

SEEDS

Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society

annual report 07-08



contents

Message
Vision and Mission
Community Based Disaster Management
Safe Construction Practices
School Safety

Education and Research
Disaster Response
International Cooperation
Our Partners
Balance Sheet 2007-2008



vision

Resilient Communities

mission

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

message

The first time we came across the plight of children in disasters was when we were studying the impact of urban floods on slums in Delhi in the year 1995. We felt moved, and yet helpless to make a meaningful intervention at that time. Since then we have seen horrific impacts of disasters on children in many places, as a result of the Kandla Cyclone, Chamoli Earthquake, Orissa Supercyclone, Gujarat Earthquake, Gujarat Riots, South Asian Tsunami, Kashmir Earthquake, Bihar Floods and many other smaller disasters that hit the region in the past decade. Protecting children is not only a necessity because the sight of a suffering child hurts the human conscience, but also because children hold a key to the future of humanity. We felt the need not only to protect children, but also to educate them in the life skill of disaster risk reduction and response. Thus started the school safety campaign of SEEDS, which has by now touched over ten thousand schools.

School safety became our vehicle for reaching out to children, teachers, parents, communities and governments for acting to make children safer. School safety constitutes making school buildings and infrastructure safer and also educating and training school communities on disaster risk reduction and response. There are a number of ongoing initiatives of the SEEDS team in different parts of the country where we are trying to research, innovate, design and implement school safety activities. Our work with the international community resulted in the Ahmedabad Action Agenda on School Safety, which is a global commitment to eliminate child mortality from avoidable disasters.

Our School Safety Initiative picked momentum and activities were implemented in Gujarat, Rajasthan, Andamans, Orissa and Shimla. Besides school safety work, we spent the last year continuing our missions in various fields of disaster risk reduction and response. Community Based Disaster Management stayed our main mode of work, engaging and empowering local communities to take charge of their safety wherever we worked. The Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning System project provided linkages between local safety efforts in the villages of the Andaman Islands and the regional multi-country initiative. The work on urban safety in Orissa continued our strategic work on urban risk

reduction. Disaster response work in Rajasthan led to the restoration of schools in the remotest of the Thar Desert villages. Project Selamat helped us understand the complexities of building resilience in coastal communities, and we worked on the multi country project in cooperation with a range of partner agencies. Research on Himalayan construction technologies and their risk reduction qualities, viability of mobile shelters in Gujarat, relations between forest sector and disaster risk reduction, and transferrable indigenous knowledge kept our thinking side alive and kicking, and the year saw us evolve further as a learning organization. GOLFRE, the Tsunami Learning Project and various research initiatives were continuations of our work to learn from practice and to share our learning. Our interactions with network partners through Sphere-India, the Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network and other bilateral partners saw us engage in strategic deliberations on disaster risk reduction in the region. Our foray into climate change adaptation kept us up to speed with one of the worst impending disasters the world has ever seen. We are working to expand our work in this area and address related problems before they become unmanageable disasters.

We thank our supporters, donors, partners, volunteers and friends who have helped us continue our work with vulnerable communities and achieve all these landmarks. Through this report we share with you the learning from our work on School Safety and the Ahmedabad Action Agenda on School Safety. We also share with you our annual report.

Manu Gupta
Executive Director, SEEDS
(2009)

सुरक्षित निर्माण को बढ़ावा

कौशल प्रशिक्षण

शिक्षा और जागरूकता

सक्षम संघर्षों का निर्माण

ED BY
PARTNER
IMPLEMENTED BY





Community Based Disaster Management

Disaster management needs to be decentralized to the level of the individuals. The individuals at risk should be empowered to be able to make informed choices for themselves and their family's safety. SEEDS is currently promoting such activities in India and other Asian countries.

Since its inception in 1994, SEEDS has actively engaged communities through all its programmes and capacity building activities. The activities include educating people on local hazards, risk mapping and environmental assessments, training on sustainable practices, disaster management plans and strengthening government-community linkages.

Agra Model Municipal Ward: Community Based Urban Planning at Ward Level

Looking at the deteriorating condition of the urban environment in Agra, it was decided to analyze this decline and suggest suitable interventions for preparing a strategy for improvement. Center for Urban and Regional Excellence (CURE), SEEDS and Cities Alliance, along with support from Agra Nagar Nigam proposed to prepare a ward development plan as part of the City Development Strategy. The slums under ward number 32, Ghatiya Azam Khan, were chosen for the assessment. The ward development plan contained an analysis of planning issues within the ward. The plan was prepared on the basis of problem identification and assessment of perceptions and priorities of the primary stakeholders, that is, the residents of the ward. Workshops were conducted under this programme to sensitize the residents on infrastructure issues like water supply, sewage, drainage, garbage and, electricity. Community consultations were carried out in the action planning mode whereby people identified the problems, their causes and the solution of the problems. The intention of this exercise is to replicate it in other parts of the city.



Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning System

The Community Based Disaster Management in the Tsunami affected regions of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India was initiated to prepare coastal communities against any future disasters. Supported by USAID, the initiative focused on vulnerability mapping, stake holder analysis, training on emergency management and preparing village disaster management plans. 15 Panchyats in one sub-district were mapped both in terms of physical and social vulnerability. Resource assessment was also done for all the villages under the Panchayats. Emergency task forces were formed in each village and trained on specific tasks like early warning, shelter management, search and rescue and evacuation. Village disaster management plans for all the panchayats were prepared which clearly defined vulnerabilities, resources and roles and responsibilities of task force members. Disaster emergency kits, informative posters and a handbook for task forces were also distributed in the Panchayats for education and awareness.

The entire process of stakeholder analysis and vulnerability assessment involved communities and local government authorities through focused group discussions, interactive workshops and in-depth

interviews. The Community Based Disaster Management Project has ensured that the villagers consider risk reduction as essential component in all development initiatives. Local Government and authorities were active partners in the entire process and as people's representative, today ensure that disaster risk reduction is a continuous process for these coastal communities.



Orissa Urban Safety Initiative

In Orissa, civic services and the general quality of the settlements is of a low standard, as a result of which the urban communities are being subjected to an ever increasing risk of natural as well as technological disasters. With the aim to reduce the consequences of disasters on Orissa's major urban communities, SEEDS in partnership with National Foundation of India introduced an Urban Safety Initiative in the cities of Berhampur, Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Puri and Talcher. The project was successful in strengthening the local capacity to prepare and respond to natural disasters. It actively involved the local government

officials, community members and Disaster Risk Reduction experts at State level through meetings and consultative workshops. The stakeholders were given an orientation on safety of buildings, emergency response preparedness, emergency medical preparedness and fire fighting preparedness.

The major outcome of the initiative was the preparation of Vulnerability Maps of the five urban centers which would be further helpful for the urban local bodies to prepare disaster plan of the respective urban areas.

School Earthquake Safety Initiatives Shimla – II

Recognizing the work done towards school safety under its previous initiative SESIS-I, European Commission Humanitarian Aid Department (ECHO) and Christian Aid supported SEEDS to continue its efforts.

Children naturally help to reach out to a larger community and build a culture of disaster safety. The project will demonstrate how school safety can involve and accelerate community based disaster management processes which can be directly linked to block, district and state level disaster management planning. This will also lead to institutionalizing risk reduction and disaster preparedness at school, community and

Government levels. It will in this way show how the gap between small scale community based initiative and top heavy policy interventions be bridged effectively.

With earthquake as primary focus it will also address other natural hazards like landslides. Formal training and education on Disaster Management at state level institutes, mainstreaming safe construction practices and focusing on specific needs like safety of children with disability form an integral part of the initiative. Engineers, masons, teachers, local government officials and village representatives will also be trained in disaster risk reduction measures.







SCHOOL SAFETY

SEEDS recognizes the role of schools in the community as being very important. In fact, it would be befitting to call schools cradles of the society. Children are a dynamic and powerful force of change and are supporters in creating awareness in the community. They can contribute in a unique manner with energy and vision to find local solutions.

SEEDS School Safety Initiative endeavors to create a safe environment for children. Recognizing the immense potential of children as potent agents of change, the initiative is trying to tap this powerful resource to bring about a larger change. SEEDS along with its partners and supporters has been implementing school safety activities since 2005 in the following areas: Delhi, Gujarat, Andaman & Nicobar, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Orissa.

ANKUR: Post Flood School Restoration Programme

One of the focuses of SEEDS intervention has always been towards ensuring school safety. Project Ankur is one such initiative in this direction. Along with its partners, The Children's Investment Fund Foundatrion (CIFF) and Lakshmi & Usha Mittal Foundation SEEDS decided to reconstruct 18 flood damaged schools in the flood-hit region of Barmer. Out of the 18 schools 13 were restored at their original site and the remaining 5 were relocated with entirely new construction. The aim was not only to reconstruct disaster resistant schools but to provide students with a cohesive learning environment where they can intermingle with each other and get the best of knowledge. Apart from constructing buildings, the schools were made as safe refuge centres for future emergencies. The work was carried out in collaboration with the community so as to ensure a greater ownership of the school.



School Earthquake Safety Initiatives Shimla – I

With a view to build greater sensitivity towards earthquake risks in the region, a pilot programme was initiated in Shimla district of Himachal Pradesh. School Earthquake Safety Initiative, Shimla (SESIS) emphasized on the need of preparedness against earthquakes. The initiative was carried out in partnership with Christian Aid and European Commission Humanitarian Aid Department (ECHO) and with support of the Government of Himachal Pradesh. The programme aimed to imbue a culture of earthquake safety through schools. Schools under the pilot programme would also serve as models of disaster preparedness for the larger community.

The initiative addressed earthquake risks and determined means to reduce it at two levels: ensuring safer school buildings and building capacity towards earthquake preparedness. It was implemented in the 20 schools of Shimla district. Demonstration of non-structural mitigation formed an essential part of the project. Retrofitting of 5 selected schools was also carried out under the initiative. Efforts were taken to build capacity of different stakeholders like masons, students, teachers etc to be able to face future disasters. Education and awareness materials were disseminated and trainings on structural strengthening and mock

drills were carried out under the programme. School disaster management plans were also prepared for the 20 schools. At the end of the programme a State level capacity assessment for disaster management was conducted with the engagement of State, District and Sub-District officials, community representatives and schools. Case studies on local capacities were also compiled.



Andaman School Safety Initiative

The Indian Ocean Tsunami in 2004 wrecked havoc in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India. SEEDS responded with immediate relief and built intermediate shelters for 354 affected families in Hutbay region of Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Schools were severely affected which resulted in prolonged disruption of academic process. As part of the rehabilitation process SEEDS initiated a school safety programme in Andaman.

The Andaman School Safety Initiative (ASSI) not only focuses on disaster preparedness in schools but also aims to reach out to the local communities through children. Supported by Dan Church Aid and

Christian Aid the programme is being implemented across 40 schools in South Andamans. Emergency task force training, evacuation route maps, mock drills are some of the key activities under this initiative. Parents and teachers are actively engaged through open demonstrations and contact workshops. Informal educational games and posters are also being disseminated for awareness and wider outreach. Training in developing the School Disaster Management Plans is being imparted to the 40 schools. During 2007-08, schools in 18 wards were covered. It is estimated that around 34000 school students and community members will benefit from the initiative.

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 livelihood, concerted efforts are required to strengthen the coping capacity of people, particularly coastal communities. In the same light, SEEDS aims to develop a school to community model, sensitize, train and educate people on the need to build back better on their own strengths. The initiative, Safe School Safe Community, under Project Selamat would help inculcate a culture of disaster preparedness in schools and link it to the neighboring communities.

The initiative focuses on two districts of Orissa: Ganjam and Puri. Fifty schools have been identified for the school based activities.

The activities under this project would include awareness and orientation of schools 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 is being implemented with active support from the Government of Orissa, University of Madras, UNISDR and ECHO.

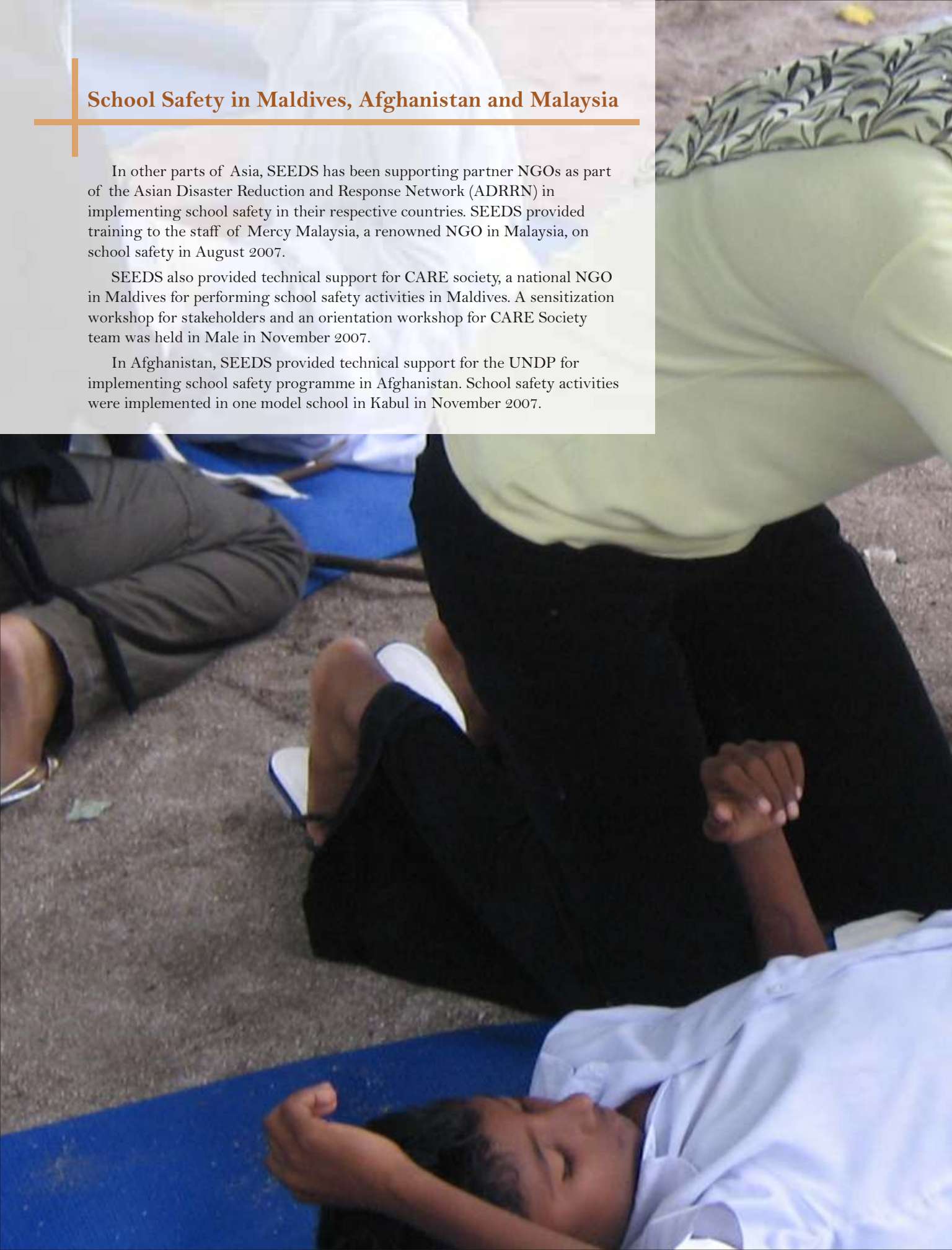


School Safety in Maldives, Afghanistan and Malaysia

In other parts of Asia, SEEDS has been supporting partner NGOs as part of the Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network (ADRRN) in implementing school safety in their respective countries. SEEDS provided training to the staff of Mercy Malaysia, a renowned NGO in Malaysia, on school safety in August 2007.

SEEDS also provided technical support for CARE society, a national NGO in Maldives for performing school safety activities in Maldives. A sensitization workshop for stakeholders and an orientation workshop for CARE Society team was held in Male in November 2007.

In Afghanistan, SEEDS provided technical support for the UNDP for implementing school safety programme in Afghanistan. School safety activities were implemented in one model school in Kabul in November 2007.









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 with its small team of committed individuals have reached out to families affected by earthquakes, floods, cyclones and tsunamis. SEEDS has taken up the task of responding with humanitarian relief within few hours of the disaster. The earthquake in Poonch and Tsunami in Port Blair are few of the examples where SEEDS was amongst the first ones to reach with humanitarian relief.

SEEDS carries out this response and rehabilitation work in complete compliance with the SPHERE standards and the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Barmer Aashray Yojana

The Barmer Aashray Yojna was a project taken up by SEEDS to reconstruct three hundred houses in the flood-ravaged district of Barmer in the western desert state of Rajasthan. The flash floods, following six years of drought, that occurred in August 2006 destroyed lives, livelihoods, livestock and crops.

SEEDS targeted families that were socially marginalized and ostracized, persons who were physically handicapped and/or remotely located. However the beneficiaries were not solely selected through the SEEDS survey that took about one month beginning December 2006. Community participation was the core of the Barmer project. Villages included in the mission were assisted in forming village development committees, which were the link between SEEDS and the beneficiaries. The beneficiaries were determined

through consensus in committee meetings that were attended by all residents of a village.

The houses were specially modeled to comply with the socio-cultural and environmental peculiarities of the district and the villages involved. Beneficiaries of only one village (Jalela) were relocated to Kotra, which has been tagged the 'model village'.

Apart from the three hundred houses, SEEDS also constructed seven tankas or wells, five latrines with attached bathrooms and provided solar panels to the three hundred beneficiaries. Further, spread awareness on good sanitation practices workshops were conducted for the community. The project was completed within the specified period of six months ending May 2007.



SPHERE

Sphere India began in 2003 as a coalition of government and international NGOs, which is developing and implementing a unique system of unified response in humanitarian emergencies called Unified Response Strategy (URS). The initiative was conceived as an inter-agency (IAG) group with the aim to shorten disaster response time, clear roles and responsibilities of members and minimize duplication of relief efforts. UNICEF India supported the concept design and piloting phase and SEEDS India office served as the secretariat for Sphere-URS.

The initiative primarily aimed to develop mechanisms, tools, capacities and protocols for information sharing, pre-positioning, coordination and collaborated response in humanitarian emergencies.

The initiative was piloted in three states i.e. Assam, Bihar and Orissa. URS complemented and supplemented the Government relief efforts, legitimized NGO's contribution and helped in supporting the principle of life with dignity for human beings in emergencies.

One of the key highlights of the initiative was the introduction of the Common Assessment Format for effective and coordinated response after a disaster. For the first time, 25 NGOs came together to compile and use the Common Damage Assessment Format in responding to 2007 South-Asian floods. Regular coordination meetings were organized in 3 pilot states, involving more than 400 humanitarians from 60 organizations.







International Cooperation

Networking and cooperation amongst the disaster management practitioners is essential for knowledge sharing and reaching out to people on a large scale including the policy makers, local community, local agencies, CBOs, local cooperates, and other stakeholders. Experiences need to be shared among nations, especially in South and South East Asia. These provide fresh inputs and learning for local organizations working with communities.

SEEDS is committed towards increased collaboration among NGOs and other stakeholders for effective and efficient disaster reduction and response in the Asia-Pacific region. After successfully coordinating with partners on an international level, SEEDS is now the founding member of National Alliance on Disaster Risk Reduction (NADRR) which is a similar body at the national level.

Project Selamat

Implemented across four countries, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India and Maldives in partnership with UN/ISDR, European Union, ADRRN4 universities and 7 NGOs, Project Selamat owes its genesis to the Tsunami Learning Project. The project aims to build community level coping capacities towards long term resilience. The focus will be to make tsunami threatened communities aware of their risks, build knowledge resources and internalise preparedness measures through education and training. It also helps to mainstream risk education at institutional levels like schools and universities.

The project involves different activities with an overall goal to develop long term resilience. It recognises the community and its educational institutions as the most crucial stakeholders for building resilience to tsunamis. It includes making communities aware of their risks and of actions needed, training local stakeholders in appropriate skills, establishing community based infrastructure, developing national curriculum on disaster management and advocacy at policy levels.



ADRRN

In February 2002, the Asia Disaster Reduction Centre (ADRC) Kobe and the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) in Kobe with the assistance of the ASEAN Foundation, brought together more than 30 NGOs from all over Asia to discuss the need for a network of NGOs for Disaster Reduction & Response in Asia. As a result, the Asian Disaster Reduction & Response Network (ADRRN) was formed. This loose body of NGOs was consolidated in December 2003 and in June 2004, the structure, content and direction of the ADRRN was clearly formulated and implemented.

In the year 2007-08, SEEDS actively engaged in mutual learning and better standards on humanitarian practices. ADRRN members gathered in Kuala Lumpur in October 2008 to get a better understanding on how practitioners can be more accountable to

beneficiaries. In partnership with Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP), ADRRN members explored the issues of accountability and quality management through self regulatory mechanism. In addition, HAP certifies those members that comply with the HAP Standard in Humanitarian Accountability and Quality Management, providing assurance to disaster survivors, staff, volunteers, host authorities and donors that the agency will deliver the best humanitarian service possible.

The workshop oriented participants on Principles of Accountability, shared various aspects of accountability through real case studies and trained participants on the process and requirements for HAP certification. The management concluded with a commitment to steer and promote HAP certification for ADRRN members.

asian disaster reduction & response network

HOME
ABOUT US
STORIES & ARTICLES
KNOWLEDGE RESOURCE
EVENTS/TRAINING
PROJECTS
PUBLICATION
CONTACT US
ADRRN Members
Membership Form

Welcome to The Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network (ADRRN) website.

Our main aim is to promote coordination, information sharing and collaboration among NGOs and other stakeholders for effective and efficient disaster reduction and response in the Asia-Pacific region.

Comments and feedback are welcome. Please share your ideas with us.

Stories & Articles

**International Humanitarian Conference 2009
"The Role of Local NGOs in Difficult
Environments"**
by Merlie "Adlet" B. Mendoza
Humanitarian and Peace Worker, Philippines

A pleasant good afternoon to each one of you, my friends and colleagues in the humanitarian community. I am very grateful to my Mercy Malaysia family and my colleagues in the Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network for making it... (more)

Knowledge Resource

Evaluation brief

The Evaluation brief of UN ISDR secretariat Asia Pacific is an organizational assessment of the relevance, performance and impact of regional ISDR secretariat in Asia and Pacific. Very innovatively presented and also an example how good editorial design aids better communication... (more)

Latest Content Addition

Flash Floods in Afghanistan

New 2009 Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction

Save lives. Make hospitals safe in emergencies

Supported by
Australian Government
AUSAID

Copyright ©2009 ADRRN. All rights reserved.





Education and Research

Education can build long-term security and resilience for communities. Education that recognizes traditional knowledge and practices of community and integrates them to academic research is a strongly felt need. At the same time constantly reinventing and focusing on research is also realized as an important aspect to create link between knowledge centers and frontline workers like school teachers, local government staff and NGO workers.

SEEDS in collaboration with eminent institutions from around the world has been involved in creating link between knowledge centers and frontline workers through education and research. In synergy with the Hyogo Framework of Action 2005-2015, SEEDS has also introduced Global Open Learning Forum on Risk Education (GOLFRE), an initiative to use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels.

Feasibility study for mobile shelter at Mundra Taluka

In the recent past, Kutch and specifically Mundra Taluka have witnessed rapid changes due to heavy industrialization. As a result of Mundra being declared as a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) the habitant of this region are paying a heavy price. Besides being threatened by cyclones, this region is also earthquake prone falling under Zone V.

Looking at the vulnerable condition of the fishing community in this region, SEEDS along with CARE India, conducted a study on feasibility of designing disaster resistant mobile shelters for the fishing community with the twin purpose of providing a good quality safe shelter, which they could also dismantle and carry back to their village when required. A rapid

assessment of the existing habitat was carried out which included space usage, materials, technology, services, family arrangements, clusters, etc Based on the field survey it was quite obvious that the habitat system in which coastal community is living right now is unsuitable and they are at risk to different hazards prevailing in the area.

The findings of this document would help associated organizations to take decision about the kind of the mobile shelter to provide to the marginalized fishing community. It would also help on deciding appropriate delivery mechanism for the mobile shelter.

Pan Himalayan Research Work

Pan-Himalayan Study on Indigenous Technology of Earthquake Resistant Construction of Historic Buildings (PAHSIB) was a combined initiative by SEEDS, National Society for Earthquake Technology (NSET) and Engineers for Sustainable World (ESW) to revive the indigenous building techniques in the pan Himalayan region. The Himalayan region that is so prone to natural disasters does not have an effective approach to construction practices as a method to mitigate the structural damages due to an earthquake. Lack of knowledge of safe construction technologies together with neglect of indigenous know-how has compounded the problem to a great extent.

The Pan Himalayan Research Work was conceived with the idea of studying and analyzing the historic buildings which has survived some of the deadly earthquakes in the past. The study seeks to restore and revive the technology involved in the construction of these buildings and rectify the

mistakes in the repair of the damaged structures, and thereby come out with an appropriate conservation strategy. The project is expected go a long way in fulfilling the much required need of coming out with a comprehensive conservation master plan of construction technology for the pan Himalayan region.



Forest Sector Reform Project

Appropriate and sustainable use and management of forests, water bodies and other natural resources is a must for maintaining the ecological balance and creating a disaster free society. The most critical target audience for addressing such knowledge are school children. Educating them not only makes schools and their areas safer, but the education also percolates to the larger society as the children transfer this knowledge to their families. Realizing this SEEDS decided to include the component of making students aware on the importance of forests within its ongoing School Earthquake Safety Initiative in District Shimla.

Through awareness material and demonstration of physical models displaying the importance of forests, the project aimed at creating awareness on the subject in pilot schools. Five school workshops were conducted and over five hundred students and teachers were educated on the subject.



Tsunami Learning Project

In 2007 -08 SEEDS continued to steer multi-country project for ADRRN that enhanced co-learning from rehabilitation and recovery approaches of Tsunami. The Tsunami Learning Project implemented across three worst affected countries: Indonesia, India and Sri Lanka was unique as it enabled experience sharing of humanitarian practices across borders and capture a dynamic recovery process.

The project identified several key learnings that related to diverse strategies in rehabilitation. From micro- credit programme to environmental friendly permanent housing programme, it helped to assess several approaches and share them amongst humanitarian practitioners. It also focused on implementation challenges and emerging issues on reconstruction and recovery process.

Through several exchange visits, workshops and primary research studies the project strengthened partnerships among various ADRRN members and facilitated better working relationships among key stakeholders. The entire learning was captured through a multi country film and book titled “Lessons that Matter” and a periodic journal “Resilience”.



GOLFRE

Global Open Learning Forum on Risk Education (GOLFRE) is a pedagogy that integrates knowledge that exists with frontline workers (NGO practitioners, school teachers, community workers) and academic research. Its mandate is to build knowledge resource and create human capital for an institutional approach to risk reduction. GOLFRE launched the Certificate Course on Disaster Management for Field Practitioners in 2007 in affiliation with CENDEP at Oxford Brookes University. The main objective of the course is to impart knowledge and training to field practitioners on efficient disaster management practices and bridge the gap between knowledge and practice. The course involves a teaching methodology based on relevant and interesting reading material, email discussions, assignments and a contact programme.

In all 105 trainees joined this course during 2007 which consisted of four batches in total. 55 participants from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, UK, Malawi and India enrolled in the first batch which commenced in August 2007. Most of these participants were officials of Christian Aid and few from other NGOs. Dan Church Aid sponsored the course for its 35 officials all over India, Bangladesh, and Nepal under its project "Communities Coping with Climate Change". Four



Transferable indigenous knowledge for disaster reduction

Under the National Research Institute for Earth Science and Disaster Prevention-Disaster Reduction Hyperbase (NIED-DRH) initiative, a study of transferable indigenous knowledge for disaster reduction was taken up at Asia level. DRH Asia took an initiative to research and document those indigenous practices in societies that have been developed and tested over a period of time and can be replicated in other parts of the world with similar climatic and topographical conditions. The intention was to help various communities by disseminating the knowledge developed by other communities over a period of time.

A workshop on transferable indigenous knowledge was also held at Anandgram, New Delhi, on 11-12 February 2008. It was attended by Disaster Risk Management professionals from various countries, and was technically supported by Kyoto University and the UN-ISDR. Christian Aid provided funding support for the workshop and CBS Co. Ltd. provided funding support for production of the report.



Communities coping with Climate Change

The project carried out between October and November was undertaken in collaboration with DanChurch Aid. The purpose was to develop and test a Social Vulnerability Assessment(SVA) tool by applying it to communities affected by climate change. For the purpose of the project two districts in coastal Orissa, Balasore and Kendrapara, were chosen. Parts of these districts have been affected due to sea water ingress due to sea level rise, increased frequency and intensity of disasters, loss of lives and livelihoods and damage to property due to disasters. In Balasore, the SVA tool was tested in Kirtania and Chandrabali villages of Bhograi

block and in Kendrapara it was tested in Kanhupur and Sattabhaya villages of Rajnagar block. The study helped successfully to develop a tool to assess factors affecting the vulnerability of coastal communities and also to determine the extent of vulnerability.

Climate Change in India: The role of civil society

Development agencies need to ensure that both their work is suitably resilient to climate change impacts and external advocacy compliments them. The other challenge is to ensure that programme goals are not affected and programme activities do not increase the climate vulnerability of the communities. Keeping these challenges in mind, Christian Aid in collaboration with SEEDS organized a partner workshop that debated on climate change scenario for the country and the role of developmental agencies.

A three day workshop was held in Delhi between June 28-29, 2007. Through the discussions, the workshop certainly achieved the significant first step of bringing climate change within the agenda of mutually exclusive development initiatives across the country. A country strategy paper based on the inputs from the experts was devised at the end of the three day consultative workshop.

The outcome document identified thematic areas of work, future focus and the approach to be adopted.



“Consuming today with no concern for tomorrow is not a winning philosophy. It is essential to look at the problems from a wider point of view inculcating issues like global warming, population crisis and food crisis within the ambit of disaster risk reduction.”

Prof. Tsuneo Katayama

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 and Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network.



Our Partners

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

Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC)
Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network (ADRRN)
Agra Nagar Nigam
Christian Aid
CARE India
CARE Society
CENDEP at Oxford Brookes University
The Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF)
Cities Alliance
CSA Co. Ltd.
Centre for Urban & Regional Excellence (CURE)
Dan Church Aid
The European Commission Humanitarian Aid Departments
Disaster Preparedness Programme (DIPECHO)
Engineers for Sustainable World
Forest Department Himachal Pradesh
Government of Orissa
Kyoto University
Mercy Malaysia
Mittal Foundation
European Commission Humanitarian Aid Department (ECHO)
National Disaster Management Authority
National Foundation for India
National Society for Earthquake Technology
Port Blair Municipal Corporation
SPHERE
United Nations Development Programme
University of Madras
United Nation Children's Fund
United Nation International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
United Nation Officer for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
United States Agency for International Development

Balance Sheet 07-08

Name of Society: Sustainable Environment & Ecological Development Society

Reg. Office: 315, Kallash Tower I, Mount Kallash, New Delhi - 110 065

Reg. No.: S/25402 of 1994

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2008

| Particulars | Schedule | Amount (Rs.) as on 31st March 2008 | Amount (Rs.) as on 31st March 2007 |
|-------------------------------------|----------|--|--|
| A - INCOME | | | |
| GRANTS & DONATION | 6 | 63,584,796.18 | 54,662,099.33 |
| INTEREST & OTHER INCOME | | 1,238,132.95 | 1,185,041.73 |
| | | <u>64,820,929.13</u> | <u>55,847,141.06</u> |
| B - EXPENDITURE | | | |
| EXPENDITURE ON PROJECTS | 7 | 38,578,961.94 | 35,103,679.61 |
| OTHER EXPENDITURE | | 540,842.26 | 161,743.45 |
| | (B) | <u>39,119,804.20</u> | <u>35,265,423.06</u> |
| C-EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE | (A-B) | 25,701,124.93 | 20,581,718.00 |
| LESS: TRANSFERRED TO SPECIFIC FUNDS | | 20,685,590.43 | 12,716,667.57 |
| BALANCE CARRIED TO BALANCE SHEET | | 5,015,534.50 | 7,865,050.43 |
| NOTES TO ACCOUNTS | 8 | | |

For RAKESH B. LAL & CO.
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS
New Delhi
RAJAT BEHARI LAL
(PARTNER)

Place : New Delhi
Dated: 16 Sept 2008

For Sustainable Environment & Ecological Development Society

Manu Gupta
(Vice President)

Anshu Sharma
(Secretary)



Annexure

BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE THROUGH EDUCATION: SCHOOL SAFETY AS A ROUTE TO A CULTURE OF PREVENTION

Anshu SHARMA, Manu GUPTA

SEEDS India

1. Building a Culture: A question of attitudinal change

Disaster prevention is a cultural issue. Certain societies are so particular about the minutiae of safety measures and preparatory actions that they spend a huge amount of resources in putting up infrastructure and support systems to protect lives of their citizens from the most improbable of disasters. Other societies have such a casual attitude towards disasters that the value attached to human lives is questionable. The less developed parts of the world fall in the latter category. These are also the parts where most of the world's poor people live on the most vulnerable lands, resulting in a high number of casualties from disasters each year.

Various international campaigns in the past decade have focused on building a culture of prevention. Yet, it has been very difficult to build this culture in those parts of the world that are most vulnerable, poorest, and most prone to recurrent disasters. Cultures cannot be built in short periods of time through externally imposed awareness campaigns. Cultures evolve over time, and need to come from within societies. Of course, this process can be catalysed, but the catalysts need to be more bottom-up than top-down.

One of the most appropriate catalysts for such a process of building a culture of prevention is education. Education influences a society's attitude, and as a result its behaviour, in many ways, starting from the basics and bringing about long term changes. Even within the less developed countries, there are wide disparities between the haves and have-nots. Across such disparities, a direct correlation can be found between the levels of education, access to resources, building of assets, and vulnerability to disasters. The least educated societies earn the minimum, are unable to live on safe lands, build safe houses, have financial support systems, and are mostly caught in a debt cycle wherein they are constantly chasing the target of recovering from recurrent small and big disasters. Moreover, the current pace of development has in many cases actually perpetrated disasters. e.g. new highways causing floods locally; freshly built houses being highly vulnerable to

earthquakes. The inability to link effects with their causes comes from lack of education and understanding of disaster reduction. In more recent times, global climatic changes are becoming increasingly visible and threatening. Effects of developments, as well as of climatic change, are usually long lasting and can cause permanent damage to natural environments.

The most viable point on which the cycle can be broken is access to and distribution of resources, which can be improved in a significant way through enhanced education. Education for safe living is a vital component of the overall education package in vulnerable communities.

2. Education – the backbone for propagating a culture

Education starts with influencing the foundations of knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and intentions, all of which lead to desired changes in behaviour. When the target is as specific as bringing about behavioural changes around disaster prevention, the task is achievable since its benefits can be easily demonstrated, and lead to a marked improvement in the quality of life.

Inculcating a culture of safety, and the building of resilience within a community, require a comprehensive and consistent effort on the education front. One-off awareness campaigns are unable to have much of an impact beyond short-term hype. Initiatives focusing on limited areas of action do not sustain as they fail in creating a wider understanding of the issue and an understanding-based learning.

Education “packaging” has to be aimed at bringing about permanent changes in behaviour through a gradual process. The target audience is important. Because the real benefits of disaster reduction can only manifest over a period of few years, the audience should therefore be able to see the fruits of their investments. Targeting youth, notably children becomes critical.

3. Schools – the cradle of each community

The most viable medium for carrying this catalyst into the social learning system are school children. Schools are present in all communities. Schools and schoolteachers are respected in all communities. What schools teach their students eventually reaches the larger community. The seeds that schools sow in terms of elementary education, grow into larger education and research agendas at higher levels, led by those who move ahead in life on the paths shown by their early education. In all respects, schools qualify as the most appropriate hubs for educating communities, cultivating and preserving cultures, and also for our purpose of ensuring the safety and sustainability of communities.

The entry into the school system for the purpose of building community resilience can effectively operate at the following levels:

- a. Making schools safer: Steps to make the school buildings and building contents safer in order to avoid casualties from building collapse, falling hazards and other structural and non-structural elements.
- b. Educating children on concepts through formal curriculum: Inclusion of disaster management in formal curriculum as a subject.
- c. Educating children on life skills through informal tools: Sensitising and training children on skills and tools to assess their risks and plan their actions, mostly achieved through tools such as games, activity books, hazard hunts and exposure activities.
- d. Equipping teachers to transfer learning in the most effective manner: Training of teachers, not only on the formal teaching of the subject of disaster management, but more importantly on transferring disaster risk reduction as a life skill.
- e. Involving parents as the link between the school and the larger community: Making school safety activities comprehensive by accounting for actions that will be required once the children have been secured, such as pick up by parents and continued safety at homes and other places where risks may be encountered.
- f. Engaging with local stakeholders for ensuring complementary roles: Involvement of emergency response services, government agencies and local civil society organizations to understand interdependence and to make best use of it for ensuring safety.

- g. Linking up with community plans and institutions for effective integration: Giving wider inter-connectivity of school safety and safety education initiatives through linkages with community plans and local institutions to ensure that plans are not in isolation but are well backed.

4. School children as an entry point for promoting disaster risk reduction

Addressing the issue of safety of children in schools has been a challenging process. In India, schools and the education system face heated public debate on the usefulness of current curricula and the need to address rapidly changing social and economic realities. Introducing a new subject, therefore, is not always welcomed. The programme had to be designed to cause minimal additional stress on students, while sending the message across succinctly in a manner that makes the absorption process natural.

Dr. Daisaku Ikeda's proposal *The Challenge of Global Empowerment: Education for a sustainable future*, aimed at introducing environmental education in schools, provided a useful cue in designing the disaster education intervention. Quoting the 1997 Thessaloniki Declaration – the concept of sustainability encompasses not only environment, but also poverty, population, health, food security, democracy, human rights and peace – Ikeda proposes that since these issues are so deeply interlinked, their resolution requires a fundamental rethinking of our way of life. The approach suggested in the proposal is as follows. Education for sustainable development should be promoted with the following three goals: To learn and deepen awareness of environmental issues and realities; To reflect on our modes of living, renewing these towards sustainability; To empower people to take concrete action to resolve the issues we face. These goals provide a useful framework for reaching out to school children in a manner that can be exciting and oriented towards concrete results.

Revisiting the goals stated in the Proposal from a disaster reduction perspective, provides the following approach:

To Learn: Students deepen their awareness about hazards and risks through understanding realities and knowing facts. Recent natural disasters have been well documented and shared. These serve as case studies for teachers as well as students. Wherever needed, disasters are simulated with the help of portable models. Curriculum changes strengthen the learning process.

To Reflect: Students analyze reasons that have led to

loss of life and injury in disasters. They are able to make the distinction in development practices and people's actions that can cause disasters or prevent them. Students connect to their own local communities and families and share their learning with them.

To Empower: Students take concrete action toward lowering risks in the environment. Classroom and school exercises are introduced to help them take small definitive actions that can become a precursor to bigger investments for disaster risk reduction. School Management prepares school disaster management plans in which roles and responsibilities are identified and rehearsed periodically.

The stated approach translates into the following interventions carried out at school level:

- Raising awareness of disaster issues among the targeted stakeholders (students, teachers, school management and others) through lectures, discussions, posters, drama (street play) and demonstration;
- Identifying and listing hazards and vulnerabilities outside the school as well as structural and non-structural hazards inside the school;
- Identifying and listing ways of reducing vulnerabilities;
- Identifying the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders;
- Training teachers on how to prepare a school evacuation plan and preparing a school evacuation plan;
- Building emergency response capacity, focusing on skills such as rescue and first aid (training provided to student groups);
- Listing, in the school disaster management plan, the contact information of all facilities and resources for emergency management;
- Conducting a mock drill, at the end of the school safety activities, to demonstrate the evacuation, rescue and first aid skills acquired by the students;
- Keeping targeted schools informed through a newsletter;
- Promoting School Safety Clubs to sustain risk education.

5. Empowering teachers

Teachers play a crucial role in ensuring the safety of children in school. The authors' experience in interacting with teachers during the implementation of school safety programmes revealed their keen interest in contemporary issues that catch the

attention of the children. Stories from live events, such as most recent major catastrophes, their scientific perspective and follow up steps that children are expected to take, are areas of interest which teachers like to incorporate in their lessons.

Further, teachers act as guardians to children in school. In the event of emergency evacuation, the teachers take on the role of "Emergency Managers" guiding actions that children need to take.

Teachers also serve as links between parents and children. Parents rely on teachers for the welfare and upbringing of their children. There is, hence, an implicit trust reposed on teachers. A trust that can potentially be reinforced if teachers can also provide a guarantee to parents that children are 'safe' under their teachers' care.

In formal school setup, however, school level disaster management does not figure in the 'job task' of the teachers. Teachers find it as an 'additional responsibility' and sometimes, even as burden to be learning skills and practicing disaster management.

The approach to school safety, therefore needs to take a 'complementary' approach where teachers' are able to view the subject as an extension of their existing curricula. Much work needs to be done in interpreting disaster reduction through mainline subjects such as science, mathematics, physical education and social studies. Currently, in most cases, disaster management is integrated with geography, however viewed from a larger perspective this may not be adequate. Practical lessons in life saving skills add value to existing classes on physical education. Similarly, the subject of science can provide a useful framework for understanding cause-effect relationships, which would help students reflect better on the inherent links between ourselves and our natural environments.

6. Distance learning – a vital tool for teacher training

The scale of actions required for an approach of inculcating a culture of safety and building community resilience to be effective is too wide to be addressed through conventional means. Though there have been a number of successful pilot initiatives in the past years, it will take very long for these pilots to translate into norms across the entire target of vulnerable communities of the world at the current pace and given formal nature of propagation.

In this light, the new and emerging models of distance learning, specifically at strategic levels such as that of schoolteachers, are going to bring about the critical change in gear required for complete coverage. Distance learning programmes of the World Bank

Institute, Global Open Learning Forum on Risk Education, African Centre for Disaster Studies and other institutions are opening up windows of opportunities for schoolteachers, who are one of the frontline workers in the disaster management field. A large majority of these school teachers are based in remote locations, with almost zero accessibility and hopelessly low affordability levels for the existing formal training programmes on disaster management to be of use to them. Distance learning is the only way for these critical stakeholders to gain state-of-the-art knowledge on the subject.

7. The agenda now

Coinciding with the United Nations' International Strategy for Disaster Reduction campaign for 2006-07, "Disaster Reduction Begins at School", an International Conference on School Safety took place at Ahmedabad, India from the 18th to 20th of January 2007. An important outcome of the conference is the "Ahmedabad Agenda of Action for School Safety" which summarizes important contributions made by school safety champions, as well as "users" – school communities that have been exposed to safety programmes.

Reaffirming the Priority for Action 3 of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, to use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels, and the UN Millennium Development Goals (Goal 2) to Achieve Universal Primary Education by the year 2015, the Ahmedabad Agenda of Action for School Safety sets the goal of achieving:

"Zero Mortality of Children in Schools from Preventable Disaster by the year 2015"

Towards achieving this goal, the following immediate actions have been laid out:

- To include disaster risk reduction in the formal curriculum at both primary as well as secondary levels.
- To promote disaster risk reduction through co-curricular activities in schools acknowledging that school children need to develop "survival skills" first, along with "life skills" and "academic inputs."
- Complete risk assessment and safety measures must be undertaken to ensure zero potential damage to new school buildings.
- Mandatory safety audit of all existing school buildings with respect to their location, design and quality of construction and prioritizing them for

demolition, retrofit or repair.

- Mobilize parent, student, local community and school staff to champion school safety.

In addition to the aforesaid "immediate" priorities, the Agenda outlines following long-term actions with targets for 2015 :

- Promote exclusive initiatives among children in schools that make them leaders in risk reduction in the community.
- Ensure effective partnership among schools to share risk reduction education and achieve higher levels of school safety.
- Develop, implement and enforce codes with the performance objective of making all new school buildings ready for immediate occupancy following any disaster to serve as shelters or safe havens for the community as well as to restore educational functions in the shortest possible time.
- Implement a systematic plan to retrofit and/or repair existing schools to meet minimum standards for life safety in the event of known or expected hazards. Demolish unsafe irreparable school buildings and replace them.
- Implement routine checks to ensure schools adhere to minimum standards and safety measures are not undermined.
- Schools to prepare and implement school safety plans including measures to be taken both within school premises and in the immediate neighbourhood. This must include regular safety drills.
- Promote active dialogue and exchange between schools and local leaders including police, civil defense, fire safety, search and rescue, medical and other emergency service providers.
- School children must practice safety measures in all aspects and places of their lives.

The Agenda also identifies various stakeholders and their roles and responsibilities in the implementation of the actions outlined. Every parent, school principal, teacher, child, government policy maker, pedagogic/scientific/technical expert, non-governmental organization, intergovernmental organization, private sector, mass media should consider himself or herself to be a stakeholder and hence a "Champion of School Safety". The following roles are expected to be played by various stakeholders :

National / State-Province / Local Education**Authorities:**

- Accept responsibility for ensuring the safety of school children.
- Include disaster risk reduction training/education elements in educational curriculum throughout all grades/classes.
- Establish and implement strategies, policies and regulations for safe school facilities
- Allocate resources for construction/retrofitting of safe schools and training
- Promote, facilitate and incorporate disaster risk reduction in teacher-training programme across institutes/colleges/universities.

School Community (School Administrators and Teachers)

- Ensure teachers and non-teaching staff receive the opportunity for training in disaster risk reduction.
- Be accountable for applying proscribed safety norms and regulations in their own schools.
- Ensure active participation of school community, including children and parents, in preparing and implementing school disaster plans and disaster risk reduction efforts.
- Be prepared to respond to emergencies.
- Encourage and support children to participate in spreading disaster risk reduction knowledge, acting as bridges to families and communities.

National/State-Province / Local Disaster Management Authorities:

- Collaborate with and involve education authorities in planning policies, minimum standards and regulation for ensuring school safety.
- Promote effective methodologies for active learning, integration of disaster risk reduction education in formal curriculum of schools.

Inter-governmental Organizations, Development Banks, and Donors

- Mainstream disaster risk reduction in schools through appropriate line item allocation of funds and standard operating procedures.
- Integrate safety and disaster risk reduction into policy and strategic planning for schools and education sector.

- Leadership to educate larger donor group policy-makers in longer-term issues of school safety and disaster risk reduction.
- Develop monitoring tools and set-up independent auditing processes to evaluate school and education sector projects from a disaster risk reduction perspective and in adherence with the established standards.

Non-Governmental Organizations (local, regional and international)

- Establish ongoing links with academic/scientific/research institutions and experts for development of training programs, delivery of training programs, and research on impacts and outcomes.
- Initiate coalitions for school safety at every level, local, district, state, national, regional and global levels.
- Integrate disaster risk reduction into mainstream development and aid activities, including adoption of standards and standard operating procedures that ensure physical safety of school buildings.
- Mainstream disaster risk reduction in schools through appropriate advocacy and communication to common citizens.

United Nations

- Allocate resources to develop focal points for knowledge sharing at regional and global level.
- Promote use of Hyogo Framework for Action as a reference for actions on the Education for Disaster Risk Management
- UNISDR take lead UN role in advocacy and education of national governments, decision-makers for strategic policy intervention for disaster risk reduction.
- UN agencies collaborate to develop and promote good practices in school structural safety and disaster risk reduction education in all forms.
- Coordinate comprehensive library and online catalogue of disaster risk reduction educational materials and tools. (UNESCO/ISDR)
- Reach out to include all school safety efforts in Education Platform worldwide, reflecting local activities as part of larger objectives. (UNISDR)

Children and Youth

- Learn principles and practices of disaster risk reduction

- Become aware of disaster risks in your own community and how to reduce them
- Participate in preparing and implementing school disaster plans and disaster risk reduction efforts
- Participate in drills and appropriate response to early warnings available in your school or community
- Participate as bridges to spread disaster risk reduction knowledge to families and communities.
- Advocate at all levels to keep school safety a priority until it is achieved
- Share advocacy materials, and good practices to support school advocates globally.
- Nurture and support school safety leadership and champions at all levels.
- Encourage formal and informal groups and individuals to affiliate for the purposes of mutual support in creating the momentum needed to accomplish these goals

Mass Media and Social Marketers

- Participate in training to learn background on hazard, risk and risk reduction information
- Participate in the development, refinement and implementation of code of conduct for disaster reporting, especially with respect to children and schools
- Engage as responsible partners in creating awareness and encouraging action for disaster risk reduction and school safety.

Pedagogic/Scientific/Technical Experts

- Adopt and incorporate a children's rights approach to school safety.
- Develop and disseminate training modules for awareness, assessment and planning, physical protection and response capacity skills and provisioning.
- Provide technical assistance and guidance in refining and improving educational materials and learning aids for disaster risk reduction.
- Involve all stakeholders in participatory development of training resources and research.

Private Sector

- Engage as local community stakeholder and partner with other stakeholders in school safety
- Promote in-kind, material and financial support to promote disaster risk reduction and school safety activities.
- Link private schools to public school safety and disaster risk reduction efforts at all levels.
- Insure schools against physical losses in disaster.

Coalition for Global School Safety

- Serve as an independent umbrella to link school safety advocates globally for the long-term tasks of both school disaster risk reduction, and disaster risk reduction education through schools.

8. From schools to communities

Over the past decade, school safety has gained ground in the developing world and there have been numerous commendable programmes that have demonstrated that schools are a viable entry vehicle for disaster reduction initiatives in any community. The appeal attached to working with children, the universally accepted principle that children must be made safe first, and the concerted efforts of the disaster management community have helped in bringing this agenda to the forefront. Some of the notable achievements in the past years have been:

In Algeria, following the 2003 Boumerdes earthquake, stories were included in the lessons for the primary school section to teach students about the disaster.

In Turkey, more than 2,000 volunteer teachers from 50 provinces participated in the Distance Learning Basic Disaster Awareness self study program from 2003-2005.

In Iran, Earthquake Safety Drills, which started as a pilot project in 1996 to cover 100 schools, have now expanded to cover more than 14 million school students of primary, secondary and higher schools across the country.

At the same time, such initiatives have paid dividends far beyond the boundary walls of the schools they have worked with. The message given to children travels far, reaching their parents and relatives, and eventually the entire society. Recognizing the importance of community participation, evacuation drills involving the community have been greatly encouraged across countries.

A school earthquake safety programme in Shimla, India, has specifically focused on the involvement of parents in school safety drills. Not only is this good for entire families to know how to respond to a disaster and how to complement each other's actions, it also helps a larger cohesive preparedness action at the community level as it brings various stakeholders together; something that doesn't happen easily otherwise. During the drills, children, teachers, school

staff, parents, fire services, civil defence, medical responders and local government officials all come together and find out through practice how well or poorly prepared they are to face an emergency. They assess, plan and rehearse together, and learn the value of preparedness at a societal level.

Further initiatives in the region are taking this approach of 'school to community safety', wherein an integration of school disaster management plans and community disaster management plans is targeted through measures described above. Community based disaster management planning has been the focus of many programmes over the past decade. They have been organized under Community Based Disaster Management (CBDM), Community Based Disaster Preparedness (CBDP), Community Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) and other banners, but the essence has been constant in terms of community organizations being established, assisted in preparing local disaster management plans, organized into task forces, and trained for specific tasks. The problem with this approach has been that the task forces have remained dependent on external support, and have in most cases ceased to be effective after the external aid agencies have withdrawn. Even linking up with local governance mechanisms has not proved very effective. While local governance institutions lend a stronger sense of legitimacy to the initiatives, they also bring in a high level of politicization.

Convergence of school safety and community based disaster management programmes addresses this problem since schools are present everywhere, and are neutral as well as respected institutions across the board. Their vibrancy is constant over time. The turnover of students ensures a fresh stream of actions and dissemination endlessly, once the systems have been established and the duty bearers have taken it upon themselves to keep them running. Establishing systems of school safety and getting the conviction of the school community has been successfully demonstrated in a number of models across the developing world, some of which are mentioned above in this paper.

9. Final Comment

Over a third of India's billion plus population is in the school going age. The country is vulnerable to multiple hazards. In order to be able to make a tangible change, it would require a sustained effort for at least a decade. Fortunately, unlike the little progress made in other areas, school safety has found quick acceptance among stakeholders in the country. Events that occurred in the earlier part of the current decade, such as the 2001 earthquake, and directions provided by the

Hyogo Framework for Action have contributed in achieving strong government support through legal and policy instruments that would ensure that current initiatives have the capability to make a definite impact. Civil society organizations have taken up safety and protection of school children as an important concern in their agenda. Parents and teachers are increasingly voicing their worries about the need for attention in this area.

Ultimately, the effect of undertaking the path of school safety as a means of building community resilience would depend on the extent to which initiatives translate into public policy and are backed up by sustained institutional support. Forging partnerships amongst stakeholders can enable policy and institutional backing. This is as crucial as the content and approach of the programme, so that we are able to secure both our present and our future generations from the next big disaster.

References:

1. The Challenge of Global Empowerment : Education for a Sustainable Future. Daisaku Ikeda. www.sgi.org/english/President/envirom_prop/global.htm
2. United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction's Hyogo Framework for Action <http://www.unisdr.org/eng/hfa/hfa.htm>
3. Inamura no Hi. Tsunami Awareness Education Material, www.adrc.or.jp/publications/inamura/top.html
4. School Awareness and Safety Programme.
5. Social Science Syllabus for Classes IX & X. www.cbse.nic.in
6. SEEDS School Safety Programme www.seedsindia.org/schoolsafety, School Earthquake Safety Programme www.seedsindia.org/SEESIS

Ahmedabad Action Agenda for School Safety

The International Conference on School Safety¹ was held from 18th to 20th January, 2007 in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India. Reaffirming **The Priority for Action 3** of the **Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015**, to Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels, the **UN Millennium Development Goal** (Goal 2) to **Achieve Universal Primary Education** by the year 2015, the participants recognize that every child has both the right to education and the right to safe and sustainable living, hereby set themselves the goal of achieving in solidarity.

“Zero Mortality of Children in Schools from Preventable Disasters by the year 2015”

To achieve the above goal the participants adopted the following action agenda for school safety (hereafter referred to Ahmedabad Action Agenda). The actions are outlined under immediate priority and long term accomplishments (i.e. by 2015).

Disaster Risk Reduction Education In Schools

Immediate Priority

Action 1.a: Include disaster risk reduction in the formal curriculum at both primary as well as secondary levels.

Education must address an understanding of root causes that lead to disasters² and environmental problems that are intimately connected to our daily lives. Education must inculcate a sense of responsibility for effecting a positive change on both local and global scale.

Action 1.b: Promote disaster risk reduction through co-curricular activities in schools acknowledging that children in schools³ need to develop “survival/life skills” first, along with “academic inputs”.

Co-curricular activities must include basic disaster awareness and disaster risk reduction, mock drills, first aid training, training on fire safety and other response skills as appropriate (e.g. light search and rescue, swimming, evacuation and emergency shelter creation).

By 2015

Action 1.c: Promote exclusive initiatives among children in schools that make them leaders in risk reduction in the community.

Children must serve as role models in the community and provide exposure on responsible practices and behavior in the community. Children in schools must reach out to those under-privileged and non-school going children.

Action 1.d: Ensure effective partnership among schools to share risk reduction education and achieve higher levels of school safety.

Local, Regional, National, Global coalitions/school networks must be encouraged to share and learn good practices on school safety.

Disaster Resistant School Infrastructure

Immediate Priority

Action 2.a: Complete risk assessment and safety measures must be undertaken to ensure zero potential damage to new school buildings.

Minimum standards must be established for school construction, considering schools as critical infrastructure. Building codes are expected to be in place, promulgated, and enforced by national, regional and local governments. All new school buildings must adhere to minimum international standards.

Public authorities need to reach out to communities who self-build schools, to promulgate these standards and provide technical assistance, including, if necessary, engineering guidance and construction-worker training on disaster resistant construction.

¹ “School Safety” refers to safe environments for children starting from their homes to their schools and back. This includes safety from large-scale ‘natural’ hazards of geological/climatic origin, human-made risks, pandemics, violence as well as more frequent and smaller-scale fire, transportation and other emergencies, and environmental threats that adversely affect the lives of children.

² “Disaster” a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society causing widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources. (UN/ISDR terminology)

³ “Children in schools” refers to children while they are in school premises, as well as on their way to or back from school.

Action 2.b: Mandatory safety audit of all existing school buildings with respect to their location, design and quality of construction and prioritizing them for demolition, retrofit or repair.

Safety audits must adhere to the minimum standards. Both knowledge and physical resource to ensure audits and repair must be made easily accessible to school community. Audits must be recognized and encouraged by local government/education department.

By 2015

Action 2.c: Develop, implement and enforce codes with the performance objective of making all new school buildings ready for immediate occupancy following any disaster to serve as shelters or safe havens for the community as well as to restore educational functions in the shortest possible time.

Since schools are important post-disaster shelters, safe havens, emergency operations centers, and needed for educational continuity, “immediate occupancy” should be the performance standard of choice, and school buildings should serve as models of disaster-resistant construction.

Action 2.d: Implement a systematic plan to retrofit and/or repair existing schools to meet minimum standards of life safety in the event of known or expected hazards. Demolish unsafe irreparable school buildings and replace them.

To prevent avoidable deaths and injuries of children in schools, as well as to ensure that they serve as post-disaster shelter that can be retrofitted or repaired, school buildings must fall within the purview of safety standards. Unsafe buildings must be demolished and replaced with safe new buildings.

Action 2.e: Implement routine checks to ensure schools adhere to minimum standards and safety measures are not undermined.

Maintenance of school facilities and resources must be done periodically. Physical resources like fire safety equipments, first-aid kits must be regularly updated. Similarly non-structural mitigation of equipments and furniture, evacuation plans, building survey and hazard mapping must be reviewed periodically. This ensures effective response during any contingency.

Safe School & Community Environments

Immediate Priority

Action 3.a: Mobilize parent, student, local community and school staff to champion school

safety.

Encourage parents, students, local community and staff to actively engage in discussions and action planning for school safety with school administrators, authorities and governments.

By 2015

Action 3.b: Schools to prepare and implement school safety plans including measures to be taken both within school premises and in the immediate neighbourhood. This must include regular safety drills.

Schools shall recognize risks both within their own premises and in their immediate neighbourhoods, identify and assess resources available for meeting emergency needs, prepare short term plans for preparedness and outlining measures for disaster risk reduction. Safety drills include fire safety, evacuation process, earthquake drills (Duck, Cover and Hold), drills for flood safety, and learning early warning signs and communication systems for storms and other hazards.

Action 3.c: Promote active dialogue and exchange between schools and local leaders including police, civil defence, fire safety, search and rescue, medical and other emergency service providers.

Recognizing that school communities must be prepared to meet their own disaster response needs for a period of time, active dialogue and exchange helps to prioritize and co-ordinate assistance by emergency services. Advance planning optimize the need for expert resource and also make the school community resilient.

Action 3.d: Children in school must practice safety measures in all aspects and places of their lives.

This focus on school safety is intended to build momentum for a culture of safety that extends to all parts of life, and to become as natural to daily life as health, hygiene and environmental concerns. Safety practices must be internalized to bring in tangible changes.

Advocacy and Government Policy on School Safety

Immediate Priority

Action 4.a: A policy on school safety which would eventually be integrated with the existing policies on school education must be framed.

State/National Government must ensure a policy

framework on disaster risk reduction education and safe school infrastructure with active participation from schools, national/local educational authorities and community at large.

By 2015

Action 4.b: Enforce policy through budgetary allocation, strategic programs and effective monitoring.

State/National Government must implement school safety through enactment (legal support), resource allocation, effective advocacy and strategic programs. All national/state governments must aim for zero loss of life in schools due to any calamity.

Stakeholders, Roles and Responsibility

To implement the Actions outlined above, every parent, school principal, teacher, child, government policy maker, pedagogic/scientific/technical expert, non-governmental organization, intergovernmental organization, private sector, mass media should consider themselves to be a stakeholder and hence a “Champion of School Safety” bearing the following responsibilities.

National/ State-Province/ Local Education Authorities

- Accept responsibility for ensuring the safety of schoolchildren.
- Include disaster risk reduction training/education elements in educational curriculum throughout all grades/classes.
- Establish and implement strategies, policies and regulations for safe school facilities.
- Allocate resources for construction/retrofitting of safe schools and training.
- Promote, facilitate and incorporate disaster risk reduction in teacher-training programme across institutes/colleges/universities.

School Community (School Administrators and Teachers)

- Ensure teachers and non-teaching staff receive the opportunity for training in disaster risk reduction.
- Be accountable for applying proscribed safety norms and regulations in their own schools.
- Ensure active participation of school community, including children and parents, in preparing and implementing school disaster plans and disaster risk reduction efforts.

- Be prepared to respond to emergencies.
- Encourage and support children to participate in spreading disaster risk reduction knowledge, acting as bridges to families and communities.

National/ State-Province/ Local Disaster Management Authorities

- Collaborate with and involve education authorities in planning policies, minimum standards and regulation for ensuring school safety.
- Promote effective methodologies for active learning, integration of disaster risk reduction education in formal curriculum of schools.

Inter-governmental Organizations, Development Banks and Donors

- Mainstream disaster risk reduction in schools through appropriate line item allocation of funds and standard operating procedures.
- Integrate safety and disaster risk reduction into policy and strategic planning for schools and education sector.
- Leadership to educate larger donor group policy-makers in longer-term issues of school safety and disaster risk reduction.
- Develop monitoring tools and set-up independent auditing processes to evaluate school and education sector projects from a disaster risk reduction perspective and in adherence with the established standards.

Non-Governmental Organizations (local, regional and international)

- Establish ongoing links with academic/scientific/research institutions and experts for development of training programs, delivery of training programs, and research on impacts and outcomes.
- Initiate coalitions for school safety at every level: local, district, state, national, regional and global.
- Integrate disaster risk reduction into mainstream development and aid activities, including adoption of standards and standard operating procedures that ensure physical safety of school buildings.
- Mainstream disaster risk reduction in schools through appropriate advocacy and communication to common citizens.

United Nations

- Allocate resources to develop focal points for knowledge sharing at regional and global level.
- Promote use of Hyogo Framework for Action as a reference for actions on the Education for Disaster

Risk Management.

- UN/ISDR take lead UN role in advocacy and education of national governments, decision-makers for strategic policy intervention for disaster risk reduction.
- UN agencies collaborate to develop and promote good practices in school structural safety and disaster risk reduction education in all forms.
- Coordinate comprehensive library and online catalogue of disaster risk reduction educational materials and tools. (UNESCO/ISDR).
- Reach out to include all school safety efforts in Education Platform worldwide, reflecting local activities as part of larger objectives. (UN/ISDR).

Children and Youth

- Learn principles and practices of disaster risk reduction.
- Become aware of disaster risks in your own community and how to reduce them.
- Participate in preparing and implementing school disaster plans and disaster risk reduction efforts.
- Participate in drills and appropriate response to early warnings available in your school or community.
- Participate as bridges to spread disaster risk reduction knowledge to families and communities.

Mass Media and Social Marketers

- Participate in training to learn background on hazard, risk and risk reduction information.
- Participate in the development, refinement and implementation of code of conduct for disaster reporting, especially with respect to children and schools.
- Engage as responsible partners in creating awareness and encouraging action for disaster risk reduction and school safety.

Pedagogic/Scientific/Technical Experts

- Adopt and incorporate a children's rights approach to school safety.
- Develop and disseminate training modules for awareness, assessment and planning, physical protection and response capacity skills and provisioning.
- Provide technical assistance and guidance in refining and improving educational materials and learning aids for disaster risk reduction.
- Involve all stakeholders in participatory development of training resources and research.

Private Sector

- Engage as local community stakeholder and partner with other stakeholders in school safety.
- Promote in-kind, material and financial support to promote disaster risk reduction and school safety activities.
- Link private schools to public school safety and disaster risk reduction efforts at all levels.
- Insure schools against physical losses in disaster.

Coalition for Global School Safety

- Serve as an independent umbrella to link school safety advocates globally for the long-term tasks of both school disaster risk reduction, and disaster risk reduction education through schools.
- Advocate at all levels to keep school safety a priority until it is achieved.
- Share advocacy materials, and good practices to support school advocates globally.
- Nurture and support school safety leadership and champions at all levels.
- Encourage formal and informal groups and individuals to affiliate for the purposes of mutual support in creating the momentum needed to accomplish these goals.



SEEDS

15/A Institutional Area, R. K. Puram,
Sector - IV, New Delhi - 110022

SEEDS INDIA www.seedsindia.org

Cover: A beneficiary standing in her shelter being constructed under the Barmer Aashray Yojana. Barmer was the worst affected district during the 2006 floods in Rajasthan. SEEDS has intervened to construct 300 intermediate shelters for the most marginalised and socially excluded families.