

# Children in Urban Space

## Making Child Friendly Cities



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

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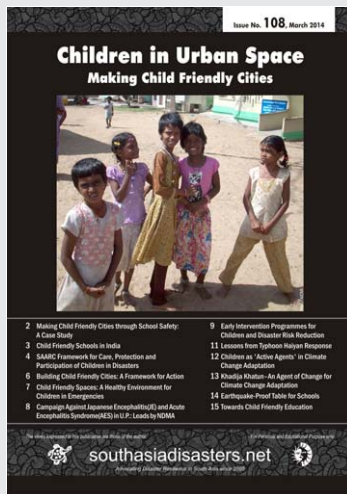


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## ABOUT THIS ISSUE



A Child Friendly City is a system of good local governance committed to the fullest implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>1</sup>. Viewed from the perspective of disaster risk reduction, a child friendly city would invariably involve structures (both institutional and physical) which are resilient and which help children achieve their fullest potential.

This issue of Southasiadisasters.net outlines the key pre-requisites to make a child friendly city by documenting the experiences and expertise of organizations and individuals that have strived towards this ideal. Since many institutions and sectors come under the ambit of a city, therefore an analysis on many institutions and sectors that impact children in urban spaces has been presented in this issue. ■

1 BUILDING CHILD FRIENDLY CITIES: A Framework for Action, <http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/cfc-framework-eng.pdf>

## SCHOOL SAFETY

# Making Child Friendly Cities through School Safety: A Case Study

CHILD'S RIGHT TO SAFER SCHOOLS CAMPAIGN COVERAGE MAP



A potent method to build child friendly cities is to have schools that are safe and resilient. This prerequisite for advancing the rights and interests of children was recognized by the All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI). AIDMI is one of the pioneering non-government organizations in the field of disaster management in India. It is a community-based action planning, research and advocacy organisation, working towards bridging the gap between policy, practice and research related to disaster mitigation.

Since 2001, AIDMI has worked consistently towards making schools safe in India. AIDMI's school safety campaign has brought under its ambit the schools of various districts from 12 states/union territories. In promoting Child's Rights to Safer Schools AIDMI has provided a total of 172 trainings

which covered a total of 2089 Schools and 5549 teachers. Under the Child's Rights to Safer Schools Campaign, school safety audits were also performed on 664 schools across 8 states/ union territories of India.

AIDMI's school safety campaign is geared towards promoting a culture of safety in schools. To achieve this end, it tries to help, inform, persuade and integrate all issues relevant to school safety. The objective of all these efforts is to make schools active stakeholders in building the resilience of the community. The ultimate goal of all these school safety measures is to ensure that children, the future of the country have a safe environment in schools to learn and grow. The above map shows the extent of the reach of AIDMI's school safety campaign<sup>1</sup>. ■

- Kshitij Gupta

1 AIDMI: Ten Years of Making School Safer: Child's Right to Safer Schools Campaign

## Child Friendly Schools in India

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE) enacted in 2010 stipulates the child-friendly quality education as a fundamental right of every child aged 6 to 14 in India. RTE constitutionally mandates every school in India to abide by the guiding principles of child friendly school, creating enabling environment for quality education within a safe environment.

A "Child friendly school" (CFS) is a comprehensive approach to quality education focusing on all needs of the child - health, nutrition, hygiene, well-being and safety. It seeks to actively identify all children, especially the excluded and marginalized, enrol them in schools and help children to stay in school, while supporting their effective learning.

The guiding principles of a "Child Friendly School" are focused around the concepts of child-centeredness, democratic participation and inclusiveness. The *Child-centeredness* concept puts the best interests of all children and their well-being at the centre of all aspects of the school life. Safeguarding the interests of the child must be central to all investments in education and decisions made by all stakeholders (parents, teachers, education administrators and others). The concept of *Democratic participation* advocates for children's participation in all decision making processes. Children's participation and opportunity to express their own views should be non-negotiable and included in the process of negotiating the curriculum, assessing their learning outcomes, the school governance, including: ensuring safe environment free from violence,

decision on school construction and architecture, availability of adequate water, sanitation and hygiene amenities and all other aspects of the school life. The concept further emphasizes that children's parents and community leaders also have important role to play in determining the structure, content and process of education. The concept supports the view that equitable, quality education process within a safe learning environment establishes a vital relationship between children, teachers, communities and parents and such learning environment reflects children's lives within their environment contexts. The concept of *Inclusiveness* emphasizes that all children have a right to education. Schools should be accessible to all, welcoming of all children and encompassing the needs of diverse learners. The concept of inclusiveness prescribes fair, transparent and non-discriminatory rules allowing access to school for all children. It further recommends the development of strategies and measures to address barriers preventing eligible children from the opportunity to actively participate in an equitable education process.

Last but not least, the concept of a Child Friendly School should focus with priority on preventing and reducing the risk from hazards,

*Child Friendly School should focus with priority on preventing and reducing the risk from hazards, climate and environment impacts.*



climate and environment impacts. Children, parents and teachers must be jointly involved in identifying risks to their school environment through periodic risk assessments, develop and regularly update clear plans emphasizing on safe infrastructure, healthy and protective environment, and be involved in regular preparedness efforts through mock drills involving also communities and local authorities. Appropriate capacity of all stakeholders, including children, should be developed through increased awareness on impact of hazards, climate and disasters incorporated in school and teacher training curricula and community awareness measures. Teachers, local authorities and communities should have the knowledge and skills to help reduce the impact of disasters by providing child friendly experiences to affected children, respecting their rights and encouraging their participation, thereby restoring normalcy in children's lives.

The application of child-friendly school concepts and principles in different contexts of India, especially in high risk areas impacted by natural or man-made disasters and climate change variations, lays a pathway for quality education, ensures inclusiveness and gender equity, empowers children and communities and contributes to learning achievement meeting RTE, MDG and Education for All goals. ■

- David McLoughlin,  
UNICEF India

# SAARC Framework for Care, Protection and Participation of Children in Disasters

Children worldwide form the most vulnerable group to the detrimental impacts of disasters. Therefore the growing intensity and frequency of disasters has left children, particularly those belonging to the developing countries exposed to multiple risks. The entire region of South-Asia is composed of developing countries and children constitute 31.5% of its total population.<sup>1</sup> The high vulnerability of South Asia to disasters can be gauged by the fact that the region faced as many as 1333 disasters over the last four decades (1970-2009) that took the lives of 980,000 people, affected 2,413,100 individuals and damaged assets worth US \$105 billion<sup>2</sup>.

The blend of all the aforementioned factors translates into a heady mix of risk and exposure for the children of South Asia who suffer disproportionately from the adverse impacts of disasters. Realizing their precarious condition, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) devised a framework titled *SAARC Framework for Care, Protection and Participation of Children in Disasters*. Developed in collaboration with UNICEF in February 2011, this framework aims to reduce the vulnerability of children of every age and social group by addressing their special needs during disasters.

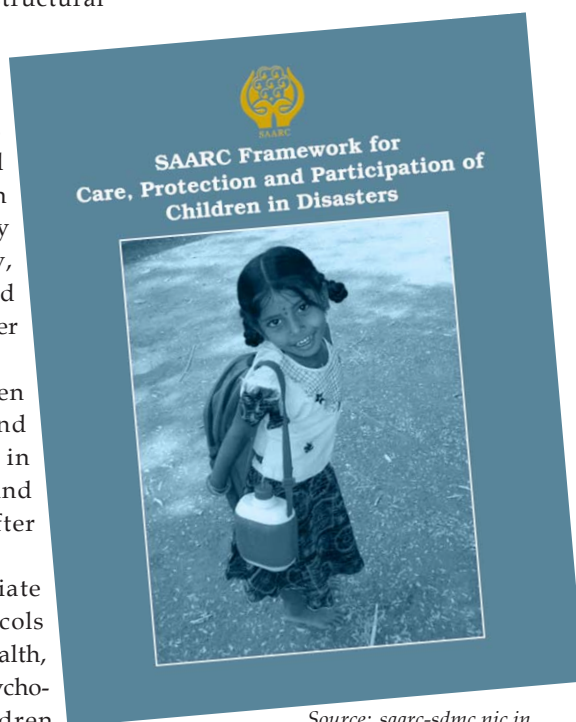
This framework entails elaborate guidelines for national and local governments, international agencies and regional organisations,

humanitarian agencies and social workers to achieve the aforementioned aim. The principle objectives of this framework are<sup>3</sup>:

1. Assess the vulnerabilities of children in different types of hazardous conditions at regular intervals and integrate the findings of these assessments in all relevant plans and programmes for the welfare and development of children.
2. Assess the differential vulnerabilities to children in various age groups with inclusion of disability; and accordingly map the specific needs of children before, during and after disasters.
3. Reduce the impacts of disasters on children through various structural and non-structural measures designed to prevent and mitigate the risks of disasters.
4. Mainstream the issues of survival, care and protection of children in every regional, country and local level policy, strategy, plan and programme of disaster risk reduction.
5. Highlight the children specific needs and requirements in evacuation, search and rescue operations after disasters.
6. Develop appropriate standards and protocols for addressing the health, mental health and psycho-social needs of children

affected by disasters and other emergencies.

7. Ensure that disasters do not disrupt and deprive children of essential food and nutrition.
8. Ensure that relief camps and other temporary shelters set up after disasters have adequate provisions for water, sanitation, education and recreation of children.
9. Ensure that protection mechanisms available under the legal systems are enforced to prevent crime against children affected by disasters.
10. Assess the safety of school buildings from the risks of earthquake, cyclone, flood and other hazards and retrofit them with resilient features to protect



Source: saarc-sdmc.nic.in

1 Facts on Children in South Asia

2 [http://www.unicef.org/rosa/FactsonChildren\\_ROSA-website.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/rosa/FactsonChildren_ROSA-website.pdf)

3 SAARC Framework for Care, Protection and Participation of Children in Disasters, <http://saarc-sdmc.nic.in/pdf/Publications/SAARC%20Framework.PDF>

children from fatalities and injuries during disasters.

11. Provide opportunities for adolescents to take part in management and decision making on matters affecting their own interests and those of their communities, as young teens have the energy, enthusiasm, idealism, vision and honesty that can add value to disaster management efforts and initiatives.

The underpinning principles of this framework are based on the core principles of the Convention on the Rights of Children. Based on these principles, objectives and vision the following priorities of action have been identified<sup>4</sup>:

1. Assessing the vulnerabilities of children to disasters.
2. Evacuation, search and rescue of children in disasters.
3. Food security and nutrition for children.
4. Water, sanitation and hygiene facilities for children.
5. Emergency medical care and health services for children.
6. Mental health services and psychosocial support for children.
7. Reconstructing built environment for children.
8. Child protection in disasters.
9. Education in emergencies and school safety for children.
10. Participation of children in disaster management.

These priorities of action have been ably supplemented with a regional road map for implementation by national governments. This road map for implementation consists of specific guidelines and actions apropos every priority of action. With its elaborate scope and reach, this framework has become a potent tool to pursue the imperative of building up the resilience of children to disasters in South Asia. ■

- Kshitij Gupta

<sup>4</sup> ibid.

#### DISASTER RESPONSE

## Save the Children and Cyclone Phailin Recovery

In October 2013, Cyclone Phailin struck the coast of the Indian states of Andhra Pradesh and Odisha. The superb preparedness and mass evacuation exercises of the local administrations in the aforementioned states ensured that the number of casualties was limited to 36. However, astronomical economic losses in the wake of the cyclone could not be averted. Given these economic losses, the Odisha government has already asked the Union government for a financial assistance of Rs. 42,000 crore for relief and recovery process.

Save the Children, which had been implementing disaster preparedness programmes in Odisha since 2007 collaborated with the government to facilitate the relief and rehabilitation process after Cyclone Phailin. For, in the immediate aftermath of the cyclone, Save the Children launched an initial appeal for INR 21 crore (US\$ 3.5 mn) to support the government – while working with NGO partners – to provide timely relief to those affected by Cyclone Phailin.

Save the Children also swung into action by giving invaluable assistance to the government and other stakeholders to quickly assess the needs of children in the aftermath of the cyclone. As a result of the various initiatives of Save the Children and collaborating partners, ostensible positive change has been observed in the form of the emergence of shelters (for floods/cyclones), increased awareness of the affected communities, etc. All these efforts will have a profound impact on the children of the affected states, who constitute 40 percent of the state's population and those of the affected families. ■

(Source: Save the Children to raise Rs 21 cr for cyclone relief, <http://odishasuntimes.com/10880/save-the-children-to-raise-rs-21-cr-for-cyclone-relief>)

## EU's Work in Phailin

As a first step, ECHO started by responding to a funding appeal from the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) by providing over ₹ 81 lakhs (€96,748) to support the urgent needs of 15,000 affected families. In the meantime, comprehensive needs assessments by ECHO and its NGO partners in the cyclone and flood-ravaged areas revealed that marginalised communities, especially daily wage labourers and fishermen, were the worst hit. ECHO then allocated a further €3 million to address immediate and early recovery needs of these most vulnerable families.

(Source: taken from *Southasiadisasters.net* issue no. 106, page 2.)

# Building Child Friendly Cities: A Framework for Action

In order to put children at the centre of urban development, the Child Friendly Cities Initiative (CFCI) was launched by the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN Habitat) in 1996. The purpose of this initiative is to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child at the level where it can have the greatest impact on children's life. Out of this emerged the concept of a 'Child Friendly City' which stands for a system of local governance where children's rights are addressed and reflected in policies, laws, programmes and budgets.

Building a Child Friendly City refers to the implementation of the Convention on the rights of Child. UNICEF has devised a framework for action that translates the process of implementing the aforementioned Convention by national governments into a local government process. Through this framework for action, the special needs of children are sought to be addressed. In fact, this framework can be viewed as a strategy for children to achieve their fullest potential.

The Child Friendly Cities Framework is based on the following nine principles of the Convention on the rights of the Child:<sup>1</sup>

1. **Children's participation:** promoting children's active involvement in issues that affect them; listening to their views and taking them into consideration in decision-making processes.
2. **A child friendly legal framework:** ensuring legislation, regulatory frameworks and procedures which consistently promote and

3. **A city-wide Children's Rights Strategy:** developing a detailed, comprehensive strategy or agenda for building a Child Friendly City, based on the Convention.
4. **A Children's Rights Unit or coordinating mechanism:** developing permanent structures in local government to ensure priority consideration of children's perspective.
5. **Child impact assessment and evaluation:** ensuring that there is a systematic process to assess the impact of law, policy and practice on children – in advance, during and after implementation.
6. **A children's budget:** ensuring adequate resource commitment and budget analysis for children.
7. **A regular State of the City's Children Report:** ensuring sufficient monitoring and data collection on the state of children and their rights.
8. **Making children's rights known:** ensuring awareness of children's rights among adults and children.
9. **Independent advocacy for children:** supporting non-governmental organisations and developing independent human rights institutions – children's ombudsperson or commissioners for children – to promote children's rights.

The foundations for building a Child Friendly City are the following four key principles of the Convention:<sup>2</sup>

1. **Non-discrimination (article 2)**  
A Child Friendly City is friendly and inclusive for *all* children. So it needs to seek out and give

special attention to any children who are suffering discrimination in access to their rights.

2. **Best interests (article 3)**  
A Child Friendly City ensures that the best interests of the child are a primary consideration "in all actions concerning children".
3. **Every child's right to life and maximum development (article 6)**  
Child Friendly City seeks to maximise the survival and development of all its children – providing the optimal conditions for childhood, for the child's life *now*. And "development" in the context of the Convention means children's physical, mental, spiritual, moral, psychological and social development.
4. **Listening to children and respecting their views (article 12)**  
Children are seen *and* heard in a Child Friendly City. Their active participation as citizens and rights-holders is promoted, ensuring them the freedom to express their views on "all matters affecting them" and making sure that their views are taken seriously – in government, in their neighbourhoods and schools and in their families.

It should be borne in mind that this framework is not a standard model which needs to be implemented according to a uniform protocol. It is a framework that seeks to implement the Convention on the rights of the Child. Through this framework big cities, medium-sized towns as well as small rural communities can plan a concerted strategy to make themselves a better place for their children. ■

– Kshitij Gupta

1 Building Child Friendly Cities: A Framework for Action, [www.unicef-irc.org/publications/416](http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/416)

2 *ibid.*

# Child Friendly Spaces: A Healthy Environment for Children in Emergencies

Child welfare has been a crosscutting theme in the global humanitarian endeavour. It is now accepted as conventional wisdom that children are most vulnerable to the adverse impacts of emergencies and disasters. Consequently, the United Nations Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF) has instituted the concept of a 'Child Friendly Space' to provide children with a safe and healthy environment during emergencies and disasters. The concept of a Child Friendly Space (CFS) can be used in emergencies as a first response to children's needs and an entry point for working with affected communities.

Aimed at championing children's right to protection, psychological well-being and formal education, the specific objectives of Child Friendly Spaces are as follows<sup>1</sup>:

1. Mobilize communities around the protection and well-being of all children, including highly vulnerable children;
2. Provide opportunities for children to play, acquire contextually relevant skills, and receive social support;
3. Offer inter-sectoral support for all children in the realization of their rights

In addition to the aforementioned aims, Child Friendly Spaces can be put to a variety of uses such as reviving formal education and supporting national education systems, child protection and early child development, stimulating efforts on disaster preparedness and



Photo: AIDMI.

disaster risk reduction. Given the importance of the concept of Child Friendly Spaces, UNICEF has established certain principles and actions that can help the governments, humanitarian agencies and associated entities to establish child friendly spaces. The needs, interests and capacities of all stakeholders have been addressed in these principles. They are discussed as follows<sup>2</sup>:

## Principles

Child Friendly Spaces are based on the following principles:

1. Take a coordinated, inter-agency, and multi-sectoral approach
2. Use CFSs as a means of mobilizing the community
3. Make CFSs highly inclusive and non-discriminatory
4. Ensure that CFSs are safe and secure
5. Make CFSs stimulating, participatory, and supportive environments

## Actions

The above principles need to be supplemented by the following actions for building Child Friendly Spaces:

1. Conduct an assessment
2. Organize integrated supports and services
3. Provide ongoing training and follow-up support for animators and staff
4. Monitor and evaluate CFS programs
5. Phase out or transition in a contextually appropriate manner

Essentially, the concept of Child Friendly Spaces is a corollary to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. These guidelines for building Child Friendly Spaces should always be employed after aligning them to the context in which they are applied. This would make their application more topical and would render the overall intervention more effective. ■

- AIDMI Team

1 Guidelines For Child Friendly Spaces in Emergencies, [http://www.unicef.org/protection/Child\\_Friendly\\_Spaces\\_Guidelines\\_for\\_Field\\_Testing.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/protection/Child_Friendly_Spaces_Guidelines_for_Field_Testing.pdf)

2 Ibid.

# Campaign Against Japanese Encephalitis(JE) and Acute Encephalitis Syndrome(AES) in U.P.: NDMA Leads

The most populated State of the country, Uttar Pradesh (UP), was affected by severe health problems, leading to hundreds of deaths reported in recent past, especially in Eastern UP, Gorakhpur region, due to Acute Encephalitis Syndrome (AES) and Japanese Encephalitis (JE). For instance, Uttar Pradesh alone has registered about 70 to 80 percent of total JE/AES cases and deaths of the country, in recent years. Moreover, the Gorakhpur subdivision alone has evolved as most concentrated pocket of the above epidemic with coverage of around 50% of total reported cases and deaths of the State.

AES is defined as the acute onset of fever and a change in mental status (including the symptoms such as confusion, disorientation, coma or inability to talk). Thus Meningitis, Encephalitis, including Japanese Encephalitis, Cerebral Malaria and Encephalopathy are classified as AES. It is generally transmitted through the contaminated water.

Japanese Encephalitis (JE) is caused by a virus and is transmitted through mosquitoes. The main reservoirs of the JE virus are pigs and water birds and in its natural cycle, virus is maintained in these animals. Children below 15 years are mostly affected by JE. As a natural corollary, JE epidemic outbreaks with enhanced breeding of mosquitoes at the onset of monsoons.

The National Disaster Management Authority

(NDMA), Govt. of India addressed the above pertinent issue of alarming health diseases on high priority. For the Prevention and Control of JE / AES in Uttar Pradesh, NDMA organized the first workshop on social mobilization for Master Trainers at Gorakhpur in November 2011. The participants were sensitized about the personal hygiene, water and food safety, protection against mosquitoes, disease surveillance, vaccination etc. Afterwards, Trainings of Master Trainers (TOTs) were conducted at all District Headquarters of Eastern UP. Later on, the master trainers conducted the training on Block level facilitation for Health workers / Anganwadi Workers/NGOs etc. This was followed by the household visits for

creating awareness amongst the community for prevention and control of JE/AES. NDMA is supporting the State to facilitate trainings related with capacity building of health staff at various levels with respect to JE/AES. The social mobilization has made it massive public awareness.

NDMA also created relevant IEC material in the form of posters, leaflets and pamphlets, capturing vital information on dos' and don'ts related to preventing and controlling JE/AES to generate the awareness and sensitization at the community level. The awareness material was sent to the different districts and was disseminated on the ground by local health machinery.

Apart from it, NDMA raised the matter with MoHFW/ PMO expressing concern of the problem/ disease. The Prime Minister constituted a Group of Ministers (GoMs) to suggest measures /recommendations for national programme on prevention and control of JE and AES. On the recommendations of GoMs, various concerned Ministries such as Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Women and Child Development, Rural Development, Water and Sanitation etc, have rolled out a combined combat against the above disaster, in the form of national programme for Control and Prevention of JE and AES in 5 States, 60 Districts with a cost of more than Rs. 4000 Cr. in 12th Five Year Plan. ■

- Dr. Muzaffar Ahmad, Member, NDMA, Govt of India



Do's and Don'ts Poster of JE and AES.



# Early Intervention Programmes for Children and Disaster Risk Reduction

One of the so called successes of the United States of America in decrease of young children disability and its related disaster risk reduction (DDR) is introduction of Early Intervention Program Services.

Early intervention programmes (EIP) in the United States were established in 1986 as part of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in recognition of "an urgent and substantial need" to enhance the development of young children with disabilities, decrease educational expenses by minimizing the need for special education and enhance the capacity of families to meet their children's needs. Currently, all states and territories of United States are participating in this service. The National Early Intervention Longitudinal Study (NEILS) documented family perspectives on services (Bailey, Scarborough, Hebbeler, Spiker, & Mallik, 2004). Data were collected in telephonic interviews with 2,600 primary caregivers and questions were asked to families on child services. Nearly 91% rated EIP services excellent services for child services. 75% reported EIP had a lot of impact on their child's overall development.

Hence, Early Intervention has been growing at a very fast rate through much of its efforts are designed to identify on its five developmental areas including: physical development, cognitive development, communication, social or emotional development, and adaptive development.

One of the major reasons for an increase in EIP Services has been its uses and disclosures:

- It's a service that is confidential, protects family educational rights and privacy acts.



Aarika with her mother at home, Pennsylvania, USA.

- Parents have the right to accept or decline any proposed services and activities
- Parents are informed about screening and evaluation procedure of their child to determine the eligibility for EIP by service coordinator.
- Specific learning skills activities carried out by health care professionals (occupational therapist).

When families and children act fast and get services it is but natural that they will show remarkable sign of improvement, this has led to substantial increase in EIP services over the last few years. EIP services are broadly described into three services to families:

- Family training , counseling and home visits( child visit therapist are utilized more frequently than family oriented services)
- Social work service
- Care

The case study clearly provided an excellent example of why Early Intervention for children with DDR

is effective," sometimes bad things happen" we fail to understand that their child adequately distinguish between fantasy and reality, a deficit that can later increase the risk of disability. In fact this is the punchline of my beautiful girl, a wonderful but heartbreaking account of her birth. (The moral of the story Learn the Signs. Act Early) - Aarika (infant), my only daughter was born on 21st September 2013. My baby was declared a preemie and being a new mother, who was diagnosed with HELLP syndrome later postpartum depression ...was notified by my daughter's pediatrician that this mother (Monika) needs assistance. On 3rd week of November, I received a call from "Early Intervention, "; "Hello, I am Carry! Center county services coordinator and would like to talk about our services... She explained in rush about Early Intervention and its related services... EI works best when it is part of family's daily routine and activities...occurring in the context of family's everyday life. When families identify the routines and activities that their child enjoys or has difficulties with, early intervention has a natural context in which to work. We know this approach is the most effective way to promote yours child's development."

I accepted their services and now every week, at our convenient time, professional therapist visit home, they would first set up a milestone for a month and later teach new skills every week. Example; I chose Infant massage at first month, Aarika's occupational therapist would come every week and teach different strokes of Asian and Swedish massage and what is good for infants colic /gas relief, gentle arms, chest, cross legs, face and back movements. Our current milestone is positioning, playing with toys and reaching.

At better resources, new developmental skills activities, parents participation and community help has resulted in achieving its milestone. Over the last few years EIP is rising because of its best resources:

- Address parent involvement, including the parents right to be involved in decision making regarding their child .There are also resources to help EI systems promote the active involvement of families at either the organizational or individual levels.
- A Child Becomes A Reader: Birth Through Preschool. This free publication from the U.S Department of Education includes ideas about how parents can help their child become a reader when they talk, play, and read together. It is specifically written for parents with children with DDR of preschool age or younger.
- Learn the Signs. Act Early. On this website, you can view or download the various materials for the "Learn the Signs. Act Early." Campaign designed for parents and health care professionals.
- An Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) documents and guides the early intervention process for children with disabilities and their families. It contains information about the services necessary to facilitate a child's development and enhance the family's capacity to facilitate the child's development.

What this tells us is that Early Intervention is excellent for expectant, new mother's. Positive experiences with family-centered EIP services, including delivery of services in the home, family involvement in the EI process, and social supports and resources met family needs. I have indicated preference for nonjudgmental, sincere, caring, creative, supportive, and responsive EIP service providers. This intervention is embedded within activities and routines, family or community participation and how strategies are used. The outcome is addressed with direct teaching,



Aarika with her therapist learning to play with toys at home, Pennsylvania, USA.

demonstration, guided practice/ feedback, caregiver practice/ feedback, problem solving, reflection and others. EIP can assist families in finding and linking to a variety of community services and supports.

This EIP is effectively working; those who are evaluated and eligible are getting short term measures of medical and education benefits. Early development demonstrate that children with DDR who participate in these EIP tend to be more successful in later school, outcomes to long term measures of improved school achievement and family quality of life.

As of 2006, more than 6 million children with DDR in the U.S. receive special education services through IDEA<sup>[1]</sup>. In addition to higher intelligence scores, timelier school enrollment, lower dropout rates and higher school completion rates has resulted in increased earnings through increased schooling participation. EIP are associated with reduced criminality and reduced welfare utilization as an adult. The long-term impact of early interventions dramatically influences their cost-effectiveness. The "High/Scope Perry Preschool Project" is estimated to have saved US\$7.16 for every US\$1.00 invested due to savings in lower education and welfare expenditures combined with gains in productivity over time (Schweinhart et al. 1993).

The challenges are great. So is the need. The recommendation presented will not be achieved quickly. Nor the

needs met easily. An advice offered by legendry basketball coach, John Wooden from University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), is pertinent: " *When you are improving a little each day, eventually big things occur, not tomorrow, not the next day, but eventually a big game is made. Don't look for the big, quick improvement. Seek the small improvement one day at a time. That's the only way it happens -and when it happens, it lasts*". (Wooden, 1997.p.143) ...And this reason has in turn pushed up early intervention to large extent.

It is possible to add, delete and refine recommendation until this calibration reached to a common consensus. Many obstacles prevail around disability programmes in developing countries such as social stigma, pessimism and a consequent failure to invest. We need to take more responsibility towards recognizing the importance of public health. We need to emphasize broadly on mobilizing community support to focus on investment. A bigger step would be biggest relief for families and their children with DDR would be facilitating home visits by health professionals.

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- **Monika Jaryal**,  
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# Lessons from Typhoon Haiyan Response

This short article is based on a paper titled as "Key Lessons to Learn for Typhoon Haiyan Response (November 2013), by Save the Children's Humanitarian Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) Working Group to improve humanitarian response to Typhoon Haiyan in Philippines.

The full paper is a short synthesis of the consolidated lessons identified in several recent key Save the Children and external reports from previous responses that are likely to apply to the response to typhoon Haiyan. The lessons identified in the paper are also relevant to cyclone Phailin response in India. This article is only a summary and readers are encouraged to read the full paper<sup>1</sup>.

1. International response must systematically work with existing national capacities and response coordination mechanisms (IA RTE Cyclone Kestana; Tsunami Evaluation Coalition Synthesis Response; ALNAP Flood Disasters).
2. The affected community must be able to hold responders to account and 'own' the response (Tsunami Evaluation Coalition Synthesis Report; ALNAP Urban Disasters).
3. Quality of the response is key - it must conform to the needs of the affected population (Tsunami Evaluation Coalition Synthesis Report, 2007).
4. Needs assessment strategies and data should be shared and coordinated (Inter-Agency RTE Cyclone Kestana; ALNAP Flood Disasters).
5. Targeting must be flexible enough to adapt to different phases and complexities (ALNAP Flood Disasters; ALNAP Urban Disasters).
6. Ensure children's needs are not overlooked by the broader



A boy surveys the sea of destroyed houses close to the shoreline in Tacloban, Leyte island, the Philippines, days after the town was smashed by a super typhoon Nov. 8, 2013. (Photo: Calum MacLeod, USA TODAY)

- response (SC's role in Disaster Management in High and Middle-Income Countries; ALNAP Urban Disasters).
7. Quick and effective recovery depends significantly on how quickly livelihoods are restored (ALNAP Flood Disasters; ALNAP Urban Disasters).
8. The number of cases of communicable diseases will often rise after a disaster, particularly where there is wide-scale displacement (ALNAP Flood Disasters; ALNAP Urban Disasters).
9. Shelter is necessary to provide security and personal safety, protect from the climate and enhance resistance to ill health and disease (ALNAP Flood Disasters, ALNAP Urban Disasters).
10. The importance of not conflating evacuees with IDPs, and evacuation centres with IDP camps is crucial (URD Humanitarian Action in Urban Settings).
11. Use new and existing media for better communication, information gathering and accountability (ALNAP Urban disasters).

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- Mehul Pandya

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# Children as 'Active Agents' in Climate Change Adaptation

**Abstract:** Most of the climate change impacts in Bangladesh are likely to come from the south – that is, the Bay of Bengal and the adjoining North Indian Ocean. These waters are the sources of tropical cyclones and storm surges, coastal erosion, monsoon winds, evaporation for monsoon rainfall, floods, and droughts. Climate change affects children severely. Children are at a greater risk of injuries, death, displacement, loss of caregivers and post-traumatic stress due to climate change. As well, climate change threatens children's development through the decreased access to food, water, health care and education; increased exposure to abuse and violence; and increased prevalence of vector-borne diseases and acute respiratory infections. Though impact of climate change on children is severe and diverse, climate change assessment and adaptation plans rarely consider children's vulnerabilities or their specific needs and priorities. But it is imperative to include children's perspective and integrate children's specific needs and priorities through a child

centered approach that recognizes the role and rights of children as citizens and agents for changes in climate change adaptation policies and plans as the population of the children comprises about half of the population of Bangladesh. Save the Children International (SCI) strongly believes that addressing climate change induced risks, consequences and the underlying causes can reduce the impact of climate change on children's survival, development and protection, particularly when children themselves are at the centre of that effort.

There are scattered interventions from government and non-government agencies to bring resilience from the impacts of climate change. Still there is a gap of having a concerted effort to address the climatic vulnerabilities. Children are merely seen as passive victims of climatic disaster and their potentiality to bring resilience is never explored.

Today's children are tomorrow's leaders and can play vital role to bring broader community resilience.

In SCI, climate change and disaster risk reduction projects children have been demonstrating strong potential as *agents of change* and DRR and CCA projects are benefitted from increased child participation. At the same time, community people appreciated the systematic analysis of community's risk and resources presented by children. Still children's participation in CCA debates is limited and children's rights to adaptation assistance are poorly understood. The major lessons of existing projects that involved children are that

- Children act as identifiers, analyzers and planners of risk reduction and can bring innovative approaches to raise awareness for a resilient community.
- Communities appreciate the roles of children, especially in presenting the risk reduction action plan in a structured way that benefit not only children themselves but also the wider community. ■

– Syed Matiul Ahsan,

Senior Manager-DRR & CCA,  
Save the Children in Bangladesh

## Child facilitated interventions



Exploring adaptation by children.



Risk assessment by children.

## Khadija Khatun—An Agent of Change for Climate Change Adaptation

Pirojpur district is one of the coastal districts of Bangladesh, and one of the most vulnerable to climate change impacts such as salinity, tidal surges and tropical cyclones. The community people are exposed to climatic hazards and have been experiencing difficulty in seasonal variations resulting in health hazards and cultivation since the tidal surges frequently inundate their land. In fact the community's people feel that the timing and level of water changes and they fail to predict so they have to raise their plinth and even sometimes shift their houses, lose their land and expected staple food production which hampers their usual food intake. People of this area have been living here for many years and coping with the tidal surge and cyclone but in the recent changing scenario nothing works for him to mitigate the loss. As a result people have problems in access to food, nutrition, communication, health, water and sanitation. Children are not exempted in sufferings and they experience trouble as often they have to postpone their education, lose their play ground and be compelled to work to support their families.

Khadija Khatun, a 15 year old girl is from this district and also witnesses

the sufferings of the community. Her father's name is Kalam Sheikh and mother is Asia Begum and has four sisters and one brother. She is the youngest of the family but is enthusiastic and has shown her voice through different ways. Being a member of the child club of UDDIPAN—a local NGO, she came to learn about the fact of this changing scenario. UDDIPAN has been implementing a "Child Centered Climate Change Adaptation" supported by Save the Children. UDDIPAN has six child clubs in this area and from where orientation and training sessions on climate change adaptation are provided to children and adolescents. Khadija is one of the members of a child club and has been participating in school awareness rising session, climate vulnerability capacity assessment (CVCA) training. She took part in conducting CVCA in her community and identified the climatic vulnerabilities and risks and potential adaptive measures. In addition, Khadija has become a good mobilizer in her community and has been able to make her friends, neighbors and caregivers sensitized to climate change impacts and the need for being respondents to the climate change impact. Khadija and her friends understand the reasons of



the changing trends of diseases and the sufferings from extreme heat during summer. They also feel that due to lack of understanding of protecting the environment and nature the sufferings become double fold. The children identified all the changing trends during the CVCA and the seasonal calendar for diseases and hazards. The children not only identified the sufferings of the children and they also identified the sufferings of the community due to untimely rain or increase level of water during tidal surge and other things. The community people have been participating in court yard sessions facilitated by Khadija. She facilitated the community to find out the probable impact of climate change in different sectors of the community. The community could realize the causes of the changing of time, frequency and level of water of the tidal surges and cyclones and at the same time identified the most vulnerable areas. The community also provided information about children's health education, nutrition.



Bandhu Chula set up in a house.



Presenting their idea in the training.

UDDIPAN facilitated the community to initiate adaptations measures like using *Bondhu Chula*– an environment friendly improved stove which emits less smoke, raising their homestead to protect from inundation, vegetable cultivation in alternative methods, rearing duck, adapt with alternative drinking water option, making health adaptation plan of their children. The community observed these alternative options and some of them started using the *Bondhu cula* with their own interest and willingly attended various activities of "Child Centered Climate Change Adaption" project like courtyard session, day observation, TFD and practice the adaptive measures. The community has become aware of the seasonal variations and has learned to make compost using organic fertilizer instead of chemical fertilizers for their crops.

Khadija's dreams to sensitize the whole community is taking part in *Theatre for Development (TFD)* – a popular way for mass awareness. She and her friends are taking part in observance of World Environment Day, Disaster Risk Reduction Day, National Disaster Preparedness Day,

where she has been playing a vital role for disseminating messages on climate change and climate change adaptation to her friends, community and mass people. She also takes part in sharing the findings of CVCA to local government departments such as agriculture, fisheries, livelihood in discussion meetings. The local union (lowest tier of government structure) disaster management committee (UDMC) showed their eagerness to incorporate some of the findings of the CVCA. Even the UDMC extended their support to repair one of the connecting roads to a school, which was identified in the CVCA.

UDDIPAN encourages the community to set up demonstration plots to show how to cultivate alternatively to adapt with the salinity and tidal surge. Khadija is very happy to take part in the interventions and says "more children should be a part of child centered climate change adaptation initiatives and we should take more steps to make the caregivers responsive to this, so that we could have better living conditions and could adapt with the climate change impact". Khadija has become an icon to other

children and the community and there are increased demands from the children and community to arrange more school sessions and courtyard sessions to disseminate messages on climate change.

The community appreciated other child friendly events such as competition among the students to write an essay on climate change, drawing and the TFD shows. Rebecca Khatun, one of the community members, who has received orientation and support from the project, says "we are motivated by Khadija and trying to adapt environment friendly measures like *Bondhu Chula*. The burner is really very good as it consumes less fuel than normal ones, generating less smoke and our children are getting a smoke free environment. We received orientation on the child centered climate change adaptation and we would like to be a part of this which is not only beneficial to children but also for the whole community." ■

– Syed Matiul Ahsan,

Senior Manager,  
DRR and CCA,

Save the Children in Bangladesh

## SCHOOL SAFETY

### Earthquake-Proof Table for Schools



(Source: <http://www.design4disaster.org/2012/07/23/earthquake-proof-table-for-schools/>)

The Earthquake-Proof Table provides protection during a collapse and creates passageways for escape or rescue. The table is lightweight and made from inexpensive materials.

Most schools are not built to withstand an earthquake. The Earthquake-Proof Table provides a solution for protection without accruing the cost of earthquake-proofing an entire building.

This simple and effective design has the potential to save millions of lives from earthquake and collapse.

The patent pending design has sustained many tests and is awaiting final approval from the Structural Engineering Program of Padua University, Italy. ■

# Towards Child Friendly Education

Due to their unique stage of mental and physical development, children as a group are most exposed to the detrimental impacts of disasters<sup>1</sup>. The risks faced by children during disasters are multifarious. From risks to physical safety to risks to psychological stability, disasters can be major impediments to the overall development of children. The detrimental impact of disasters on children is further compounded by the disruption of education caused by disasters. For instance, a review conducted by the World Bank on the impact of disasters on human capital shows that household income typically falls after a disaster, especially for already poor households; the effects of reduced household expenditure included a decline in investments in children's education<sup>2</sup>. Since education is the most potent instrument through which children's futures can be secured, therefore, concerted efforts need to be made to make schools truly resilient to disasters.

Since children spend a majority of their time at schools, therefore any effort to make a child friendly city should necessarily be entwined with promotion of school safety. The All India Disaster Mitigation has acknowledged the need to promote school safety for building a child friendly city. Through years of experience in the field, AIDMI has the following action points to build a safer education and in turn a child friendly city:

## 1. Integration of School Safety with other associated child welfare programmes of the Government

An inescapable observation of AIDMI has been the silo mentality ailing those working in the field of disaster risk reduction and school safety campaign. This is basically a problem of perceiving school safety as a disparate entity with no connection to various associated aspects of child welfare such as food security for children, education security, etc. What is required is a revolutionary inter-sectoral mentality which sees school safety not as an independent silo but as a compartment in the long train of child welfare measures. Consequently, there needs to be greater integration of school safety campaign with other associated child welfare schemes of the government such as Mid-Day Meal Scheme, Integrated Child Development Scheme, Integrated Child Protection Scheme, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Operation Blackboard, Integrated Programme for Street Children, Right to Education, etc.

## 2. The Issue of Sustainability

One of the most important issue to be dealt with when striving for a child friendly city is that of sustainability. Sustainability implies the continued commitment to a project or a programme when the agency responsible for the inception of that programme or project has withdrawn. This is necessary because it has been invariably observed that whenever the starting agency withdraws the enthusiasm of the other stakeholders wanes and the project or the programme ends

without achieving its stated purpose.

To preclude such a possibility from the campaign for child friendly cities, there needs to be organized regularly from time to time a convention of all stakeholders who have a stake in building up the resilience of children. Through these conventions these stakeholders will be able to disseminate information and share ideas about building the resilience of children.

## 3. Mandatory School Safety Audits

School safety audits are an integral part of AIDMI's school safety campaign. However, it must be recommended that school safety audits be institutionalized throughout the schools of the country. Essentially, these audits serve two important purposes. The first purpose they serve is that of ensuring adherence to highest safety norms while building schools and the present ones are structurally sound with all the required safety equipment. The second purpose served by these school safety audits is that they reveal the level of awareness among teachers about disaster related information. Thirdly, these audits are also helpful in the identification of important non-structural mitigation measures to be taken by the schools.

## 4. District wide School Safety Plan

Hitherto there have only been school specific school disaster management plans. This implies that certain schools were selected from a district to be imparted

1 UNICEF, 2007: 6

2 Baez et al., 2010: 8

training on school safety. However, such an approach falls terribly short in achieving the ideal of building child friendly cities because a lot of schools in the district have not been included in this exercise. Thus, to redress this wrong, it is strongly recommended that there should be a district wise disaster management plan, i.e. one where all the schools of the district are brought under the rubric of the school safety campaign. In fact, the district wide school safety plan should be an integral part of the District Disaster Management Planning process.



Photo: AIDMI.

PBGHS Civil Defence Training in Assam.

#### 5. A Platform for Children

It is indeed quite ironic that generally the voices of children are excluded in making decisions that pertain to building resilient and child friendly cities. Since this effort is aimed at benefitting the children, therefore it is imperative to include them in their formulation and appraisal. With this end in view, there needs to be a platform for children to make their voices heard in campaign to make schools safer.

#### 6. Disaster Risk Reduction in Curriculum

A potent way of making child friendly cities is to institutionalize school safety. In order to make the school safety campaign more robust and sustainable, there needs to be the inclusion of disaster risk reduction in the curriculum of the schools at various levels. While similar initiatives have taken place before, the lack of proper will in implementation saw these intentions coming to naught. Thus,

not only is there a need of a strong advocacy for the inclusion and integration disaster risk reduction in the school curriculum but also of the need for more effective and systematic implementation of any such policy. It should be noted that any inclusion of DRR in school and college curriculum should inherently be gender sensitive, i.e. one that promotes the participation and addresses the needs of girls and women. ■

- Vandana Chauhan and  
Kshitij Gupta

Do you wish to receive this publication regularly? Write to AIDMI (bestteam@aidmi.org). The publication will be sent by E-mail. Your comments help *southasiadisasters.net* remain an effective and informative resource for regional issues of disaster risk management. Please contribute comments, features, reports, discussion points, and essays about your work. Today!

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