all.**
 - Climate change is deeply inequitable. While **no child is responsible for rising global temperatures, they will pay the highest costs.**
 - **Children are More Precarious:**

Compared to adults, children require more food and water per unit of their body weight, are less able to survive extreme weather events, and are **more susceptible to toxic chemicals, temperature changes and diseases, among other factors.**
 - **Nations Not Meeting the Climate Goals:**
 - The majority of the carbon emission reduction pledges for 2030 that 184 countries made under the **Paris Agreement** aren't nearly enough to keep global warming well below 2 degrees Celsius.
 - Some countries won't achieve their pledges, and **some of the world's largest carbon emitters will continue to increase their emissions.**

- **Recommendations:**
 - **Increase Investment:**
Increase **investment in climate adaptation and resilience** in key services for children.
 - **Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions:**
Countries must cut their emissions **by at least 45% (compared to 2010 levels) by 2030 to keep warming to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius.**
 - **Provide Climate Education:**
Provide children with **climate education and greens skills**, critical for their adaptation to and preparation for the effects of climate change.
 - **Include Young People in Decisions:**
Include young people in all national, regional and international climate negotiations and decisions, including at **COP (Conference of the Parties- A climate Convention) 26** (It will be held in Glasgow, UK in November 2021).
 - **Ensure Pandemic Recovery is Inclusive:**
Ensure the **recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic is green**, low-carbon and inclusive, so that the capacity of future generations to address and respond to the climate crisis is not compromised.

Way Forward

- **Meet the Goal:**
In order to avoid the worst impacts of climate change, **global net man-made emissions of carbon dioxide must be nearly halved by 2030**, and reach **“net zero” by 2050.**
- **Scale up Social Protection System:**
Scale up **adaptive and shock-responsive social protection systems** – such as grants for pregnant mothers and children - to **address the increasing impacts of climate change on children and their families.**
- **United approach towards child rights:**
More countries need to work towards their commitment in the **Convention on the Rights of the Child** to ensure every child is protected from poverty, for example by providing universal child benefits to improve children’s well-being and build resilience.

Source: DTE