

SEEDS

Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society



Annual Report 08-09

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Against the backdrop of a global financial meltdown and amidst growing fears of climate change related risks, the criticality of disaster risk reduction takes on new dimensions. Clearly, in an increasingly 'at-risk' world, building disaster-resilient communities will be of utmost importance to sustain development. In the face of such challenges, broader issues such as global warming, population crisis and food security need to be addressed within the ambit of DRR.

Together with Kyoto University, the Sustainable Environment and Ecological Society (SEEDS) called on experts and practitioners in the fields of DRR, urban risk reduction and climate change adaptation to come together for the fourth International Conference of Act Ahead. A bi-annual international conference that was launched by SEEDS in 2002, Act Ahead IV was held in New Delhi from February 23rd to 25th, 2009. It was actively supported by Government of India National Disaster Management Authority, United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, Christian Aid, The European Commission Humanitarian Aid Department's Disaster Preparedness Programme, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Save the Children and the University of Madras. The result was an Action Agenda for Building Safer Communities in Asia and the four key priority areas that need urgent action: Mainstreaming climate change and disaster risk reduction; Ensuring the safety of community lifelines; Urban risk reduction; and Building resilience of communities hit by disasters.

This collaboration at the international level complemented our continued work within the local communities. Projects such as the bioshield in Tamil Nadu and a three-year research and capacity-building initiative took our work on climate change adaptation forward. Community Based Disaster Management remained a mainstay of our work, with the idea of hospitals as a vital community lifeline being brought to the fore in Gujarat. A second phase of earthquake safety programmes began in Shimla, including a model school safety programme at the Deaf, Dumb and Blind school in Dhalli. This year also saw us set up the secretariat for the National Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction (NADRR) and roll out its first pilot project – the Community Disaster Relief Fund.

Disaster response work in Orissa embedded DRR activities into the construction of shelters and we tested new technologies with a pilot Quake Safe Adobe project in the Kangra-Dharamsala region.

Our School Safety Initiative also remained a key focus, with projects being implemented in Shimla, Tamil Nadu, Andamans, Maldives, Pakistan and Orissa. Knowledge sharing, analysis and education were strengthened with GOLFRE, the Tsunami Learning Project, Views from the Frontline (a local level analysis of HFA implementation) and an evaluation of the impact of UNDP's Disaster Risk Reduction programme.

All in all, it has been a year of tremendous learning for us: from international conferences to the piloting of new technologies, our venture into hospital safety to embracing the criticality of adaptation and advocacy.

We thank our donors, partners, volunteers and friends who have extended their generous support. It is their support and the overwhelming response from the communities that we serve that allows us to continue to achieve landmarks in this critical field.

Manu Gupta
Executive Director, SEEDS
2009



VISION

Resilient Communities

MISSION

Equipping the most vulnerable with appropriate tools and technologies, sharing knowledge and skills and promoting linkages among stakeholders to prevent loss of life and suffering.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Prompt in our action
- Identify and reach out to the most vulnerable
- Facilitate community participation in decision making
- Adapt to local and cultural environment
- Non-discriminatory in our approach
- Focus on individual
- Promote excellence

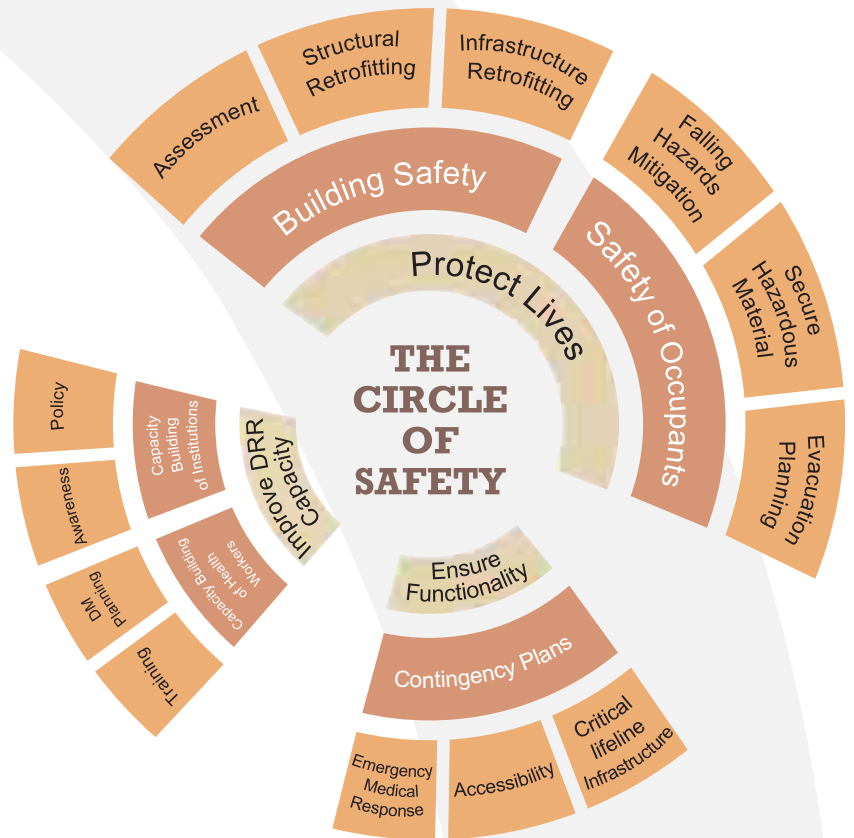


COMMUNITY BASED DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Disaster management needs to be decentralised to the level of individuals. The individuals at risk should be empowered to make informed choices for themselves and their family's safety. SEEDS is currently promoting such activities in India and other Asian countries. It actively engages communities through all its programmes and capacity building activities. This includes educating communities on local hazards, risk mapping and environmental assessments, training on sustainable practices, disaster management plans and strengthening government-community linkages.

Keeping Hospitals Safe from Disasters

Hospitals and health facilities serve as a community's lifeline and assume an even bigger role during disasters. The collapse of this critical machinery can often be worse than the disaster itself, exposing the community to a magnified risk. By ensuring that hospitals and health services are functional and safe during and after an emergency, SEEDS aims to address the larger goal of creating resilient communities. The project, Keeping Hospitals Safe from Disasters, was implemented across 4 districts of Gujarat in collaboration with UN/ISDR, WHO and Oxfam. It focused on the physical and functional integrity of hospitals and health facilities in emergency conditions. For this purpose, assessments of structural and non-structural features of hospital buildings were conducted, hospital disaster management plans were developed and trainings were organised for health workers and neighboring communities on disaster management and hospital safety.



Community Disaster Resilience Fund (CDRF)

The pilot of the Community Disaster Resilience Fund aimed to demonstrate that by forging effective community and local government partnerships, vulnerable communities can identify risks, plan and manage earmarked funds to enhance community resilience by themselves. The CDRF is currently being coordinated by the National Alliance for Adaptation for Disaster Risk Reduction (NADRR), a network of over 170 NGOs. The initiative is led by Swayam Shiksha Prayog (SSP) with support and coordination provided by SEEDS.

The Fund was managed by local CDRF committees who transferred funds, planned and oversaw DRR initiation across 10-15 communities. Facilitating organisations provided training and advocated for resources with district level administration and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI). CDRF was implemented in eight states across India: Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttarakhand.



The Project Advisory Committee was chaired by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) of India and included other institutional partners. The aim is that, through this committee, lessons and recommendations from local CDRF experiences can be applied to state and national level programmes with NDMA support.





Earthquake Safety Initiative, Himachal Pradesh

Taking forward the pilot programme done in Shimla last year, ESIHP spread the message of school safety to a large audience in three districts of Himachal Pradesh – Kangra, Shimla and Solan. The project demonstrated how school safety can involve and accelerate community based disaster management processes. It directly linked school safety to block, district and state level planning, leading to the institutionalisation of risk reduction and better disaster preparedness at the school, community and government levels. The project demonstrated how the gap between small-scale community based initiatives and top-heavy policy interventions can be effectively bridged and was supported by DIPECHO and Christian Aid.

The project encompassed several different components. Three model schools were constructed in Kangra, Solan and Shimla districts respectively with 1,625 teachers and 193 teachers educated on basic safety techniques. Training of trainers and master trainers workshops were also conducted.

1,156 masons were mobilised and trained on earthquake resistant construction and features. Vulnerability atlases were prepared at three levels - the State, Shimla District and Mashobra block. Structural retrofitting was carried out at the Government Guest House, Mashobra block by introducing seismic bands and strengthening the corners and openings with steel reinforcements. Above all, special efforts were made to involve school communities in brainstorming for community disaster management plans.

A model inclusive school safety programme was instituted at the Deaf, Dumb and Blind school in Dhalli, Shimla. It strives to build the coping capacity of the visually and hearing impaired to strengthen their resistance to any disaster.

In an effort to implement the Hyogo Framework for Action (2005-2015) and the National Disaster Management Act of India, the preparation and implementation of a State Disaster Management Plan was also initiated.



DISASTER RESPONSE

Asia, the most disaster prone continent in the world, experienced more than half of the world's major disasters in the last half century. In response to the increasing number of disasters, SEEDS reaches out to families affected by earthquakes, floods, cyclones and tsunamis. This response and rehabilitation work is carried out in complete compliance with the SPHERE standards and the Code of Conduct of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Balasore Ashray Yojana

SEEDS, in partnership with Christian Aid and with support from European Commission Humanitarian Aid Department, initiated a shelter programme in one of the worst affected flood areas – Balasore, Orissa. The situation there revealed a critical need to embed DRR activities into the construction of shelters and basic infrastructure, vital assets in the event of future disasters. 400 resilient shelters were built during the programme in an attempt to build a more resilient and sustainable environment.

The project was based on owner-driven reconstruction and the beneficiary selection procedure followed a transparent and rigorous logic. Regular community meetings were integral and kept a proper check on the development.

It was implemented in the gram panchayats of Kulida, Paunskuli, Raghunathpur and Santoshpur and covered 43 villages. Lying in the catchment area of rivers Bidhabalanga, Jaloka and Subarnarekha, the vulnerable population in this area is severely affected by multiple floods. Masons and contractors were trained on the appropriate technology to develop the shelter unit. Fly-ash bricks were manufactured at a centrally located production yard in Balasore and a stockyard was set up from where material distribution to the beneficiaries was carried out.



The shelters improved mental and physical health, providing a cushion for the community, allowing people to divert their existing resources for other fruitful purposes. The project also addressed the sanitation issues prevailing in the area by building 200 sanitation units. Increasing the reach of the intervention, 5 schools across 4 panchayats were strengthened and upgraded to emergency refuge centres.





ANDAMAN SCHOOL SAFETY INITIATIVE



SCHOOL SAFETY

SEEDS recognises the seminal role of schools within a community and their importance in disaster risk reduction (DRR) programmes.

Children are a dynamic and powerful force of change and supporters in creating awareness in the community. Their energy and vision can provide unique insights for local solutions.

SEEDS School Safety initiatives endeavour to create a safe environment for children and use schools as hubs to bring about larger transformations in the community.

School Earthquake Safety Initiative (SESI): Reducing Vulnerability of School Children to Earthquakes

Promoting the School Earthquake Safety Initiative (SESI), the United Nations Center for Regional Development (UNCRD) ran a project called "Reducing vulnerability of school children to earthquakes" across Fiji, India, Indonesia and Uzbekistan. Earthquake safe schools and improved local community resilience in seismic regions was the overall goal. SEEDS took on the implementation of this project in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh. The project focused on on-site training and a capacity building programme for sustainable development.

The preliminary assessment revealed an urgent need to retrofit many schools built on the steep hillsides. Vulnerability assessments were carried out for six schools in Shimla and three were retrofitted. The participatory project involved local communities, governments and resource institutions in the retrofitting. Training and capacity building also played a key role. 50 technicians were taught safer construction practices, while 40 teachers were also trained. Schools and communities participated in earthquake drills, focused group discussions and search and rescue training. Educational materials such as a Manual for Training Technicians and earthquake awareness posters were also developed.



Andaman Child - Led Disaster Risk Reduction Project

Children are active citizens, capable of participating in decision making and actions on issues relevant to their lives. In this vein, Save the Children and SEEDS developed a framework outlining the means by which children can lead a process of risk reduction. This child-led DRR project was implemented across 40 schools in the south Andamans and directly benefited 25,606 children, 416 teachers and 40 masons.

As a child-centered community based framework, this programme allows children to play lead roles in their communities to minimise the negative impacts of disasters. This includes meaningful and ethical child participation in assessing, planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating DRR. However, the responsibility and accountability for preparedness, mitigation and response still lies with adult stakeholders and duty bearers. As part of this project, school safety clubs were formed and teachers, students and masons alike were trained. To sustain this effort and promote advocacy, interface workshops with state and district administration and local NGOs were also organised.

Andamans School Safety Initiative

Using school safety as the medium, this joint project with Dan Church Aid and Christian Aid aimed to create a disaster resilient community by making the municipal ward or panchayat an interface between schools and the community at large.



Through this programme, SEEDS enabled school children to look outside their school premises and identify the risks and vulnerabilities surrounding them. The programme was implemented across 40 schools in the Andamans. Emergency task force trainings, evacuation route maps and mock drills were some of the key activities under this initiative. Parents and teachers were actively engaged through open demonstrations and contact workshops. Informal educational games and posters were disseminated for awareness and wider outreach. 18 wards have been covered under the Port Blair Municipal Council and South Andamans and an estimated 34,000 school students and community members will benefit from this initiative.



Maldives School Safety Initiative

SEEDS provided technical support to CARE Society, a national NGO in Maldives, to develop school safety activities in the area. Mercy Malaysia, the funding partner, provided financial support both to CARE Society for the implementation, as well as for the technical support by SEEDS. After a sensitisation workshop for stakeholders held in Male in 2007, a two-member team from CARE society visited SEEDS in 2008 for in-depth training on school safety and consultations with the SEEDS Media Team on necessary IEC materials. In July 2008, a joint SEEDS and CARE Society field team visited the Maldives to demonstrate school safety activities.



School Safety Training, Pakistan

In November 2008, four staff members from Church World Service (CWS), Pakistan, underwent a two-day training workshop at the SEEDS office. The agenda included orientation on the concept of school safety and training in developing school disaster management plans. They were taught to systematically analyse a school's hazards and vulnerabilities and plan mitigation and preparedness. The necessary IEC materials were designed by the SEEDS Media Team.

The workshop built the capacity of the organisation to implement school safety and non-structural mitigation in Pakistan. Christian Aid UK, who have provided financial support to CWS for earthquake rehabilitation work in Pakistan and supported SEEDS earthquake rehabilitation activities in Poonch in Jammu & Kashmir, India, facilitated a dialogue between CWS and SEEDS to explore collaborative work on disaster risk reduction in the South Asia region.

Tamil Nadu School Safety Initiative

In the coastal district of Nagapattinam in Tamil Nadu, SEEDS extended technical support on school safety to Society for People's Education and Economic Change (SPEECH), a local NGO. The project was financially supported by Christian Aid. In-depth consultations were held with the Director of the NGO



in April 2008 on the concept of school safety and the SEEDS methodology including the development of a school disaster management plan. This was followed up with a three-day Training of Trainer workshop for SPEECH staff and school teachers in Nagapattinam in May 2008.

The activity continued the following month when a joint SEEDS and SPEECH Team held a demonstration of school safety activities in a school. DRR training using GOLFRE modules was also conducted for 25 participants including SPEECH staff and teachers.

inculcate a culture of disaster preparedness in schools and link it to its neighboring communities.

The initiative focused on two districts of Orissa: Ganjam and Puri. 50 schools were identified for the activities. These included awareness and orientation on disaster preparedness; developing school disaster management plans; training school children and communities on emergency response and risk identification; and conducting regular evacuation and mock drills at the community level. The project was implemented with active support from the Government of Orissa, University of Madras, UN/ISDR and ECHO.

Safe School Safe Community: Project Selamat, Orissa

Orissa has a long history of coastal disasters, particularly cyclones. In order to prevent future loss of lives and livelihoods, concerted efforts are required to strengthen the coping capacity in the area, particularly of coastal communities. SEEDS aimed to develop a school to community model, sensitising, training and educating people on the need to build back better using their own strengths. The initiative, Safe School Safe Community, under Project Selamat, helped





EDUCATION & RESEARCH

Education can build long-term security and resilience for communities. There is a strong need for a blend of traditional community knowledge and practices with academic research. SEEDS collaborates with eminent institutions from around the world to create links between knowledge centres and frontline workers through education and research.

Evaluation of the Impact of UNDP's Disaster Risk Reduction Interventions

The Government of India, supported by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), implemented a Disaster Risk Management Project across 17 Indian states. This UNDP project aimed to enhance disaster risk management (DRM) capacity at various levels of the government machinery. SEEDS and Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) were chosen by UNDP to conduct an in-depth evaluation of the project, looking at the relevance/appropriateness, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability and connectedness (including partnerships). The evaluation would then be used for future UNDP interventions on DRR.

The following 14 states were selected for evaluation by UNDP: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Delhi, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttaranchal, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

In each state, two project districts and one non-project district were chosen. Field visits by APDC and SEEDS experts were carried out between August and November 2008. During this time, the teams visited the state headquarters for disaster management, as well as many villages in which the project was implemented. They interviewed a number of stakeholders from the government, reviewed the disaster management plans developed at various levels and witnessed various preparedness initiatives. A number of good practices were identified and compiled for future reference.

Views from the Frontline

'Views from the Frontline' was an action-research project undertaken by civil society stakeholders in conjunction with government bodies. Its main goal was to support the effective implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) to build the resilience of vulnerable people and at-risk communities. Views from the Frontline aimed to measure the progress towards HFA implementation at the local level across developing regions. These survey findings will provide a different, yet complementary perspective to the UN-ISDR-initiated monitoring process, which will review progress on the HFA primarily at the national level and from a top-down governmental perspective.

Since the National Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction (NADRR) was given the responsibility of national coordinating organisation, SEEDS (serving as the national secretariat for NADRR) coordinated the project implementation in India. A National Advisory Committee guided the process and a number of Civil Society Organisations were identified to administer questionnaires to government officials, voluntary organisations and community representatives. These participating organisations held community consultations to share the findings of the survey, consolidate views and discuss ways to improve the future implementation of HFA.

GOLFRE

Global Open Learning Forum on Risk Education (GOLFRE) is a pedagogy that integrates knowledge from frontline workers (NGO workers, school teachers, community workers) and academic research. Its mandate is to build knowledge resources and create human capital for an institutional approach to risk reduction. Under the GOLFRE umbrella, SEEDS offers a Certificate Course in Disaster Management (in affiliation with CENDEP at Oxford Brookes University) as well as conducting various workshops across India.

A single batch of the GOLFRE course took place this year, registering a majority of participants from Sri Lanka.

Over the course of 2008-2009, four GOLFRE workshops were also held in Nagapattinam, Port Blair, Shimla and Srinagar.

In Nagapattinam, 20 school teachers and NGO practitioners attended the GOLFRE workshop conducted on January 2009 in association with SPEECH. It included presentations and group exercises and the general feedback was positive with several requests for more such workshops in the area.

An interface workshop between children and the Disaster Management Committee was held in Port Blair on February 2009 in collaboration with Save the Children. Students and teachers from six schools participated in the workshops, even giving demonstrations of search and rescue and first aid, as well as presentations on various DRR aspects.

In Shimla, 21 teachers from schools across the state and 25 field practitioners from various organisations attended GOLFRE workshops on February 2009. Various participatory exercises and visual aids helped them understand the risks and hazards of Himachal Pradesh and develop effective methodologies to deal with them.

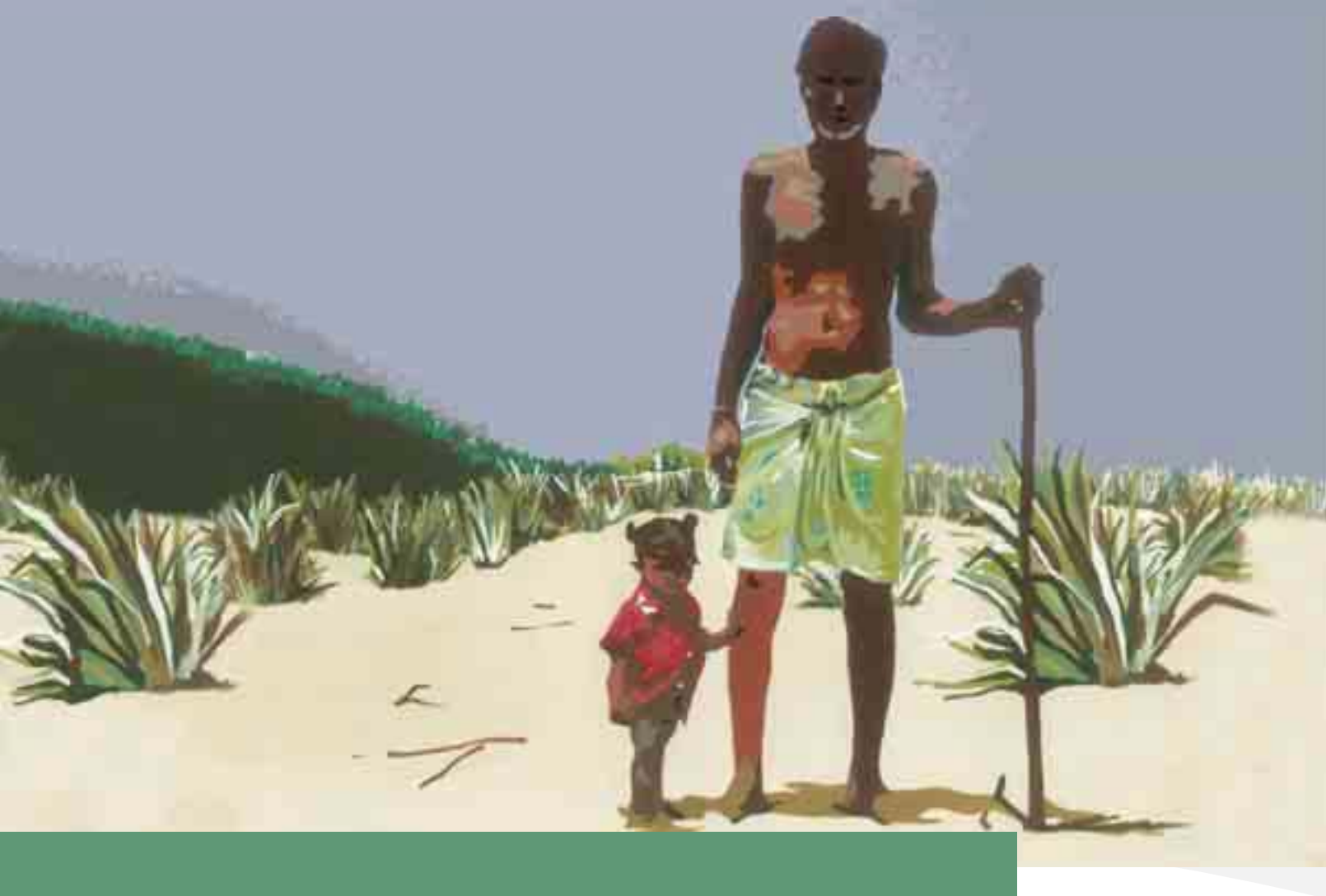
Volunteers and students from a social work background participated in the workshop held in Srinagar on March 2009. A similar workshop was also conducted in Gingal near Boniyar on March 2009. Both trainings were conducted in partnership with Act Now for Harmony and Democracy (ANHAD) and explained the basic concepts of Disaster Management using interactive exercises to analyse the hazards, vulnerabilities and risks of the area.



Quake Safe Adobe System

India is a highly seismic country with a large proportion of unreinforced, unsafe adobe houses. Attempting to address this problem, SEEDS undertook a pilot project, with the support of GE, based on the Quake Safe Adobe system in the Dharamsala – Kangra region of Himachal Pradesh. The 16 week pilot between April and July 2008 included the training of six masons and retrofit strengthening of ten buildings. The Quake Safe Adobe system is a low-cost, low-tech reinforcement system which improves the earthquake resistance of adobe mud brick houses. Incorporating vertical timber or bamboo poles, horizontal wire and string and a continuous timber ring/bond beam, the system effectively restrains movement and enhances the overall strength of the structure. As a practical, proven, cost effective and simple way to strengthen adobe houses and save lives during seismic activity, this pilot project will form a foundation for broad-scale implementation of the Quake Safe method in India.





CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change is clearly one of the world's worst impending disasters. Understanding the impact of climate change on disaster management and addressing the related problems before they become unmanageable is critical.

SEEDS is making forays into this arena, partnering with schools for education programmes and helping plant bioshields to maintain ecological security.

Bioshield

By acting as a buffer zone during extreme natural events, coastal vegetation can mitigate damage and even save human lives. One such coastal plantation which protects coastal areas from tsunamis, high tides, storm surges and cyclones is the bioshield. After careful evaluation, SEEDS decided to promote a multi-layered and multi-species bioshield in five villages of the Light House Panchayat in Tamil Nadu. This project is envisaged as one where the ecological security of coastal ecosystems and the livelihood security of coastal communities complement each other in a mutually reinforcing manner. SEEDS is implementing this bioshield plantation with assistance from the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) and University of Madras.

Community involvement was seen as one of the critical factors in the successful completion of this project. With regard to species selection, the community members prioritised casuarinas, coconut, pugamia, thespesia and neem to plant in the bioshield area. SEEDS organised the planting materials from local nurseries and the planting was done by the community. Across the villages, the bioshield covered 39,461 sq meters and 9196 saplings were planted. The overall approach of the project is science based, community centred and partnership and process oriented.

Virtual Core

A three-year project funded by Christian Aid, this was the first year of Virtual Core. The primary theme of the project is climate change and community based disaster management. This year, it targeted institutions such as schools through media kits and posters, as well as field practitioners through knowledge resource tool kits. 10,000 schools across India were a part of the first phase of the school campaign, where SEEDS also initiated "Eco Clubs" and "School Safety Clubs". As part of the project, a specific module on Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation was developed, field tested and added to the GOLFRE initiative.

Regional workshops and study of climate change hotspots helped to understand the mitigation and adaptation strategies practiced by local communities. This further enriched knowledge of the local communities and culminated in the form of a publication, "Boiling Point". A consolidated media kit consisting of a climate change report, animation film, activity book, quiz and card game were prepared for wider dissemination through the SEEDS partner network across India.





INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Cooperation and networking among disaster management practitioners is essential for knowledge sharing and reaching the largest number of people possible. Experiences need to be shared among nations, especially in South and South-East Asia. This combination of local knowledge and broader trends is essential to apply fresh inputs and learning to on-ground projects.

SEEDS is committed to increased collaboration among NGOs and other stakeholders for effective and efficient disaster reduction and response in the Asia-Pacific region.

Tsunami learning project

The Tsunami Learning Project was launched as a medium to share experiences among tsunami affected nations. It viewed disaster reconstruction and recovery as a development opportunity in which immediate recovery needs were addressed without overlooking the long term mitigation requirement.

The project intended to enhance co-learning among the affected countries – India, Sri Lanka and Indonesia; facilitate experience sharing from other reconstruction programmes and undertake a dynamic process documentation of the recovery process as a tool for future disaster mitigation exercises. The outcome was a document titled 'Lessons that Matter'. Lessons that Matter is an effort to put experiences into words and ensure lessons learnt are put into practice in future recovery processes. The Force of Nature Aid Foundation (FON), Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network (ADRRN), Kyoto University, MERCY Malaysia, Sarvodaya and SEEDS India

partnered in this process.

Through several exchange visits, workshops and primary research studies, the project strengthened partnerships among the ADRRN members and facilitated better working relationships among key stakeholders.



Project Selamat: International

Taking its genesis from the Tsunami Learning Project, 'selamat' refers to the well-being and safety of communities. It was conceived to build the capacity of local communities at risk from tsunamis and other disasters. The objectives included education on risk and action, training local stakeholders with appropriate skills and establishing community-based infrastructure, as well as creating information, education and communications materials. The project brought together NGOs, leading academic institutions and governments in a collaborative model. The International Project team (IPT) was hosted by SEEDS India and Mercy Malaysia and our initiatives this year included the following:



Tool box

The Selamat Tool Box was an attempt to provide a tangible outcome to the entire exercise and provides resources to further DRR through education. It serves as DRR resource kit which includes films, training tools like models and manuals, educational books, interactive games and indigenous warning systems. Though the collection of items is primarily from the project countries (India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Maldives), it also includes innovative educational tools from Japan and Turkey.



DRR Trainings

The International Project team organised a series of trainings on DRR. The topics included keeping hospitals safe from disasters, bioshield plantations and the monitoring and evaluation of DRR interventions. This strengthened disaster risk reduction (preparedness, mitigation and response) capacities, helping create a pool of well informed and trained community leaders and field practitioners.

DRR Film

The IPT is leading the production of the 'To Save a Million' film. The entire film focuses on the fact that preparedness, not response, is the way forward. It looks at several DRR initiatives/practices across Asia and uses a range of people's voices from the grassroots to the policy level to build a case for investment in DRR. 'To Save a Million' is an advocacy film meant for decision makers and global humanitarian bodies.

Hospital Safety

The World Disaster Reduction Campaign 2008-2009: 'Hospitals Safe from Disasters' was launched by UN/ISDR and the World Health Organisation (WHO), with support from the World Bank. The IPT took the lead in the hospital safety campaign which included assessment, planning, demonstration projects, capacity building (training programmes), dissemination (documentation and awareness) and policy advocacy. Case studies, best practices and lessons learnt were shared and disseminated across the South-Asian region through the ADRRN network. The campaign is focused on structural safety of hospitals and health facilities, keeping health facilities functioning during and after disasters and making sure health workers are prepared for natural hazards. A hospital safety intervention framework has been developed and implemented.

ACT AHEAD IV

With the growing concerns on disaster risks due to climate change and rapid urbanisation, it is clear that building disaster-resilient communities will be of utmost importance. Together with Kyoto University, the Sustainable Environment and Ecological Society (SEEDS) called on experts and practitioners in the fields of DRR, urban risk reduction and climate change adaptation to come together for the fourth International Conference of Act Ahead. A bi-annual international conference that was launched by SEEDS in 2002, Act Ahead IV was held in New Delhi from February 23rd to 25th, 2009. It was actively supported by NDMA, UN/ISDR, Christian Aid, DIPECHO, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Save the Children and the University of Madras. Over 100 delegates participated in the conference, including representatives of prominent civil society organisations, faculty from academic and research institutions, prominent corporate citizens, senior government officials and representatives of the UN and other international/regional donor agencies.



The outcome was four key action areas: Mainstreaming climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction; Ensuring safety of community lifelines; Urban risk reduction; and Building resilience of communities hit by disasters.



BACK TO SCHOOL

The “Back to School” disaster preparedness and response workshop took place in June 2008, in Chamoli, Uttarakhand. It was jointly implemented by Architecture Sans Frontieres (ASF) – UK and SEEDS and supported by Gomti Prayag Jan Kalyan Parishad, a local NGO based in the village of Bhakunda.

A moderate earthquake in Chamoli had left 500 families homeless. With winter at the onset, ASF-UK and SEEDS were asked to provide interim shelter to these families within 50 days. Though they were temporary, these shelters needed to be technically sound to withstand likely aftershocks. They also needed to be acceptable to the local community, taking into consideration tradition and lifestyle. The idea was to create a building that could be incrementally converted into a permanent shelter. For the duration of the construction, existing schools needed to be strengthened and used as short term communal emergency shelters. The ASF-UK/SEEDS team conducted a study of the local area and the availability of different resources like materials and manpower. The workshop provided a steep learning curve for all participants, as their skills, patience and resourcefulness were tested at every stage.

OUR PARTNERS



SEEDS is a member of and signatory to the Code of Conduct for the:

- International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement
- SPHERE Standard in Humanitarian Aid
- The International Council of Voluntary Agencies
- Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network (ADRRN)

The various activities carried out by us are made possible through the support of individuals and organisations.
We gratefully acknowledge the financial, material, moral and technical support of the following partners.

Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC)
Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network (ADRRN)
Act Now for Harmony and Democracy (ANHAD)
Architecture Sans Frontieres (ASF)
CARE Society
CENDEP at Oxford Brookes University
Christian Aid
Church World Service (CWS)
Dan Church Aid (DCA)
European Commission Humanitarian Aid Department (ECHO)
Force of Nature Aid Foundation (FON)
General Electric (GE)
Government of Orissa
Kyoto University
Mercy Malaysia
M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF)
National Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction (NADRR)
National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)
Oxfam
Port Blair Municipal Corporation
Save the Children
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
Sarvodaya
Society for People's Education and Economic Change (SPEECH)
Swayam Shiksha Prayog (SSP)
The European Commission Humanitarian Aid Department's Disaster Preparedness Programme (DIPECHO)
United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD)
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR)
University of Madras
World Health Organisation (WHO)
World Bank

BALANCE SHEET

Name of Society: Sustainable Environment & Ecological Development Society

Reg. Office: 315, Kailash Tower I, Mount Kailash, New Delhi - 110 055

Reg. No.: S/25402 of 1994

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2009

Particulars	Schedule	Amount (Rs.) as on 31st March 2008	Amount (Rs.) as on 31st March 2008
A - INCOME			
GRANTS & DONATION	6	48,115,995.01	53,584,706.18
INTEREST & OTHER INCOME		2,511,613.44	1,238,132.96
		<u>48,627,608.05</u>	<u>54,822,839.13</u>
B - EXPENDITURE			
EXPENDITURE ON PROJECTS	7	54,101,803.99	38,578,061.94
OTHER EXPENDITURE		1,030,508.01	540,842.26
	(B)	<u>55,132,311.99</u>	<u>39,118,904.20</u>
C-EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE	(A-B)	(7,104,752.55)	25,701,124.93
LESS: TRANSFERRED TO SPECIFIC FUNDS			20,685,500.43
BALANCE CARRIED TO BALANCE SHEET		(7,104,752.55)	5,015,534.50
NOTES TO ACCOUNTS	8		

For RAKESH B. LAL & CO.
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Rajesh
RAJAT BEHAR TAL
(PARTNER)

Place : New Delhi
Dated: 21/04/2009

For Sustainable Environment & Ecological Development Society

Mansi Gupta
Mansi Gupta
(President)

Ankur Sharma
Ankur Sharma
(Secretary)



DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Investment for a Safer Future

Action towards Safer Communities

The tools needed to build disaster resilience are not expensive, particularly given the potential costs of inaction. Experts estimate that one dollar invested in risk reduction can save up to \$7 in relief and recovery costs tomorrow.

It is clear that building disaster-resilient communities will be of utmost importance to sustain development in the face of climate change. Both climate change and rapid and unplanned urbanization poses threats that disaster risk reduction actors need to deal with urgently. This would require reaffirming our commitment towards ensuring :

Safer community lifeline structures that can withstand climate change impacts and pressures of urbanisation. Learning from our past experiences in dealing with disasters and building resilience. Synergies between disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. In order to effect action in the above identified areas, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) stakeholders will have to:

1. Engage with new set of potential stakeholders.

For example in urban areas, these stakeholders could potentially be private sector actors with a strong stake in the economy such as real estate and infrastructure developers, insurance and risk management enterprises, transport and communication companies and other private service providers.

2. Focus first on building resilience of highly vulnerable and poor communities.

These include people who will be hit first and worst by growing risks of extreme climate events and climate change and unplanned urbanisation, such as rural poor moving into urban centres, coastal communities, islanders, frequently flood and drought affected communities.

3. Build awareness about risk reduction and benefits of being better prepared for disasters.

This can be done through disaster education in schools, public and health trainings and services in hospitals. Community

lifeline structures should take a lead into this and also in becoming 'safe zones' by adhering to building codes, disaster preparedness activities, emergency drills etc.

With the above concerns of growing disaster risks from climate change and rapid urbanisation, SEEDS (Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society) and Kyoto University called on experts and practitioners in the field of DRR, urban risk reduction and climate change adaptation to develop an Action Agenda for Building Safer Communities in Asia. This effort came together in the form of the 4th International Conference of Act Ahead -'International Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction –Investment for a Safer Future' in New Delhi on the 23-25th February 2009. The Conference was organised with active support from NDMA, UN/ISDR, Christian Aid, DIPECHO, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Save the Children, and University of Madras.

Reaffirming the priority actions of the Hyogo Framework of Action 2005-2015 and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (2015), the 4th International Conference of Act Ahead recognizes the need for urgent action in the following key areas for building safer communities in Asia:

1. Mainstreaming Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction

Both these fields address the common concern of reducing vulnerability of communities and achieving sustainable development. With cross-learning and complementary policy structures and implementation mechanisms, these two systems can ensure a systematic way of reducing risks from disasters.

2. Ensuring Safety of Community Lifelines

Natural hazards are inevitable and so are the effects of climate change. It is therefore crucial to address the safety of lifelines structures of a community. These include hospitals, schools, communication channels and other private and public sector services such as police, fire departments and local businesses. Such structures should be disaster safe for proper functioning of essential services in times of disasters.

3. Urban Risk Reduction

There is has been very limited focus on addressing vulnerability There is has been very limited focus on addressing vulnerability of people living in urban areas. As more and more people live in urban areas in Asia, it is important to build understanding of disaster risks in urban areas and work towards addressing them. National and local urban planning and development bodies should immediately take actions to put in place urban risk reduction measures that take into account risks from climate change. There should be immediate identification of priority cities and sectors for intervention, particularly those at risk from climate change, such as large cities along river banks, wetlands and coasts.

4. Building Resilience of Communities hit by Disasters

Communities hit by disasters are more vulnerable to the next disaster. Therefore, building resilience of communities should be the goal of all disaster recovery, disaster preparedness and risk reduction programmes.

Stakeholder Roles and Responsibilities

To implement the actions outlined above, key stakeholders such as NGOs, technical experts, policy makers, private sector, media, etc. should consider themselves as bearing the following responsibilities.

National and City level Authorities

- Accept responsibility for ensuring safety of urban communities.
- Include climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction elements in urban planning and development.
- Establish and implement strategies, policies and regulations for safe and resilient urban community lifelines and structures.
- Allocate resources for construction/ retrofitting of community lifelines and structures in cities.
- Have low dependence on large infrastructures.
- Create city level urban technical bodies to support urban planning and development bodies in designing robust urban climate change adaptation programmes.
- Use climate projections and conduct.
- Environment Impact Assessments while planning development projects.

- National level disaster management bodies to put in place standards for mitigation of risk in urban areas that take into

- Involve all stakeholders in participatory development of resources and research.

Private Sector

- Engage local community stakeholders and partners in urban risk reduction.
- Promote in kind, material and financial support for disaster risk reduction activities.
- Link public and private efforts to promote urban risk reduction.
- Ensure community lifelines against physical losses in disasters.

Urban Task Force in Asia

- Serve as an independent umbrella to link urban safety, advocate globally for the long term tasks of both urban risk reduction and climate change adaptation in urban centres.
- Advocate at all levels to keep urban safety as a priority.
- Share advocacy materials and good practices to support advocacy efforts globally.
- Nurture urban safety leadership and champions at all levels.
- Encourage formal and informal groups and individuals to affiliate for the purposes of mutual support in creating momentum needed to accomplish the goals set out in the action agenda.





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Cover : Children at their new model school constructed during the Earthquake Safety Initiative, Himachal Pradesh (ESIHP). The initiative spread the school safety message to three districts - Kangra, Shimla and Solan.