

How does APELL operate?

By engaging all stakeholders* in a process of structured dialogue and coordination, APELL's safe-school approach leads to the development of a preparedness plan for the school that can be incorporated into the overall community response plan. Implementing the process not only develops the plan, it also fosters awareness raising and feedback within the school and the surrounding community.

Involving the community in emergency prevention, preparedness and response is central to the APELL process. Community involvement in disaster planning has been used successfully in many places worldwide and many countries, communities and industries have used APELL and APELL-like processes to address local hazards.

* Stakeholders in a school means participants representing different groups, namely, teachers, students, student's parents, builders and local construction companies; emergency services, local authorities, local industry, international agencies on site, hospital representatives, media services, etc

UNEP and UNESCO

The mission of the **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)** in the field of disaster reduction is to address the immediate and long term human, social, health, economic and environmental impacts of natural and human-induced disasters, minimizing the resulting environmental emergencies that they cause. UNEP's approach is to promote disaster management to reduce vulnerability and enhance coping-mechanisms through capacity building, and activities in the field of early warning and assessment, prevention and preparedness, emergency response mechanisms, post-disaster assessment and post-conflict assessment, and environmental rehabilitation.

UNESCO is the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization**. UNESCO's aims in the field of natural disasters are: to promote a better understanding of the distribution in time and space of natural hazards and of their intensity; to help set up reliable early warning systems; to support rational land use plans; to encourage the adoption of suitable building designs; to promote the protection of educational buildings and cultural monuments; to enhance preparedness and public awareness through education and training; and to foster technical post-disaster investigation, recovery and rehabilitation.

UNEP - Division of Technology, Industry and Economics

39-43 quai André Citroën - 75739 Paris Cedex 15, France
Tel. +33 (0) 1 44 37 14 50; Fax +33 (0) 1 44 37 14 74
E-mail: apell@unep.fr Website: <http://www.uneptie.org/apell>

UNESCO - Disaster Reduction, Natural Sciences Sector

1, rue Miollis 75732 Paris Cedex 15, France
Tel: +33 (0) 1 45 68 41 20; Fax: +33 (0) 1 43 06 17 76
E-Mail: sc.ndr@unesco.org
Website: <http://www.unesco.org/science/index.shtml>

Compiled by: Ruth Zugman Do Coutto, Consultant, and Badaoui Rouhban, Chief, Section for Disaster Reduction, Natural Sciences Sector, UNESCO, December 2004

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APELL's suggested safe-school approach

1- Form a coordinating group in the school with all relevant participants

2- Identify and assess all hazards and risks (multi-hazard approach) to which the school is exposed. Is the school in a hazard prone area? What hazards does the school face?

3- Propose mitigation actions. Structural (re-location or building reinforcement). This means making the school structure strong enough to withstand a possible disaster.

4- Propose mitigation actions. Non-structural – Awareness Raising, Capacity Building and Preparedness Plan

5- Awareness Raising – Prepare a series of events in the school relating to the hazards to which it is exposed, invite student's parents and local authorities to participate. – Open the dialogue and talk about the hazards, about why they become disasters and what can be done to mitigate them.

6- Capacity Building – Include disaster mitigation and sustainable development issues in the school curriculum.

7- Preparedness Plan – Develop a preparedness plan for the school to cope with the hazard it faces, ensure clear roles and specific actions.

8- Include the school preparedness plan in the integrated community plan, commit both to writing and obtain approval from local authorities.

9- Test the plan – It is very important to undertake exercises and drills, so that the school (children and teachers) can test its plan. Update and review the plan each year.

Brochure Bibliography:

UNDP Publication (2004). *Reducing Disaster Risk: A Challenge for Development*
Several publications from the Disaster Management Training Programme
ISDR Publication (2002). *Living with Risk*
UNESCO Environment and Development Briefs
UNEP Publication (1988). *APELL Handbook*