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PRESS RELEASE

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Indonesia strengthens its bid to make hospitals and schools safer, as part of the One Million Safe Schools and Hospitals campaign

Jakarta – Over 13,000 schools and hospitals have joined the “One Million Safe Schools and Hospitals Campaign” since its national launch in Indonesia on July 29, quadrupling in the space of one week from 3,156 schools to 13,500. The number of hospitals that joined rose from 105 to 133.

The One Million Safe Schools and Hospitals Campaign was launched globally in Manila in April 2010, to enhance the safety of health and educational facilities in times of emergency, and better protect the millions of people who rely on them for healthcare and learning.

The most recent round of pledging in Indonesia came as part of a campaign rally on 7 August 2010 in Ciwidey and Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

The event in Ciwidey, a subdistrict of West Java Province, was organized by the disaster risk reduction forum of West Java and a non-governmental organization called Kerlip Foundation, to coincide with an official visit of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and his wife to the province.

With the support of the local communication and information authority, the organizers set up computers where participants made online pledges, receiving more than 6,000 pledges from schools and 26 from hospitals. A local student gave President Yudhoyono a briefing about the campaign at one of the computer booths.

One participant, Asep Hilman, head of the Education Department of West Java Province, said he planned to raise awareness among administrators of the 1,371 schools that he oversees. He will also be encouraging education departments at district level to explore building “safe school models” in their area.

A representative of the Kerlip Foundation, Yanti Sriyulianti Sugiharto, explained that her organization will conduct a road show from August 16 to September 30, stopping at schools in West Java to set up computers for online pledging. Kerlip will also provide training on risk assessment and preparedness during their stops schools, culminating in a workshop for school head masters, school committees, teachers and students in Cianjur district on “actions toward safe schools.”

A similar campaign is underway in neighbouring Yogyakarta province, with a round of pledging organized by the local disaster risk reduction forum of Yogyakarta and Arbeiter Samariter Bund (ASB) Deutschland, a German first-aid rescue service. The humanitarian aid department of the European Commission (ECHO) also provided support. The pledging event was attended by more than 200 participants from a broad variety of institutions, including representatives of schools, hospitals, government, NGOs and civil society.

Local officials from the districts of Bantul and Gunung Kidul published a new circular from the Minister of National Education, pushing for local education departments to mainstream disaster risk reduction into school curricula. ASB also launched a program on disaster risk reduction for disabled persons.