

Learning School Safety for Making Education Safer



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Linking School Safety and Disaster Risk Reduction

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Write Shop: A Participatory Learning Tool

Documentation of project learning and field experiences has always been a challenge for development workers. A write shop is an intensive process aimed at bringing together a range of relevant stakeholders to produce a publication in a very short period of time. Write shops are an excellent way of bringing together different groups (experts from field and academics, NGO staff, policy makers, government etc.) with different perspectives on the subject. Write shops enable participants that have different working backgrounds to get the same understanding of ground-level best practices which can result in a simple, user friendly and a high quality document.

The School safety campaign has generated awareness among school stakeholders including children through trainings, mitigation measures in schools, demonstrations, mock drills and insurance for school students and teachers. They are insured against all sorts of accidents so that families are not financially burdened for their treatment.

The write shop was aimed to bridge the existing knowledge gap between the planned and actual process adopted in school safety program in Coastal India by different institutions. The main objectives of the write shop were: to learn from partner's experiences in their field as well model; to understand the similarity and differences in approaches; to give practical ideas to each other and also to receive feedback or suggestions from others and; to replicate good practices of other partners in organization's ongoing project activities.

The write shop was prepared well in advance by collecting basic



All photographs in this issue by AIDMI.

Write shop brought all the stakeholders to a common platform for sharing and learning as well as documentation.

information about the work and approach of participating organisations. The methodology consisted of the following key elements:

- Understanding the knowledge needs of different partners
- Hands-on training cum discussion through presentations that included practical experiences, and examples leading to discussions
- Finally, filling up the write shop questionnaire

Such one-day write shop on School Safety was held in the Villupuram district of Tamil Nadu on March 11, 2013 conducted jointly by Association for Stimulating Know How (ASK), West Bengal Voluntary Health Association (WBVHA), Kalvi Kendra and All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI). It was divided into two parts; first part was to visit the school and second was in-house discussion as well documentation. The main participants included representatives of the organising institutions, panchayat presidents, school teachers and head masters.

Each participant including WBVHA, AIDMI and Kalvi Kendra presented their work done in the area of school

safety; and the processes they adopted. Through presentations, vulnerability and impacts of cyclones and floods on schools were shared with the participants. The presentations demonstrated how the trainings and mock-drills have been successful in instilling the idea of safer schools among government and the local NGOs. Also information was shared on reducing risks in Villupuram district and explaining what, how and which measures could be taken. The partners urged to replicate school safety program in other parts of India.

To make education safer, three dimensions must be considered: one, structure must be safe; second, students must be well informed about their human rights during disasters, and lastly, the teachers and children must be prepared before and after the disaster. Organisations such as AIDMI created a program that answers these 3 basic needs. It organises training and sensitization programmes in order to instil the importance of school safety, disaster risk reduction and preparedness among school children and their parents. AIDMI with its local partner Kalvi Kendra has been doing some impressive work at grass root level; community manages risks without

Kalvi Kendra's tutelage, which demonstrates how successful the implementation has been. Kalvi Kendra is now taking the initiative to involve government in all of its projects which will not only increase the efficiency of the program but will increase its reach.

On the other hand, WBVHA undertook a survey before implementing school safety program where they found that several children living in temporary shelters were psychologically traumatized by tsunami. WBVHA in partnership with NIMHANS, Bangalore initiated trauma counselling for children and adults. Acknowledging these efforts, WBVHA is chosen to be a technical support in Andaman and Nicobar Islands to implement National School Safety Programme (NSSP) in all 400 schools. WBVHA with directorate of disaster management and Department of Education has been organising mock drills and trainings to ensure that students and teachers are well informed practically and theoretically.

"Write shop is a wonderful initiative for learning; it brings different partners together on same platform to share their learning and experiences."

- Prakash Layak,
Manager of Building Capacity Division,
ASK



The write shop was clearly observed as the window of opportunity by AIDMI and its partners in one way or other to improve the condition of the community that led to recovery. The main suggestions post discussion and presentations were:

- Trainings and refreshers training jointly with government, not only in schools but for the community will make them better prepared and well aware.
- Creating awareness among students either in form of studies by introducing a disaster

management module in school curriculum; or in form of an extra-curricular activity by creating children's club.

- Showing the teachers and members of panchayat the implementation and success of school safety program by taking them to other parts of India where the program is successfully implemented. This will to boost their confidence and increase the commitment. ■

- Prakash Layak
Manager of Building Capacity Division,
ASK India

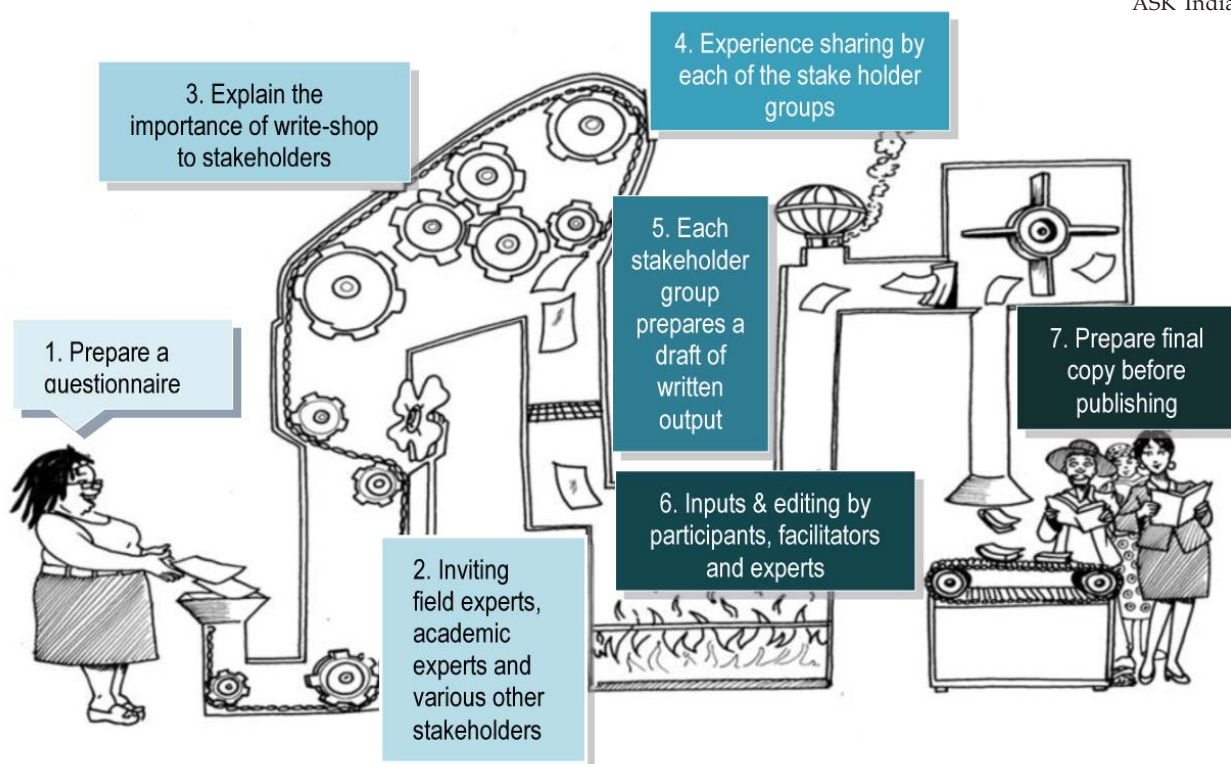


Photo Source: Agri-ProFocus Gender in Value Chains Learning Network. Available at: <http://genderinvaluechains.ning.com/page/writeshop-1>

Our School is Safer Now!

Villupuram district is located in the south-eastern coastal state of Tamil Nadu, India and is at extreme risk from cyclones, floods, tsunamis, and in more recent years, climate change. They were dangerously affected by the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, tropical cyclones Nilam and Thane in 2008 and 2011 respectively. Being located in impoverished and remote areas, and being highly under-resourced, many schools of the district were in critical need of assistance during and post these disasters. AIDMI and its partners have been involved in the school safety program where the mitigation measures have been taken to make schools safer.

As a part of write shop, we visited to one such school called Panchayat Union Middle School in Konganpattu of Villupuram district, Pondicherry, Tamil Nadu. The secondary school has 190 students and 8 teachers.

No task is as important as creating safe learning environment for our nation's children. Being prepared for disasters means being aware about disaster risks; knowing what to do about them, and having the right skills to take the appropriate actions. The school authorities were familiar with the importance of the dos and don'ts, impacts, preparedness, and

early warning for cyclones, tsunamis, floods, fire and epidemics. They understood the risks and potential hazards faced by the students and teachers - which included the proximity to the highway; two rivers surrounding the village that is often flooded during monsoon and; vulnerable school building that can collapse due to cyclonic winds. The first two hazards cannot be removed, therefore only mitigated. Such awareness about the potential risks and hazards reflect the effectiveness of government initiatives on the school safety issues and early warning systems.

Thane cyclone had adverse impacts on the district; it led to the collapse of one of the school building; which was later re-build by the Panchayat. Such disasters shift the focus of both children and parents from studies to survival issues; and therefore having a major impact on education of children. Kalvi Kendra - a local NGO initiated awareness training programs for students and teachers with the panchayat. They believe that children can effectively take the message to the parents and therefore community. The school authorities, teachers with Kalvi Kendra and panchayat have taken several steps for school safety including:

- Special modules have been designed to train both teachers and students post-school (in the evenings) to understand the risks and measures that they can take to mitigate those risks
- Children are being trained to swim as the area is prone to floods
- The schools are provided with 2 fire extinguishers; both teachers and students are trained to use them in an event of a fire
- Spreading awareness among students about the dengue epidemic; its impacts, symptoms prevention and cure measures

Another major concern of the school was its proximity to main road; AIDMI and its partners suggested Kalvi Kendra to implement measures such as road safety student education program covering topics like how to cross roads safely, road rules, simple traffic signals, and common road hazards; and have special road crossings for students.

The principal of the school, Mr. Ponirussen feels the schools are disaster resilient and that the school teachers and students are well prepared and trained. With the trainings provided by Kalvi Kendra and Panchayat, school administrators and teachers feel they are now self-sufficient and can rely on their own resources to protect students and its immediate surroundings. He suggested that the teachers' training for disaster risk reduction must be conducted regularly should be expanded in a way that the whole village is a part of the training - only then will the community understand the importance of disaster risk reduction and preparedness programs. ■

- Khyati Halani

All India Disaster Mitigation Institute



Group discussion at the Panchayat Union Middle School where teachers and principal share how the schools are safer now.

Mainstreaming School Safety in Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu

Due to the proximity of Cuddalore district to coastline, it is vulnerable to cyclones, tsunamis, erosion, storms and coastal floods. A primarily rural district where large number of people depend on fishing for their livelihoods. Cuddalore had borne the full brunt of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami and Cyclone Thane. It is anticipated that the climate change will increase the risks of disasters in Cuddalore. Due to lack of resources and adequate expertise, many schools need assistance during and post disasters.

Cuddalore was very severely affected by the Thane cyclone and had substantial losses in terms of many lives, livestock, agricultural crop land and infrastructure. Such disasters affect students' education as their normal school days are disrupted. Moreover the situations and survival gets difficult post floods that leads increase in the drop-out rate of students from schools. A program should be initiated in such disaster prone districts so that the school authorities and communities are better prepared and aware about the measures that should be taken in times of such calamities. School Safety Audit helps both schools to identify their possible areas to strengthen and; government/ school authority to allocate resources for school safety

Keeping this impact in mind, All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI) jointly with the Department of Education, Cuddalore and local partner Kalvi Kendra worked on the issues of school safety and their preparedness for disasters in Tamil Nadu. On the December 6, 2012 training was conducted for the five Block BRTes (Block Resource Teacher Education) of Cuddalore district



Students at the school in Villupuram district.

(Cuddalore, Kumaratchi, Kurinjipadi, Paruti and Parangipetti); that trained them to conduct assessment of schools in regard to safety.

In-depth surveys of the schools in the five blocks were initiated in December, 2012. 93 schools were assigned to do assessment on the



"Write shops give an opportunity to participants working in different backgrounds to get same understanding of ground level best practices."

- **B. Venkatesh**, Assistant Project Officer, Cuddalore district, Tamil Nadu

safety features in their school buildings, their data collection/ record-keeping systems, their level of awareness about safety and disaster risks, the disaster preparedness and mitigation features in place at the school, their contact with external agencies, and the availability capacity-building activities for staff and students. It was found that although majority of the schools has implemented basic safety measures, there were still a handful of schools which did not even have

Children are vulnerable to the threats posed by natural hazards. At the same time, they can be powerful agents for change, provided they are well armed with knowledge about how to be prepared in advance and how to read on warnings.



"Write shop is useful to understand the different approaches; ideas that seem impossible to us are already implemented in other states; motivating us to work further in this field."

- VS Shivram, District Training Coordinator, Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu

fire safety measures in their kitchen, for kitchen fires are one of the most common types of accidents to arise. Some concern must be raised about the learning experience for the students in all the schools as staff to student ratios was extremely high - sometimes there would be as many as 60 students to a teacher at a time.

Post-survey, appropriate steps were taken to reduce the risks of the schools in form of School safety Campaign. It has generated awareness and importance among school stakeholders' through trainings, mock drills and demonstrations.

The opinions from community are very essential as they are affected directly. Giving a voice to the community during training sessions can guarantee success of the policies implemented. Moreover, work is still to be done on providing insurance for school children with minimum premium against disaster and emergency situations; which will reduce the vulnerability of school children. District level Disaster Management Centre for Children will help to spread awareness on disaster preparedness among the children. ■

- B. Venkatesh
Assistant Project Officer,
Cuddalore District, Tamil Nadu

Major Achievements of the School Safety Campaign in Cuddalore District were:

- Identification badges/cards provided to each student, detailing the student's name, the school's address, the contact details of his/her parents or guardians, and the student's blood group
- Regular maintenance and monitoring of buildings
- Ensured that students are aware of basic road safety principles
- Delegated specific responsibilities to staff for disaster situations
- Developed emergency evacuation routes and familiarise the school community with them
- Established a command structure for disaster/emergency situations and designated specific roles for staff e.g. search and rescue, security, first-aid and communications
- Emergency resource kits available at all times.
- Trained staff in first-aid, safety-related subjects, and how to use fire extinguishers
- Ensured that communication systems functioned well
- Conducted disaster awareness/education programmes, focusing mainly on preparedness and the appropriate actions to be taken for different types of disasters.



Refining the write shop document with facilitator and rest of the partners.



"The exposure visit was a new insight into the finer aspects of disaster management as a social work concern. The importance of school safety was learnt not only at the surface level but how the secondary infrastructure of schools like the entry exit can be changed in order to work for disaster reduction."

- Nalin Maurya,
Intern, Cordaid

Making Schools Safe in Tamil Nadu

Natural disasters are events that are neither wished away nor prevented. What actually makes these hazards turn into disasters is the vulnerability of the people and their means to livelihood.

Devastation due to natural disasters cause substantial losses in terms of lives, livestock, agriculture and infrastructures. When schools are damaged, learning opportunities are disrupted, and thus the quality of education drops. Recently Thane cyclone damaged several primary schools in Kongampattu and Sorappur villages. Such events are a major concern for the future of school children which will also determine the future of India.

Process Adopted in School Safety Initiative:

The process adopted was successful in creating awareness among the school children; in the aspect of

school safety and preparedness measures among poor and the most vulnerable children. 60 schools were selected for Cuddalore district from Cuddalore, Kurinjipadi, Kumaratchi, Parangipettai and Punruti blocks while 15 schools were identified in and around Villupuram district of Kandamangalam and Koliyanur blocks. The process followed by Kalvi Kendra in School Safety Programme (shown in figure 2).

Motivation to Kalvi Kendra

Fire extinguishers were provided to the schools on their demands. Moreover, certificates were given to the teachers for their active contribution in school safety initiative; which motivated them to think and understand the needs and importance of school safety program. Such events raised expectation of more service delivery from Kalvi Kendra. In response to this



"Active participation of the members of panchayat is the major achievement of the write shop. They now understand the importance of disaster risk reduction and will reach a greater number of people by implementing policies".

– Mr. S. Chinappan,

Executive Director of Kalvi Kendra,
Tamil Nadu

Process followed by Kalvi Kendra In School Safety Program

- 1 • Conceptual clarity on school safety by Kalvi Kendra
- 2 • Kalvi Kendra Planned School Safety Initiatives with AIDMI
- 3 • In-house planning of activities to be implemented for school safety
- 4 • Selected the villages for the program
- 5 • Joint assessment of schools by AIDMI and Kalvi Kendra
- 6 • Oriented DRR volunteers and school teachers on school safety program
- 7 • Discussion with PRI to create better school infrastructure
- 8 • Conducted safety audit
- 9 • Preventive measures have taught to the school children by the teachers and conducted awareness program to the Village Education Committee for the benefit of community



"Such write shops are very important to create awareness about school safety and its importance among teachers. Only if teachers are well informed can they protect and teach children".

- Ms. D. Sumithra,

Ms. S. Kalaivani Janci, Teachers
PUM School, Tamil Nadu



Participants actively participating in the write shop and documenting the questionnaire in a group.

motivation, Kalvi Kendra with AIDMI trained teachers and 1131 students to use fire extinguishers; involved PRI leaders in structural works and equipped several students and teachers with safety measures. Kalvi Kendra organised more funds to continue their activity including a contribution of INR 4,000 from Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and; INR 11,000 from the Panchayat president for roof-repairing of a school. Moreover, volunteers of Kalvi Kendra play a major role in providing information related to dos and don'ts in an event of a disaster.

Major Learning

The learning was at three levels: community, government and



"Mock drills are a part of school safety program, increasing the awareness of the students and teachers; leading to a more aware community."

- Gyan Singh, Assistant Director at
Directorate of Disaster Management
Cell, Andaman and Nicobar Islands

organisational level. At community level, the cooperation from the village education committee and Parents Teachers Association successfully enhanced the effectiveness of school safety programme. In addition, for communities to cooperate, the community must be educated on the importance of safety of children at school.

Kalvi Kendra realised that the involvement with government in the program will ensure the success of the program and will reach out to greater people. Lastly, at organisational level Kalvi Kendra's School safety program needs a process-oriented approach rather activity oriented; the activities must be planned in the beginning and should be laid out in a comprehensive fashion, so that results and the aims are clear. Furthermore, building staff capacity on school safety is crucial so as to implement such program effectively.

Way Ahead

To take the initiative of safer schools further it is essential to systematically plan and agree to the strategies that increase the efficiency; rather than taking an event based approach to make the process faster. Kalvi Kendra aims to focus on hazards related to health disasters which put children at risk.

In addition, Kalvi Kendra would like to facilitate school level disaster management plan and mockdrills in the schools and; replicate such programmes in schools of Cuddalore and Villupuram districts in Tamil Nadu.

Kalvi Kendra understands the importance of the school safety insurance for children and would spread awareness among various stakeholders and community. To take this further, it will work with the government to provide insurance to school children with minimal premium. ■

- S. Chinappan,

Executive Secretary of Kalvi Kendra,
Tamil Nadu



"Write Shop helped us to understand the importance of School Safety and DRR. Better policies and programs will be implemented and conducted to reduce risks."

- D. Suresh, B.Radhakrishnan,
J. Marruban, Panchayat Presidents

Making Schools Safer in Andaman & Nicobar Islands



Courtesy: WBVHA

Devastation of any disaster usually influence at the core and surrounding areas of the hazard. Besides the context, fact revealed that extremity of losses and damages seen at greater extent in the island due to its geo-physical vulnerability. Same was experienced in Andaman & Nicobar Islands in 2004 tsunami. The loses in terms of lives and assets were humungous; **1729 males and 1784 females dead, out of which 1177 were children, which stands 34% of total death, over 70 teachers dead, apart from that 600 children orphaned; high girl child drop out, and damages took place in 85 schools and 70 ICDS centers were partially damaged.** During tsunami rehabilitation phase, it was observed that children who were kept at temporary shelters of South & Little Andaman were psychologically traumatized; the post impacts of tsunami remained in the conscious or sub-conscious minds of small children, substantially reducing their concentration on education. WBVHA emphasized on trauma counseling of children as well as of adults through Joyful Learning Practices, in collaboration and facilitation of NIMHANS, Bangalore.

After rehabilitation phase, an initial risk analysis was undertaken by WBVHA in the community and schools. It was found that the safety of children was at stake. Thus, WBVHA initiated "SCHOOLSAFETY PROGRAM" since 2009 in the form of a child-led disaster risk reduction program at 10 tribal villages of Car Nicobar Island, in collaboration with district administration and tribal council.

Process Adopted in Schools Safety Program

WBVHA expanded its area of operation beyond South and Little Andaman, and ventured in Middle & North Andaman in 2009 with a comprehensive community managed disaster risk reduction where school

safety was a major component. The planned process was direct approach to school authorities for planned interventions like selection of schools, training of teachers, inform authorities, letter submission to the schools, awareness to the children, formation and training of task forces, supply of kits, displays of IEC and mock drills and regular monitoring in consultation with department of education and disaster management.

However, when a direct approach was made to the selected schools then only few of them permitted the authority to execute proposed intervention. Most of them demanded a written letter from the directorate of education for them to continue the work. Thus, the importance of school safety program and its planned activities were discussed with the director of education department to attain a consent letter that was issued to the selected schools for intervention.

For transferring appropriate and adequate knowledge and skills to the teachers, the expert organization, All India Disaster Mitigation Institute was approached for facilitating training of trainers of the teachers. The training successfully created a culture of preparedness among school teachers and students who now a pay special attention to safety.



"Similar write shops must be held where different organizations and institutions who work in different states of India are brought to a platform to share their learning and experiences".

- Mr. Kamal Adhikary,
Program Coordinator at WBVHA,
Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

54 teachers were trained on school safety as a trainer (ToT); with refresher training after one year. This will help the ANI government and department of education to continue the activity without WBVHA's tutelage. To increase awareness among the community, school safety components were demonstrated during Island Tourism Festival.

Motivation to WBVHA

The knowledge and skills that were transferred and translated had excelled in ownership and sustainability. WBVHA implemented school safety interventions in selected 32 schools in collaboration with department of education and State Disaster Management Authority under Directorate of Disaster Management. With the joint partners, WBVHA made efforts to launch "National School Safety Program (NSSP)" in A&N Islands as a demonstration project under National Disaster Management Authority to cover all 400 schools of the islands. WBVHA was approached as a Partner Resource agency under the same. In addition, School level programs will always be jointly carried out with the Directorate of



"Write shops give an opportunity to field workers to put their experiences on paper".

- Ashok Kumar Sharma,
Director of Disaster Management,
Andaman and Nicobar Administration

Disaster Management and Education under NSSP; which will increase its reach.

Way Ahead

Andaman and Nicobar Islands are very vulnerable in terms of potential hazards throughout the year. Therefore, School Children Insurance coverage of accident and death was explored with Directorate of Education and insurance company, but could not be achieved because as

per the government norms under the right to education. No monetary pressure can be created for children or parents. Thus, it must be the states' decision to allocate funds from the government resources for the same. The governmental intervention in such projects will sustain a greater sense of ownership within the institutions such as schools, education department through mainstreaming process. Moreover, linkages with non-governmental and governmental bodies will increase its reach.

At organizational level, building concrete plans with clear results, activities and roles with various other organizations will help to measure and increase the effectiveness of the program. Furthermore, core competencies and skills needs to be honed for working with government and other stakeholders in a collaborative approach. Lastly, being the resource agency for NSSP, we will continue to implement and monitor the planned intervention at all 400 schools of Andaman and Nicobar Islands. ■

- Kamal Adhikary and
Arup Chakraborty, WBVHA

EXPERIENCE SHARING

School Safety Campaign in Coastal India: Achievements and Opportunities

Background

Unsafe schools are a reality. With the spread of education, more and more children go to schools that are vulnerable to both natural and man-made disasters such as fire hazards, earthquake and cyclones among many others. Each time a disaster occurs, masses of children are excluded from schools and many never return. Past experiences and available evidence shows that education sector was hardest hit along with other sectors in the event

of a disaster. The quality of education is affected as the learning environment gets distorted as access to schools becomes limited due to shelters occupancy or collapsed school building. AIDMI and many such organisations are working to build capacity, reduce risks and vulnerability and therefore making safer schools for years, which led to launch of National School Safety Program (NSSP) by National Institute of Disaster Management for which AIDMI is one of the core members.

Process Adopted

With the lead role played by AIDMI, the school safety programme received support from local NGOs and government authorities. The main objective of the programme was to continue the campaign across India especially in the coastal area with a major focus on the poor areas and community. Its main role was to facilitate the local partners on execution of the school safety activity by helping them to draft work plan and by strengthening or developing

partnership with local authorities for effective and timely execution.

In order to carry out a systematic training, AIDMI with its local partners undertook a critical appraisal to ensure that the occupational health and safety standards fully satisfy the legal requirements; a school safety audit was carried out by the local partners in various parts of India. The planned process would have covered 600 schools that will reach to 75,000 students; however in reality we covered 608 schools. The findings of the audit can be crucial for schools and local agencies that are involved in the field of education and disaster risk reduction; and will be useful for agencies that design and implement schools based DRR programs. Many schools covered in the project were urged to revise their school disaster management plan and provided 15 Thane cyclone affected schools with fire extinguishers and first aid kits.

Major Achievements

608 schools were included in the school safety audit across 5 Indian states where the project reached to 3,741 teachers and 1,53,210 students. Several schools and students realised the importance of such campaigns and promoted it. Initiatives and approaches of AIDMI for the execution of project activities has been well accepted by government at various levels such as at local level with Block Resource Teachers Educators and School teachers of 93 schools in Tamil Nadu and with state government in Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Moreover, the education Department of Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu requested AIDMI to set up Disaster Management Centre for Children in Cuddalore which will be governed by District Administration of Cuddalore. Such actions are highly important for the poor and vulnerable schools, in context with climate change for coastal community in India.

AIDMI is one of the committee members of National School Safety



Oriented school student operating fire extinguisher at government higher secondary school at Arsamangalam, Villupuram, Tamil Nadu.

Programme (NSSP) and has continuously been contributing for the training module, which will be used by National Disaster Management Authority. WBVHA became technical support of Andaman & Nicobar State Disaster Management Authority to implement National School Safety Programme in 400 schools of Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Many schools in Andaman and Nicobar Islands have their school level task forces functional and do school based DRR activities regularly. Programs under NSSP have had greater impacts on states like Assam where entire state has been covered under the school safety on demand of Assam State Disaster Management Authority.

Training of Trainers (ToTs) was carried out in different parts of India including Gujarat, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Tamil Nadu and

AIDMI has covered 608 schools in the school safety audit across 5 Indian states where it reached to 3,741 teachers and 1,53,210 students.

Maharashtra. Post trainings, several schools have prepared/ revised their school disaster management plans. 8 trainings of trainers were carried only while only 2 were proposed.

Way Ahead

AIDMI will strengthen the partnership with its local partners for execution of project activities in different parts of India. AIDMI will continue to assist them in preparing work plans, concept notes for actions on their part. Local partner Kalvi Kendra has invited AIDMI to work in more schools of Villupuram and Cuddalore district to provide mitigation measures, training and to build a school level taskforce. In addition, AIDMI has been invited by the District Administration of Cuddalore to set up Disaster Management Centre for Children and to cover entire district under school safety campaign. District Administration of Cuddalore and Villupuram made demands to provide students' safety insurance policy in the schools of entire districts. Andaman & Nicobar State Administration plans to execute more preparedness activities in the state with technical support of AIDMI. ■

- Sanchit Oza

All India Disaster Mitigation Institute

Leadership Matters

Making Schools Safer is not an individual or institutional effort. It has to be a joint multi stakeholder effort that needs local and active leadership. In this AIDMI has been very lucky to have some of the most exciting and supportive leaders over the years. ASK introduced AIDMI to the tool of write-shop that AIDMI has now used many times in many school safety projects. The tool builds the capacity of the users as well as of the sector. Shri B. Ventakesh in Cuddalore

offered AIDMI ways to work with and inside the system of education department. This was an encouraging and exciting effort. The trainings in Tamil Nadu improved and so did the trainers! Shri Shivraman in Cuddalore offered ways to make trainings faster and better. But it was Shri S. Chinnapan who mobilised his teams at Kalvi Kendra to offer real local leadership and motivation to joint assessments



Students learning how to use fire extinguisher during a school safety training session in Tamil Nadu.

of schools and conducting school safety audit. His teams offered both, their amazing capacity to mobilize the communities and schools as well as their ability to pick up new concepts around risk and resilience.

Shri Ashok Sharma, director of Directorate of Disaster Cell (Andaman and Nicobar Islands) has made efforts to make schools safer in

A&N islands. They aim to secure all 400 schools of A&N islands. Making schools safer from disasters on an island is different than making them safer on a coastal or mainland area. Shri Arup Chakraborty and Shri Kamal Adhikary are AIDMI's long term partners who participated in the workshop and enhanced the learning for the participants by sharing their experiences. The leaders have worked with the most difficult

locations in the delta area where the communities are poor; and teachers and students have limited access to resources; but the floods and cyclones are plenty. Such efforts must be made by all of us to make the schools, therefore the future of India, safer. In making India safer, leadership matters. ■

- Khyati Halani

All India Disaster Mitigation Institute

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