



School-based Disaster Risk Reduction: Making Education Safer



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Editorial Advisors:

Dr. Ian Davis

Senior Professor in Disaster Risk Management for Sustainable Development, Lund University Sweden and Visiting Professor in Cranfield, Oxford Brookes and Kyoto Universities

Kala Peiris De Costa

Siyath Foundation, Sri Lanka

Madhavi Malalgoda Ariyabandu

International Strategy for Risk Reduction (ISDR) – South Asia, Sri Lanka

For Personal and Educational Purpose only

Mihir R. Bhatt

All India Disaster Mitigation Institute, India

Dr. O. P. Mishra

SAARC Disaster Management Centre (SDMC), India

Dr. Satchit Balsari, MD, MPH

The University Hospital of Columbia and Cornell, New York, USA

Zenaida Delica Willison

Advisor, Special Unit South-South Cooperation in UNDP, Thailand

The views expressed in this publication are those of the author.



Disaster Safety of Schools: A National Concern

Children are the most valuable asset and are amongst the most vulnerable segments of society. Destruction caused by major earthquakes in the South-East Asian region over the past few years remind us of enormous task ahead of us to safeguard our schools and school children. During recent Sikkim Earthquake of 18th September 2011, a private school of G+4 storied building with RCC framed structure incurred a pan caking collapse of entire 1st floor resulting into death of four persons. Before earthquake, the building was running school of about 70 children. Had the earthquake happened on any of school day during day time, the casualties would have been extremely high. The completely collapsed Moon Light School has received non-repairable/non-retrofitable damage category 183 school children of Kutch, Gujarat lost their lives while saluting the tricolor on Republic day of 2001 and earthquake hit on the very same day. One of the most tragic aspects of the October 8, 2005 earthquake in Pakistan was the disastrous collapse of schools where over 8,000 schools were either destroyed or damaged beyond repair. Over 17,000 children perished in these collapsed schools (approximately 23% of the total deaths), and over 20,000 children suffered serious injuries. On fateful day of December 23, 1995, Dabwali witnessed the killing of 500 people mostly children and parents during Annual Day Function of the DAV School of Dabwali. The casualties were higher because of the stampede and because there was only one small gate as the exit of entire Pandal area. The blaze swept through the entire Pandal, which was covered with a synthetic sheet. In Kumbhakonam, the fire that broke out at about 10.50 a.m. on 16th July, 2004 perished 94 children who were trapped under the



Image: NSSP, AIDMI.

Inaugural Address by Shri M. Shahidhar Reddy, Vice Chairman NDMA at the Inception Workshop of the National School Safety Programme.

roof and were charred to death. It was shocking to know that for a school with strength of 900 students, there was only one narrow entrance for children which also served as an exit.

The above facts remind us for proper awareness and sensitisation with strict adherence of school safety norms. The Supreme Court on 13th April, 2009 has directed all the States and Union Territories to implement the safety measures prescribed by the National Building Code of India, 2005 in all government and private schools. While hearing Public Interest Litigation, the Court issued a comprehensive time-bound plan to ensure safety of children in schools in the light of the Kumbhakonam fire tragedy in Tamil Nadu in July 2004. There were about 19 crore children in the age group of 5 to 14 years enrolled in 12 lakhs schools in our country. 229 districts in 22 states and UTs fall in seismic zones IV and V. There are 241 multi-hazards districts in the country and all major natural

disasters, school buildings have suffered damages, destruction and loss of lives of the children. The School Safety, thus, becomes one of the most important obligations/objective for the country. In view of above, NDMA has initiated a pilot programme on national school safety programme with an overall outlay of Rs. 48.47 crore. Under this programme NDMA envisages for formulation of draft National School Safety Policy; training & capacity building in each districts of 22 States/UTs falling in earthquake zones IV and V with a total coverage of 200 schools; information, education and communication programme on the issue in all districts of 22 States/UTs. Besides above, two major segment of the programme is demonstrative retrofitting of one school each in 22 States/UTs and non-structural mitigation measures to be taken up 200 schools in two districts each of 22 States/UTs. ■

– **Dr. Muzaffar Ahmed,**
Member, NDMA.

Sab ke Liye Salamat Shiksha: Key Coordination Areas for National School Safety Programme: Briefing Note

This note lists key coordination areas for National School Safety Programme (NSSP) of National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and key coordination areas for Inter Agency Group on School Safety (IAG-SS). These areas emerged from the two-day inception workshop hosted by NDMA, UNICEF and UNDP in New Delhi, on September 1 and 2, 2011. The list is drawn from various valuable panel discussions during this event and one-to-one meetings organised by AIDMI. The note is for the NDMA, UNICEF and UNDP for planning next steps for IAG-SS and NSSP.

- Inter Agency Group on School Safety is timely and must have an overriding focus: "Sab Ke liye Salamat Shiksha".
- It is time to coordinate work done on school safety so far by various states such as Gujarat and Maharashtra; UN system; INGOs such as PLAN, Save the Children and ADRA; and NGOs such as AIDMI and SEEDs with NSSP.

Though NSSP will now lead, the past initiatives have far more to contribute beyond training modules and materials to NSSP. The ongoing school safety work is scattered but valuable to better inform NSSP on ongoing basis.

- A positive and forward-looking environment was built at the inception workshop among various stakeholders. Ways must be found to coordinate energy between national and state GOs and international and local NGOs. This can be done through a collective and cooperative decision-making process for coordination.
- NDMA has taken a lead in detailing the plans and planning process for NSSP. This excellent lead has set the pace and shaped the road map with more clarity. A key aspect of this plan at the district level is the selection of 200 schools in each district. Who should select, how, and why? These decisions must be

coordinated and communicated. Perhaps this is the most important selection process in NSSP.

- The conceptual framework of NSSP has now merged both the key concepts: HFA and Right to Education (RTE). Ways must be found to coordinate efforts so that HFA and RTE concepts feed into each other and do not dilute one another. In addition, Child's Right (CRC) must be a leading concept in the implementation process. Therefore, all three concepts must be coordinated and converged in NSSP.
- The objective of NSSP is not to do pilot (pilots have been done by UN and INGOs and NGOs) projects under NSSP, but "Demonstration" projects. More coordination on detailing what is "demonstration" in NSSP is needed. NSSP is demonstrating what; to whom; and how? And why? More details will enlarge impact of the NSSP beyond two districts in each state.



Two-day inception workshop organised on the National School Safety Programme led by National Disaster Management Authority.

- There is a real need for coordination of IAG-SS at the district level. How will IAG engage, add value, and help deliver results at the district level through coordination? A workshop on this with IAG members will be timely if held in the coming weeks. A website (attached to NDMA) can be developed to make NSSP activities transparent and effective.
- The most important role of IAG-SS is of coordination: vertical coordination across national, state, and district; partner coordination across NGO, SDMAs and SSA; and coordination of stages from planning to results. These details are needed to be worked out and can be worked out in the above mentioned national workshop. A complaint mechanism for participants at district level must be designed to make NSSP more accountable.
- There is a need for an autonomous Resource Centre for the project, policy, and training and education material on school safety to service NDMA, SSA and IAG-SS and the states. These details of coordinating advocacy, training, and other material need to be worked out up front before NSSP rolls out in full speed.

Keeping some of the above nine points on Coordination in mind AIDMI offers to act as a Resource for NSSP and help set priority agenda at the national and state level; conduct process documentation for real time and subsequent learning; help with planning and conducting review and evaluation; help peer review the school safety policy and training module design process and product. ■

– Mihir R. Bhatt

* Shared as an input to NSSP by AIDMI with NDMA and UNICEF on September 8, 2011.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Impact of Earthquake on Schools in Sikkim

An earthquake of magnitude 6.8 occurred on 18th September at 18:11 hrs IST in Sikkim-Nepal Border region. The event, which comes under the category of "Moderate earthquake", was also reported and widely felt in Sikkim, Assam, Meghalaya, northern parts of West Bengal, Bihar, and parts of other eastern and northern regions of India. The epicenter lies in a seismically known and active belt called, Alpide Himalayan seismic belt. The main shock was followed by several aftershocks of low intensity and a few significant aftershocks (M²4.0).

As of October 04, 2011 the magnitude earthquake has claimed 112 lives in the state. Many areas in the north district were inaccessible by road, posing a challenge to extending relief assistance to the people in need. The Government of India had put 36 helicopters in action as part of the relief efforts. However, heavy rains and dense fog hampered the entire operation.

Schools post-earthquake

- School education is interrupted and demand for skill development is observed.
- Schools will resume from October 10, 2011, except in north where another 15 days time is needed to restore accessibility and normalcy.
- Out of total 779 schools in the state, 682 are damaged (87% schools in the state), while 100% schools of north district are damaged.
- Repairing and reconstruction of schools are not yet planned.

Initial Needs in Schools:

- Repairing and reconstruction of temporary class rooms - in Gangtok of east district in urban segment and also in affected areas in North district - to begin with - and can be replicated in other affected schools in interior parts of the state.
- Repairing or reconstruction of school buildings of one entire district is timely. ■

– Sanchit Oza



Image: Sikkim Earthquake, AIDMI.

Schools equally suffered and damage due to the earthquake in Sikkim.

Safer Education during Emergencies



Image: AIDMI.

The school can be a sanctuary, a child-friendly place where children can find a zone of peace and a sense of normalcy.

Disasters and conflict impact education. 67 million primary school aged children and 71 million adolescents remain out of school globally. Education during emergencies usually has low priority. It usually faces challenges in terms of lack of experienced staff, too much focus on short term relief needs, little consensus among implementing agencies, poor coordination and information management. Natural disasters, conflict and underlying social vulnerability further affects our ability to deliver basic social services.

It has been recognised that the lack of education and employment opportunities creates further vulnerabilities, and that this sometimes leads to a vicious cycle where it becomes even harder to access safe education. There is also growing recognition that children and youth are highly vulnerable to abuse, unsafe migration, forced conscription and unemployment following disasters and conflict. Furthermore, there is greater understanding of the importance of

non-formal youth education programmes which emphasise skills acquisition and the link to livelihood, as well as the roles youth and adolescents can play in restoring livelihoods during recovery.

The United Nations' 'Education for All' movement and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) have recognised the fact that in order to reach universal primary education, disasters and conflict need to be addressed. Among several recommendations, the 2010 MDG summit has called for strengthened efforts to incorporate primary education as a fundamental element of the response to, and preparedness for, humanitarian emergencies – ensuring that affected countries are supported by the international community in their efforts to restore their education systems. The Inter Agency Standing Committee has established an Education Cluster for crisis situations. On 9 July 2010, The UN General Assembly passed Resolution A/64/L.58, "The Right to Education in Emergency Situations."

In December 2004, the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies' *Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction (INEE Minimum Standards)*¹ was launched. It is the first global tool to define a minimum level of educational quality and contribute to increased access, coordination, and accountability. It reflects rights and commitments as well as consensus on good practices and lessons learned across the field of education and protection in emergencies and post-crisis situations. The INEE Minimum Standards is complementary to the Sphere Project's Minimum Standards for Disaster Response and Humanitarian Charter. The INEE Standards currently go beyond a response mandate to incorporate education into the preparedness, recovery and prevention aspects of disasters and conflicts.

¹ Sources : *INEE Minimum Standards Handbook*: <http://www.ineesite.org/standards>. *EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES AND POST-CRISIS TRANSITION UNICEF*.

The INEE Minimum Standards cover five categories:

Minimum standards common to all categories: focuses on the essential areas of community participation, the use of local resources, initial assessment, appropriate response and continued monitoring and evaluation, which are required when applying any other standard within the handbook.

Access and learning environment: focuses on partnerships to promote access to learning opportunities and essential inter-sectoral linkages with protection, health, water and sanitation, nutrition and shelter to enhance security and physical, cognitive and psychological well-being.

Teaching and learning: focuses on critical elements that promote effective teaching and learning: curriculum, training, instruction and assessment.

Teachers and other education personnel: focuses on the administration and management of human resources, including recruitment and selection, conditions of service, and supervision and support.

Education policy and coordination: focuses on policy formulation and enactment, planning and implementation, and coordination.

Disaster Risk Reduction seeks to minimise vulnerabilities and disaster risks throughout a society, to avoid (prevention) or to limit (mitigation and preparedness) the adverse impacts of hazards within the broad context of sustainable development. The focus on DRR within education is usually on early warning systems, inclusion of DRR in Education curricula, increasing awareness of DRR at all levels and developing DRR materials for communities and schools, Building cyclone and earthquake resistant schools and

hospitals. Risk reduction in education also emphasises on building a culture of resilience and safety through education, teacher training, training on school level risk assessments, Development of DRR resources and guidelines, Building and retro-fitting school infrastructure to be disaster-resistant and finally strengthening disaster preparedness in education. ■

– **Chiranjeev Das**, Team Leader,
DIPECHO Project: Building Disaster Resilience of Vulnerable Communities,
Concern Worldwide India

Sources:

1. INEE Minimum Standards Handbook: <http://www.ineesite.org/standards>.
2. EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES AND POST-CRISIS TRANSITION UNICEF.
3. IASC Guidelines GUIDANCE NOTE ON USING THE CLUSTER APPROACH TO STRENGTHEN HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE 24 November 2006.
4. Education Cluster Coordinator Training Resources: UNICEF and the International Save the Children Alliance.



Image: Gujarat Earthquake 2001. AIDMI.

INEE is the only global tool that articulates the minimum level of educational quality and access in emergencies through to recovery.

Building Disaster Response in School

National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Govt. of India, created by an Act of Parliament on 23 Dec. 2005, is the apex body on Disaster Management in India. It is responsible for evolving disaster management policy, issuing guidelines on various types of disasters and taking structural and non structural measures to make India disaster resilient. To inculcate the culture of preparedness in the schools and colleges, NDMA has taken the initiative of institutionalising disaster management framework in these educational institutions.

NDMA has so far conducted over 418 mock exercises in various States/UTs of India on different types of disasters viz. earthquakes, floods, urban flooding, landslides, cyclones, terrorist related disasters, chemical (industrial) disasters, urban fires, mass casualty management, metro rail related disasters, disasters during international events like Commonwealth Games, Cricket World Cup, national events like IPL etc. Besides, mock exercises have also been conducted in 132 schools/colleges on earthquakes, fires, terrorist related disasters etc. as a pilot project. The response from the controlling authorities and the schools have been overwhelming. On 01 September 2011, NDMA launched a Demonstration Project known as National School Safety Project, in conjunction with Ministry of Human Resource Development. The project covers 22 States, two districts each, which are in Zone V, IV and III for seismic vulnerability. 200 schools will be covered in each district. The Project lasts 24 months. It will be in support of the Sarva Siksha Abhyan, a major project of Ministry of Human



Image: CEMEX 2011. AIDMI.

Fire safety mock drill and demonstration is in action during the city-wide CEMEX exercise at Chennai in August 2011.

Resource Development and work towards the aim of Right to Education.

The aim of school safety programme is not only to conduct a mock exercise, but to strengthen the disaster framework in the educational institutions and to make them self reliant, to face the perceived disasters, till the first responders arrive on the scene. The School Safety Programme in schools is conducted in two steps for students from class VI to class XII. Actions taken during these two steps are given below:

- a) Step 1: On the mutually agreed date, a workshop is organised by the Senior Specialist from NDMA in the school premises. This is attended by Principal, Vice-

Principal, administrative/support staff, all concerned teachers/head boy/girl, student, leaders (prefects, monitors of classes from class-VI to XII and house captains). In this participatory workshop, the procedure for conduct of Mock Exercises is explained. The need for making a School Disaster Management Committee is stressed. How the hazard, risk and vulnerability of the school is to be carried out is explained. The suggested sequence of formulation of School Disaster Management (DM) Plan to include hazard identification & safety assessment, DM equipment required in the school, evacuation plan and

composition of various DM teams is delineated. How the mock exercises are to be conducted to test the School DM Plan is explained. Independent observers at the scale of one per section of the class are detailed from within the school to audit the conduct of the mock exercise. Thereafter, a mock exercise documentary on school safety is shown to the audience to understand the nuances of its conduct.

b) Step 2: Step 2 is actual conduct of the mock exercise. On the scheduled date, the NDMA team arrives in the School, half an hour earlier, to check the last minute stage management aspect. The observers are briefed by the Senior Specialist. The Mock Exercise is conducted in a sequential manner and includes all actions to be taken during and after a disaster. All actions are taken by the children themselves. The evacuation team, evacuates the sections to the pre-designated assembly areas, where after the head count the monitor reports the details of children present and injured at the Control Room. The Control Room is set up next to the Principal's Office/Reception Area, which is managed by the Warning and Information Team. The Search and Rescue Teams and the First Aid Teams of the School, also assemble for tasking by the Control. When the status of injured section-wise is received, the Search and Rescue Teams are sent to the respective class rooms for evacuating the injured to the First Aid Post. First Aid Post/s is/are established next to the Assembly Areas, where the First Aid Teams of the School attend to the injured and give them first aid. The First Aid teams are trained in providing first aid by St John Ambulance,



Image: AIDMI.

Practical exercise like fire safety demonstration build the confidence among school stakeholders for effective response.

Indian Red Cross or the district medical officer.. The Control Room also simultaneously informs the first responders, like Police, Fire and Emergency Services, Ambulance Services and the nearest Hospital. Information is also passed to District Disaster Management Authority Control Room (Tele 1077). The mock exercise is called off, after the ambulances start taking the injured to the Hospitals. A debriefing session is held after the Mock Exercise, where the Observers give out their comments and the participants share their learning experience. The Mock Exercise is followed by demonstrations on Search & Rescue by NDRF and on how to douse fire before arrival of the fire brigade by the local Fire Station and on first aid by the Red Cross/St John Ambulance representatives. The Mock Exercise and demonstrations take about two hours.

c) Lastly, a debriefing session is held with the observers and all stakeholders, where the observers give out their observations and the stakeholders share their learning

experience. The gaps identified during the Debriefing Session are shared with the School Management and the school Principal, for taking remedial measures.

The Mock Exercises have proved to be a useful tool to test the preparedness against any type of disaster. The schools have come to realise that DM framework is a must for developing their resilience to perceived disasters.

To take the matter further NDMA launched a Demonstration Project known as National School Safety Project on 01 September 11, in conjunction with Ministry of Human Resource Development. The project covers 22 States and two districts in each district, which are in Zone V, IV and III for seismic vulnerability. 200 schools will be covered in each district. The Project lasts 24 months. It will be in support of the Sarva Siksha Abhyan, a major project of Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt of India and work towards the aim of Right to Education. ■

- **Brig (Dr) BK Khanna,**
Senior Specialist,
National Disaster Management
Authority (NDMA)

School Safety Insurance: Ensuring Protection for Students and School Staff

Schools play a versatile role in the communities and hence the impacts of disasters on schools are pervasive. The school infrastructures are most vulnerable during disasters due to poor construction, lack of proper maintenance and many other issues related to the schools. Moreover, as a result of the rapid urbanisation and over population in urban areas, schools are growing in an unplanned way to accommodate students in the education system. As a result, vulnerability is ever increasing in the education sector and safety of the students is becoming questionable day by day. Considering all these, school safety has become an issue of major priority to make schools safer for the well-being of our next generation.

AIDMI had initiated its Safer Schools Campaign in 2001 after more than 900 school children were crushed to death in the 2001 Gujarat earthquake. The campaign seeks to improve school safety through disaster risk reduction. More specifically, it aims to increase disaster awareness, develop school-specific disaster preparedness plans, promote structural and non-structural safety measures for disaster risk reduction, and provide disaster insurance coverage to school children, teachers and administrators against several types of accidents.

The insurance policy that AIDMI has developed for school children, teachers and other school staff members is provided by United India Insurance Company Ltd. (Government of India undertaking). It covers them not only during school hours, but when they are at home as well. This insurance policy is designed specifically for schools and education centers attended by marginalised children, including girls whose guardians cannot afford the cost of



Image: Tsunami. AIDMI.

School safety insurance policy handover to a school in Tamil Nadu.

treatment when their children suffer injuries in emergencies.

The objectives of providing the disaster insurance coverage to school children and staff are a) to reduce vulnerability of the poor students against disaster through risk transfer; b) to promote more effective risk transfer management for the poor students; c) to provide insurance at minimal amount of premium; and d) to insure school children, teachers, and administrators against several types of disasters.

The amount of insurance premium is very low i.e. maximum Rs. 15 per person per year and thus affordable for the poor community. And they get compensation of Rs. 25000/- (basic sum insured) in case of death due to accident + 10% of medical expenses in case of hospitalisation. And in case of hospitalisation due to injury in accident, they can get maximum 10% of the sum insured i.e. Rs. 2500/-.

Starting from 2006 till August 2011, more than 40000 students and school staff from 200+ schools of Bihar,

Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir, Puducherry and Tamil Nadu are insured under this insurance policy. However, many challenges had also to be faced in implementing this programme. At grass root level, there was very little awareness about student safety insurance among the stakeholders and it was also very difficult to arrange meeting and convince the parents. Moreover, the school administrators and the parents were also not much aware about the documents that they needed to submit when there was any claim and such delay resulted in the delay in claim settlement procedure. Still, till now, 20 claims have been received, out of which 13 have been settled, 4 have been rejected, and 3 were in process.

To take this initiative further, it is essential to spread information about the student safety insurance among various stakeholders. This can be done at the school and community level by disseminating insurance awareness material and at the policy level by conducting round tables to discuss issues on school safety insurance. ■

– **Aparna Shah and Kalpesh Prajapati**

Disaster Education: Experience from Rural Schools of China

Background

Studies show that education plays a vital role in disaster mitigation. According to the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) secretariat's survey, 33 countries had set up disaster education curriculums in primary and high school of 88 countries around the world. Meanwhile a UNESCO survey showed that, each year, more than 200 million people are affected by natural disasters, and that children under 18 years are amongst the most vulnerable groups. Especially when disasters occur in the time they are attending school. In 2005, the United

Nations Second World Conference on Disaster Mitigation, Kobe, Japan, emphasised education, professional training and information exchange as the most effective way for disaster mitigation.

Theoretical Framework

Based on students' cognitive ability, psychological characteristics and physical conditions, building students' capacity in disaster reduction can be illustrated by Fig. 1. Disaster knowledge is the basis for hazard awareness, mitigation actions, and determining student's behaviors when they face disaster. (Fig. 1)

Solution

Recently, a survey was carried out in rural school, Beijing, China, and the results showed that many school-age children lack disaster knowledge, and did not know how to respond to disasters correctly.

In order to enrich, students' knowledge of disasters improve disaster awareness and enhance their capacity of coping with disaster, we can achieve that by curriculum building, awareness involving and physical-skills building.

Curriculum building includes publishing teaching materials, teacher training, forming evaluation system, etc. (Fig. 2).

Awareness involving includes drawing risk maps, making disaster mitigation poster, etc.

Physical-skills building enhances students' physical and disaster emergency response skills.

In addition, social and family education is an important complement for school education. ■

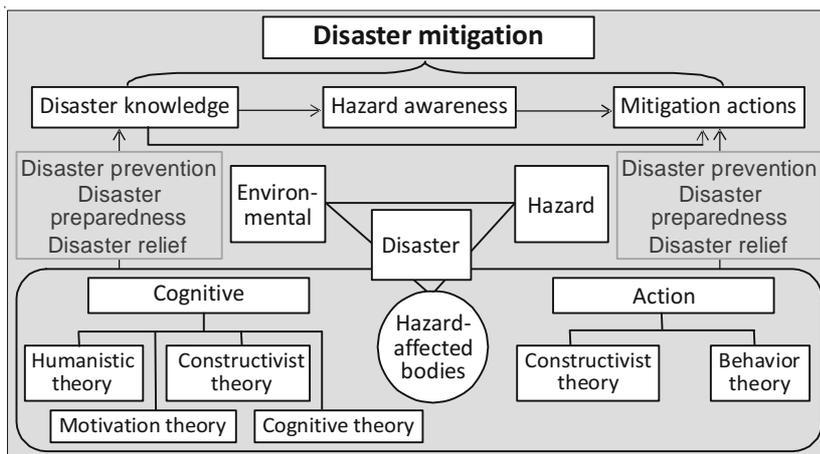


Fig. 1: Capacity building for disaster reduction system for students



Fig. 2: The materials about geological hazards for school-age children.



Fig. 3: Primary school students' draft about disaster mitigation.



Fig. 4: Primary school students participating disaster nursing activities.

– Jinhong Wan,

Institute of Water Resources and Hydropower Research (IWHR), China

Joint Efforts for Making Schools Safer in Myanmar

The School Safety project in Myanmar is a great example of South-South cooperation with qualitative input from the North. The dual training programme as was carried out in Myanmar, is an innovative approach to knowledge sharing.

The intense workshop had two parts, beginning with a four day Training of Trainers (ToT). These newly trained field workers then accompanied our team in the second part – a 3rd day training of villagers from vulnerable areas of Myanmar.

The topics included School Safety such as mapping a school to increase its preparedness, First Aid skills necessary in a post disaster situation, particularly in schools, including CPR, choking and bandaging, and a practical water filtration method for situations of potable water scarcity and hygiene in emergency situations.

Despite the challenges presented in running a training from a multi-national team, the goals of all the organisations involved remain the

same -sharing the intention to improve the quality of life for vulnerable people.

Our local partner LEAD took care of arranging the participants, and they all arrived with a great willingness to learn. The format of the workshop was adapted as we noticed what worked well. The demonstrations and group exercises were enthusiastically carried out with much laughter and enjoyment.

This joint efforts have further planning to continue the implementation of the project. The capacity building actions will include practical components such as creating school disaster response plans, updating manuals for schools and suggesting a prototype structure of a coordinating team.

Preparing for Working In Translation:

In preparation for the second training, as the group were only Burmese speakers, the YEU power point was translated, as well as training material from AIDMI on School Safety and was then provided to the participants as memory aids in Burmese language.

30 participants attended the second training from our target population of teachers, community leaders, and representative from CSO's. The English speaking graduates of the first training acted as translators and trainers for some of the sessions. This allowed for greater integration of the material and an evaluation of the first sessions' level of comprehension.

Indonesian, Indian and Burmese trainers were able to learn from each other's training styles. We are also pleased that the programme has promoted inter-faith relations with a course that was created by Christian, Hindu, Jewish and Buddhist partners. ■

– Romi Kaplan,

TAG International Development



Multi-national Trainers Group Picture, AIDMI, YEU, LEAD and TAG in Myanmar.

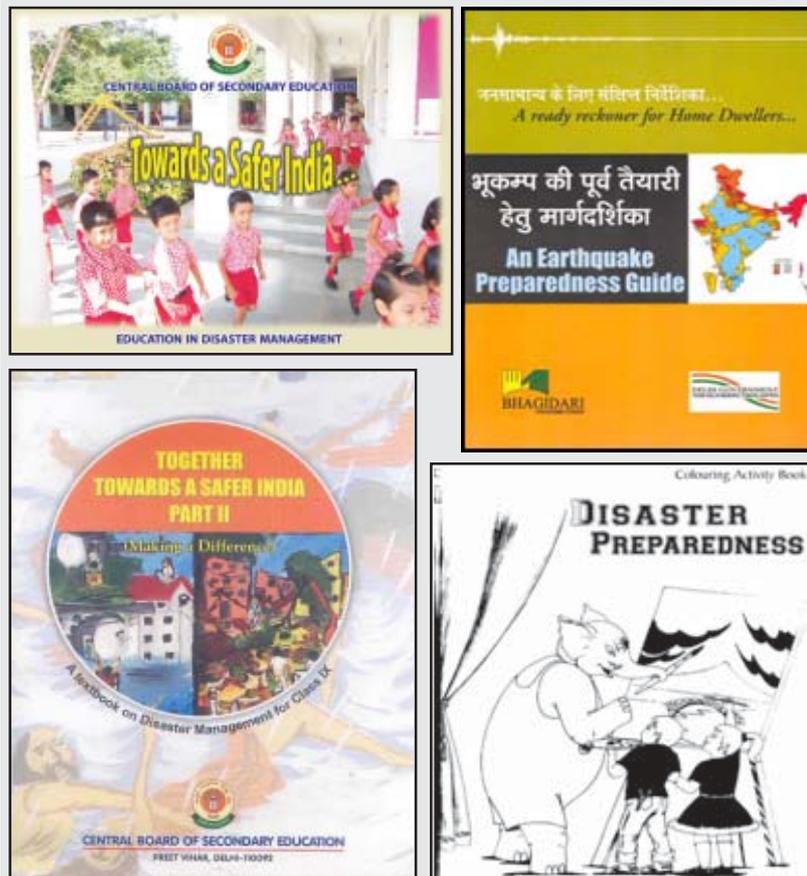
Image: TAG International Development

Schools Safety Initiatives in India

Unfortunate events such as the Kumbhakonam fire tragedy and Gujarat earthquake in India, as well as several other tragedies across the world that affected schools have brought to the lime light the need to protect the school buildings, students and staff that are involved with the school activities. Government of India, some of the State Governments, NGOs such as SEEDS, AIDMI, CEE and Save the Children (to name a few) and UN Agencies have been supporting initiatives in the schools to improve the safety of children in schools. However, most of these efforts remained as pilots, without attaining the momentum required to result in a movement or mechanisms to sustain the efforts. In this backdrop, the recently approved National School Safety Programme (NSSP) that is being spearheaded by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) is a welcome move by the Government of India. At the NCCP inception workshop organised jointly by NDMA, UNDP and UNICEF on 1-2 September 2011 in New Delhi, most of the organisations that did work in this field spoke about their experience as well as highlighted the need for a system that would sustain the efforts even beyond the project.

This note is about the school safety initiatives carried out under the GOI-UNDP Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Programme (2003-2009) under the leadership of the Ministry of Home Affairs with the support of UNDP. The component on School Safety was developed to promote the message "school safety through education and building safer schools" that generated awareness among students and teachers on how to respond to disasters by developing school level disaster management plans, capacity enhancement and

A snap-shot of various knowledge materials published under School Safety Initiative of GoI-UNDP DRM Programme



through conduct of mock drills. A number of IEC material and guidelines, including a School Safety Manual (a handbook for administrators, education officers, emergency officials, school principals and teachers) were prepared under the leadership of Ministry of Home Affairs.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), GOI introduced Disaster Management in the school curriculum - as a part of social science from Class VIII to X and in class XI in Sociology and Geography. Several state governments and state boards introduced the subject from class VII to IX. The following 19 states have

reportedly introduced the subject in the school/university curriculum: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Orissa, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

Extensive disaster management trainings involving teachers, school managers and education department officials from Central Board of Secondary Education and State Board for Secondary and Higher Education were carried out. Under this DRM Programme 125,817 teachers were trained on Disaster Management at

the district level. The Programme reached out to 4105 schools with about 130,000 school children.

Support was provided to National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT) to develop a chapter in Sociology for class XI and training modules for teachers, educators focusing on the health, safety and well being of the School Children. This being a new subject, training, orientation and knowledge upgradation programs are being conducted across the country to orient the principals and teachers on this subject and for imparting skills for teaching this subject to the students.

In Uttar Pradesh, the State government decided to design and construct 80,000 primary and upper primary classrooms with earthquake proofed design features. Engineers and architects from government departments were trained to use earthquake proof designs and codes

to construct new schools and modifying existing school buildings.

The initiative on school safety was introduced and featured in the Coalition for Global School Safety 2006 (UN initiated campaign to promote school safety programmes) as a best practice in risk reduction in the education sector. School safety initiatives under the programme was presented at the International Disaster Reduction Conference (IDRC), Davos.

The NSSP is expected to come up with a national Policy, which is an important aspect required to promote school safety across the country. While finalising the implementation modalities, it is important to keep in mind that we demonstrate some workable arrangement. Therefore, involvement of the Ministry of Human Resources Development at the national level, and through that Ministry involving the state Education Departments,

technical staff involved in implementation of other programmes and schemes pertaining to schools and education, as well as utilisation of the existing training institutions. While developing the IEC material, training modules and guidelines, the existing materials developed by various stakeholders may be reviewed by an expert group and if any improvements are required it may be undertaken by a group of technical agencies/experts. It is also important to develop the capacities in the states with the help of expert groups, not by one expert or institution. Quality assurance should be done by the group that is not directly involved in the implementation. As far as possible the decision making should be decentralised for which appropriate guidelines should be provided. ■

– **G. Padmanabhan***, Emergency Analyst, United Nations Development Programme

** The author has used excerpts from DRM reports in preparing this note. The views expressed are that of the author and do not reflect the view of UNDP.*

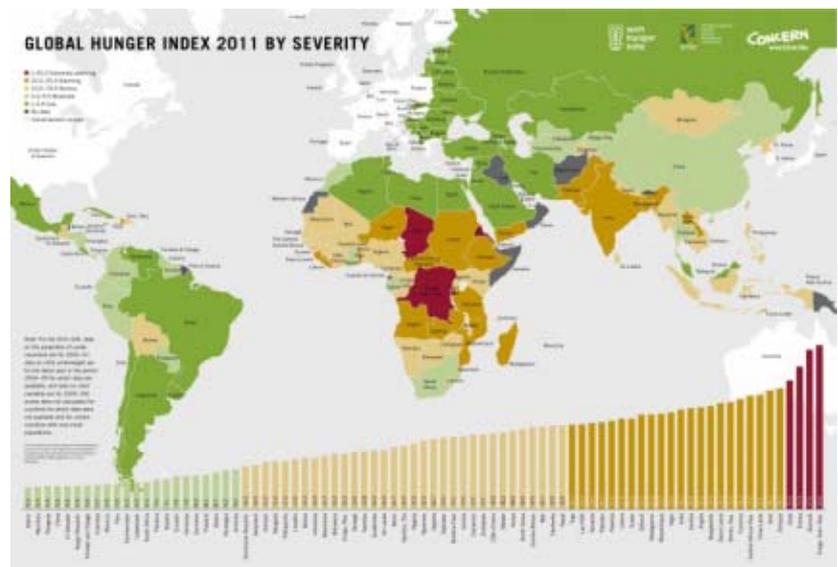
KNOWLEDGE PRODUCT

2011 Global Hunger Index Report

The Global Hunger Index (GHI) is a multidimensional statistical tool used to describe the state of countries' hunger situation. The GHI measures progress and failures in the global fight against hunger. The GHI is updated once a year.

The Index was adopted and further developed by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), and was first published in 2006 with the Welthungerhilfe. Since 2007, the Concern Worldwide joined the group as co-publisher.

Recently 2011 GHI report has been published. The 2011 GHI was calculated for 122 developing countries and countries in transition, 81 of which were ranked. Every year, the GHI report focuses on a main topic: in 2010 the Index highlighted early childhood under nutrition



among children younger than the age of two. The GHI 2011 focuses on the rising and more volatile food prices of the recent years and the effects these changes have on hunger and

malnutrition. The report is available at <http://www.concern.net/resources/2011-global-hunger-index>. ■

(Source: *Global Hunger Index Report 2011*)

Know the Risk and Take Action: Priority of Action 3 of Hyogo Framework for Action

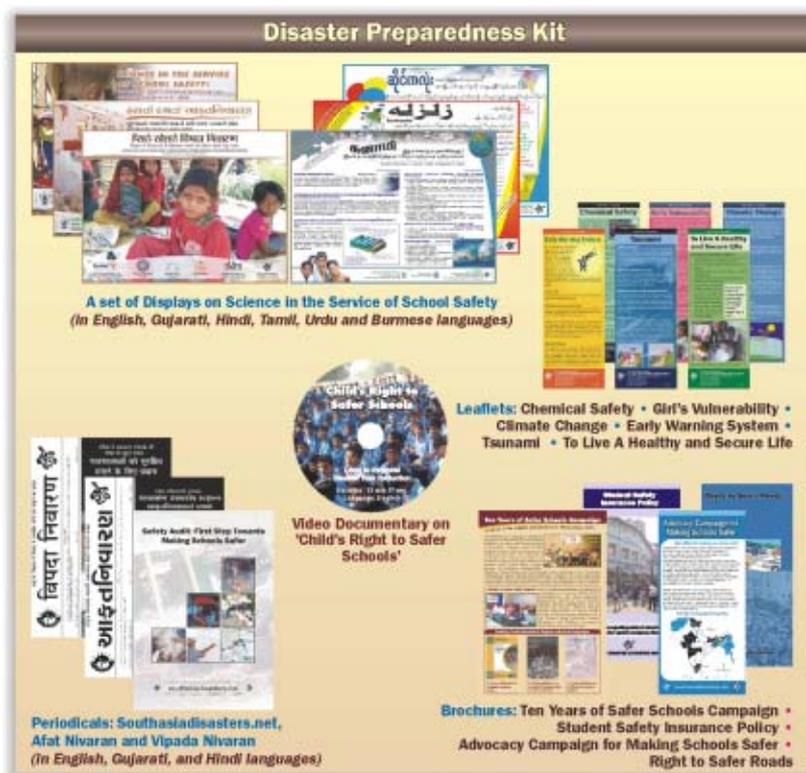
The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015 was envisaged as a blueprint, adopted by all member states of the UN General Assembly, to guide efforts in the area of disaster risk reduction. Since its adoption, the three strategic goals and five priorities of action areas contained within the HFA have since become a common point of reference for states to systematically track progress in disaster risk reduction efforts that they have undertaken.

A Priority of Action 3 of HFA is about 'Use Knowledge, Innovation and Education to Build a Culture of Safety and Resilience at All Levels'

Disasters can be substantially reduced if people are well informed and motivated towards a culture of disaster prevention and resilience, which in turn requires the collection, compilation and dissemination of relevant knowledge and information on hazards, vulnerabilities and capacities (as we read in article from Japan in this publication).

Key task for achieving this could be to raise awareness of DRR and develop education programmes on DRR in schools and local communities, develop or utilise DRR training for key sectors based on identified priorities, and enhance the compilation, dissemination and use of DRR information.

Awareness is the first step toward action, where local language DRR material is very useful. As a United Nations publication focusing on the role of schools in DRR says¹, schools are 'the best venue for sowing



Awareness is the first step toward action where local language DRR material is very useful.

collective values, school students and teachers serve as vehicles for building a culture of prevention'. Schools are very much part of community life. In many countries, schools are utilised as evacuation centers and temporary housing for people displaced from their homes by a disaster. In many countries of Asia, residents come together in schools for community festivals; through the parents-teachers association, a connection between the school and the community is established. The school is a place to inculcate DRR. Children can be effective agents in the home and the community to build a culture of prevention. Training them can begin by ensuring that views and interests

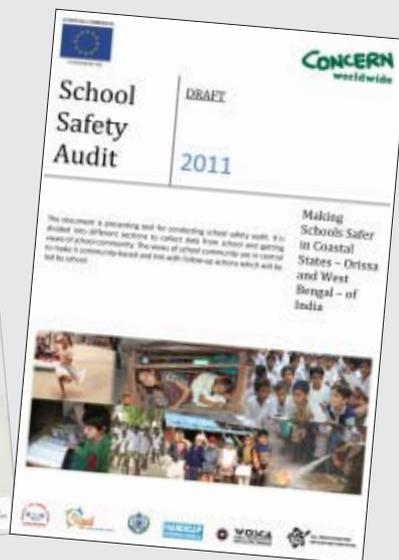
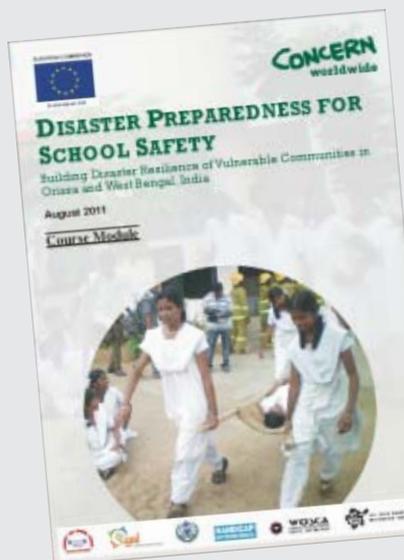
of children are incorporated in to the school disaster risk reduction plan.

Considerable progress has been made in DRR information and knowledge management. With a vast amount of information now available on good practices, greater focus and attention is required on efforts to replicate and expand those scale. In the area of school safety, significant knowledge resources have been generated over the past years. A number of countries in Asia have implemented pilot project but the impact on policy decisions has been limited. Increased efforts are also needed to recognise and document local and indigenous knowledge and practices in DRR.

1 United Nations, 2007. Toward a Culture of Prevention: DRR Begins at School, UNISDR-UNESCO.

Efforts for Making Schools Safer in Coastal Areas of India

HFA under one of its priority is trying to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels. For making a community resilient to disaster, the HFA recognises the vital role of school. Under the Sixth DIPECHO Action Plan for South Asia, Concern Worldwide has been facilitating the implementation of a project entitled 'Building Disaster Resilience of Vulnerable Communities in Orissa and West Bengal, India'. SWAD and CYSD from Orissa and Sabuj Sangha from West Bengal are implementing partners and technical support providing by WOSCA, Handicap International and AIDMI. These agencies are putting joint efforts for making schools safer against natural hazards in coastal areas of Orissa and West Bengal states of India. This is a pilot project where partners conduct school safety audits, and capacity building events, develop knowledge products with school stakeholders, developing school disaster



preparedness plans, and apply micro risk reduction actions with school. The dissemination of learning from this pilot project related to school safety is highly emphasised to encourage humanitarian agencies to replicate modified actions for making

schools safer in coastal areas in India and beyond. The school's location in coastal regions are not only vulnerable to multiple hazards but triggering issues related to coastal hazards require special attention and specific risk reduction strategies. ■

The objective of the NSSP is to save lives and prevent injuries in schools by capacity building, awareness generation and reducing the underlying risk in the existing school buildings by conducting hazard risk and safety assessments and strengthening weak structures.² The NSSP is a nationwide step towards achieving priority of action 3 of HFA by making India's school safer. School safety is recognised globally. More and more agencies addressing this issue of various level, one example is provided in above box.

Education for DRR is an interactive process of lateral learning. For better impact of DRR education we should encompass both theory and practical exercises and use traditional wisdom and local knowledge for protection from natural hazards. ■

– Vishal Pathak



Image: AIDMI.

Participants from Orissa and West Bengal are busy in consultation for the finalisation school safety audit tool for coastal areas. Organised by Concern Worldwide India and facilitate by AIDMI.

² Inaugural Address by Shri M. Shashidhar Reddy, Vice Chairman NDMA at Inception Workshop on National School Safety Programme.

Step Up for Disaster Risk Reduction

Momentum towards such a global effort was primarily gathered by children themselves when three young people in this year's Global Platform for DRR (May 2011) told more than 2600 representatives from governments, the private sector and civil society WHY and HOW children can be involved in reducing disaster risk, and keeping themselves and their communities safe. Subsequently they also launched a five-point **Children's Charter for Disaster Risk Reduction**. The Charter highlights following 5 priorities identified through consultations with more than 600 children in 21 countries.

- Schools must be safe - education must be uninterrupted.
- Child protection must be a priority, before, during and after a disaster.
- Children and young people have the right to participate and to access the information they need.



Drawings reflecting children's understanding of disasters and the ways through which communities could be better prepared.

- Community infrastructure must be safe, and relief and reconstruction must help reduce future disaster risk.
- Disaster risk reduction must reach the most vulnerable.

In the month of October 2011, Concern Worldwide India with state agencies celebrated IDDR (International Day for Disaster Reduction) on October 13 and Orissa State Disaster Preparedness Day on October 29. During these days different activities were organised by Sabuj Sangha in West Bengal state and CYSD and SWAD in Orissa states of India.

West Bengal

Sabuj Sangha organised a series of events with children for better understanding on disaster and risk reduction. More than 300 drawings by school children on 'Our Safe School'

'Vulnerability to disaster is growing faster than resilience. DRR should be an everyday concern for everybody. Let us all invest today for safer tomorrow.'

– Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon,
Message for the IDDR.

DISASTER RESPONSE

Local Wisdom a Lifesaver for Kids: Experience from Japan

"I was worried about my house and family, but I ran up to a higher place without thinking," said sixth-grader Hibiki Fujimoto, 12. He said he was with his friends playing in a residential area near the school when the earthquake hit the city.

Kamaishi schools conduct disaster drills to go uphill, teach tsunami velocity calculation methods in math class and discuss tsunami experiences during ethics lessons. The schools also encourage students to look for higher ground where they can evacuate on foot, and include evacuation routes in a disaster management map.

"I've repeatedly told children in class that we might experience tsunami larger than ever expected. It's almost a miracle that this many children were saved. I'm proud of the children for making [lifesaving] decisions on their own.", said by Prof. Toshitaka Katada of Gunma University Graduate School. ■

(Selected quotes from article on Local Wisdom a Lifesaver for Kids from www.yomiuri.co.jp)

and 'Safe Community Environment' were displayed as part of the event which fuelled discussion among the community members for collective actions of environment protection in the state especially for mangrove protection.

Another street play named *Amra o Pari* (we can make it possible) was performed by *NatyaFouz*, a street play group, to create awareness on water and sanitation preparedness at the household and community levels to prevent post-disaster epidemic and disease outbreak. Subsequently a documentary film by the Sunderbans Development Authority on climate change and its impact on the Sunderbans ecosystem was screened to help communities understand the emerging vulnerabilities and the ways through which such vulnerabilities could be addressed through appropriate preparedness measures.

Orissa

Both CYSD and SWAD organised a series of events in rural areas which mostly involved activities among school children like thematic drawing and essay competitions. In

'Initiatives aimed at disaster preparedness are an effective area where government and non-government agencies have been collaborating. We need to further enrich this coordination through many more innovative joint efforts.'

– Mr. Prasanna Kumar Das,
Block Development Officer Satyabadi

total 135 students from different schools participated in these events.

In order to generate interest and engagement among communities on issues of preparedness and effective response, Pala, a traditional folk media was used to spread across the key messages. The Pala team toured four villages and various themes of afforestation, sanitation, cleanliness and post-disaster recovery activities were covered as part of the songs and drama.

Around 100 community members, led by the DRR facilitators at village

level, participated in a cycle Rally which covered around eight villages and markets to finally converge at a village called *Suando*, which is of paramount significance in Orissa. *Suando* is the birth place of the legendary Pandit Gopabandhu Das who, through his sacrifice, unflinching determination and volunteerism served thousands of disaster affected communities in yesteryears.

Concern Worldwide India supported the Orissa state Inter Agency Group (IAG), a coalition of more than twenty one international humanitarian and UN organisations, to organise a Media Interface event to inform the media on issues of disaster preparedness and coordinated action for DRR in a disaster-prone area. Mr. S. N. Patro (minister of Revenue and Disaster Management Department, Government of Orissa) graced the occasion as Chief Guest. Representatives from various organisations emphasised on the role of media in strengthening public participation in DRR issues. ■

– Jyotiraj Patra,
Programme Officer (Advocacy),
Concern Worldwide India



Community members led by DRR facilitators participating in the Cycle Rally aimed at disaster preparedness awareness.

City-level Emergency Management Exercise (EMEx): Towards Making Urban Citizens Safer

Recently in August 2011 the RUNDMT, NDMA and the Government of Tamil Nadu conducted Chennai Emergency Management Exercise (CEMEx) at Chennai with the involvement of more than 29 stakeholders, and reaching out to around 1000 participants across the city. The city-wide exercise was completed with valuable results. The CEMEx effort was built on the prior successful collaborations undertaken by the UNDMT across India, such as the Disaster Training and Drill for Ahmedabad Civil Hospital 2007, the Emergency Medicine Conference

organised by New York-Presbyterian Hospital and Hinduja Hospital (Mumbai 2007), Project Mumbai Voices, under the aegis of National Knowledge Commission of India, University of Mumbai, AIDMI and Harvard Humanitarian Initiative (2006-2008); as well as the 2008 and 2010 Mumbai EMEx.

The educational track of CEMEx was facilitated by AIDMI where roundtable meetings, capacity building events were organised for school, college and university stakeholders. The knowledge products of educational track were

developed according to state contexts, hazards and target audience need; these products were distributed to participants of CEMEx. The products provide useful information to build awareness among school stakeholders.

The EMEx is a powerful way to improve national capacity. Humanitarian agencies across the national level and beyond should be aware and learn from EMEx cases so that urban risk reduction and emergency responses in city and countries can be improved. ■

– Yash Kadam



Image: CEMEx 2011, AIDMI.

KNOWLEDGE PRODUCT

World Disaster Report 2011 Focus on Hunger and Malnutrition

IFRC released the World Disaster Report 2011 on September 22, 2011. This year the report focuses on global issues of hunger and malnutrition and examines the cases and effects of the global food crisis. It sets out how the humanitarian system can better respond to both chronic and acute food insecurity.



Image: Bihar, AIDMI.

Every year some 9 million children across the world die before they reach their fifth birthday, and about one-third of these untimely deaths are attributed to under-nutrition (Black et al., 2008). However, contrary to popular perception, the great majority of malnutrition-related deaths (up to 90 per cent) do not occur during sudden food crises and famines, but as a result of long-term, chronic hunger that gradually depresses or destroys the immune system and leaves children especially vulnerable to diseases that they have difficulty staving off. A child suffering from mild under-nutrition, for example, is twice as likely to die from malaria as a well-nourished child - and the risk of death is nine-fold for a child who is severely undernourished (WHO and UNICEF, 2007).

Web link to download the report www.ifrc.org/PageFiles/89755/Photos/307000-WDR-2011-Final-email-1.pdf

Every learning became an achievement and every achievement became learning for me...



Image: SWAD, 2011

Ms. Subhashree Mohapatra, one of the DRR promoters narrated her learning.

Ms. Subhashree Mohapatra, 19, a young energetic girl with a commitment to serve her fellow people, works as a DRR Promoter in Ketakipatana Gram Panchayat with the Society for Women Action

Development (SWAD), Orissa state of India.

"I have a good rapport with the people of my village as I had worked with SWAD in its many social initiatives as a volunteer. But the concept of DRR was almost new for me. During these three months of my volunteerism, I have learnt a lot as I have undergone trainings on Base Line Survey, Mobile Tracking and HVCA. Beside these theoretical orientations, I developed my understanding and actions by associating myself with the project team in undertaking the tasks like community mobilisation, interaction, group discussion, baseline survey using the PRA tools. In short, I made myself associated with every activity.

The community has a traditional knowledge base on minimisation of disaster risks but the DRR activities in my village made the people conscious about the disaster issues and systematic process of risk reduction. The community is becoming more organised round the issue and very curious of making their village and school disaster resilient in a right-based approach and advocating with local authority.

Implementation process and the orientation workshops gave me the experience of schooling. Each learning became an achievement and every achievement became learning for me. I learnt, used it in work, again learnt and developed myself". ■

– **Subhashree Mohapatra**, DRR Promoter, Ketakipatana Gram Panchayat

I have to learn a lot and so is the community. We have a long way to go...

I am Ms. Sarita Jena, 25, from the village Dubaipur, a hamlet of Alandapada village under Ketakipatana GP of Satyabadi block in Puri District of Orissa state. I joined as a DRR Promoter in early June 2011 with the Society for Women Action & Development.

Prior to such engagement, I have volunteered in many social programmes of SWAD. I had little knowledge on the issue and concepts on DRR. After undergone Trainings on baseline survey, Humanitarian Accountability Partnership, Mobile Tracking and HVCA, I feel myself better equipped with rudimentary knowledge on the basic concepts and issues on DRR. My knowledge base was sharpened by participating in the Baseline Survey Process and mobilising people for meetings and

facilitating the community learning process with DRR practitioners.

Initially, I was feeling reluctant to talk with the community and share the objectives but with the 3 months' learning and ground practicing, I felt myself capable enough to mobilise the community and to lead them towards risk reduction. I was an ordinary girl, but SWAD made me a social volunteer and true DRR facilitator.

From the community point of view, the community had a common knowledge base on disaster risk reduction but they did not have a systematic idea or initiative on the issue. After regular interaction, mobilisation, sharing and orientation, the community is fast developing their attitude on the issue.



Image: SWAD, 2011

Ms. Sarita Jena shared the learnings.

With the baseline study using PRA tools, the community is becoming very conscious and vigilant on their issues with disasters and they are speedily developing a positive attitude to work towards their resilience using a participatory approach. ■

– **Sarita Jena**, DRR Promoter, Alandapada Village

KNOWLEDGE SHARING



Image: IAG Nssp. 2011, AIDMI.

southasiadisasters.net on 'Participatory Hazard, Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment: Practice and Theory' Launched at programme of National School Safety Programme (NSSP) on September 8, 2011. From left to right: Derek Glass, ADRA India; Ms. Sujata Saunik, NDMA; Mr. Chiranjeet Das, Concern Worldwide India; Mr. Sarbjit Singh Sahota, UNICEF India; and Ranjini Mukherjee, UNDP.

Note: June 2011 edition is republished. The article 'Building Disaster Resilience of Vulnerable Communities in Orissa and West Bengal' did not mention the source "orissa diary". The authorship was wrongly attributed. Both mistakes are corrected with due apologies.



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ALL INDIA DISASTER MITIGATION INSTITUTE

411 Sakar Five, Near Natraj Cinema, Ashram Road, Ahmedabad-380 009 India

Tele/Fax: +91-79-2658 2962

E-mail: bestteam@aidmi.org, Website: <http://www.aidmi.org>, www.southasiadisasters.net