

Comprehensive School Safety and Security Programme: Legislative Framework and Further Actions



Photo: AIDMI.

State Level Workshop on Making Schools Safer in Uttar Pradesh, October 17, 2017.

How to make National Disaster Management Plan (NDMP) work on the ground at the community level? One of the important steps is to start at school level. Comprehensive School Safety and Security Programme (CSSSP) has been designed and developed, aiming to make 15 lakh schools in India safe. AIDMI and UNICEF are taking initiatives with various programs and activities, including shaping and spreading the concept of School safety and Security.

Regarding to legislative framework, different Ministries of Government of India have issued and established guidelines or advisory boards regarding to School safety and security of schools, which has greatly assisted the implementation of CSSSP. To name a few, Ministry of Human Development established Advisory Board on Corporal Punishment in schools in March 2014, which is fairly widespread and includes activities on different aspects of CSSSP. The Central Board of Secondary Education focused on

School Bus as a useful start for school-level activities in School Safety Programs for students in March 2017.

The Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) developed a Guideline for state and district authorities on Safer Schools in October 2014. In December 2014, the Ministry also issued Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on dealing with terrorist attacks on schools. This SOPs is considered to be inclusive for schools guidelines.

Table 1: Below is the Summary Table of Guidelines and Boards

Guidelines/Instructions/Framework	Issued by Ministry	Effective day
Advisory Board on Corporal Punishment	Ministry of Human Development	March 2014
School Bus	Central Board of Secondary Education	March 2017
Guideline for state and district authorities on Safer Schools	Ministry of Human Resource Development	October 2014
Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to deal with terrorist attacks	Ministry of Human Resource Development	December 2014
Guidelines on food safety and hygiene for school kitchens	Ministry of Human Resource Development	February 2015

In February 2015, Guidelines on Food safety and hygiene for schools kitchens under Child Day Meal Scheme was also developed by the Ministry to covers nutrition and safety aspects of schools. (Table 1).

Towards this end, here are some points to be noted in CSSSP:

1. Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) must take a greater role in developing and advancing the concept of CSSSP.
2. The 13th Formation Day of India organized by National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) witnessed a veritable gathering of key stakeholders who deliberated upon the key activities to be embedded in the CSSSP processes of the country. Among the key themes discussed were the challenges of lack of skills among teachers and students on topics of school safety and security.
3. Affirmative action is important to make education become inclusive and equal, but to what degree, the state authorities have to define it and take this ahead in DRR activities. A more focus on girl child in mock drills, for example, is one step ahead. Specific roles of disabled children in awareness raising campaigns is another step forward. Similarly, the role of media to comprise different



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4. The school bus is an indispensable asset for schools as it helps students to commute from home to school and then back again. However, the legal liability in case of untoward incidents is not clear, making these buses extremely unsafe for the students when travelling.
5. Are we missing "Safety as a medium" of DRR learning at schools? There is an opportunity to teach math's through mock drills and geography through hazard assessments. At some points, safety as a medium must come in. In this regard, school-to-school exchange is important.
6. Role of Members of Parliaments is crucial in making schools safe. Each MP can have a review of the performance of private and public schools -in their agenda in making the students safe.
7. Information security is another important aspect. Children are more and more exposed to the Internet and virtual games. Without the supervision of adults, this can lead to different problems ranging from a neglect of studies to sexual and physical abuse along with anxiety and depression.
8. 'Gender' must be included in CSSSP. Safety of Girl Children is key and essential Women and Child Development Department must take a lead role to ensure gender based safety and security.



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Some initial work on CSSSP has been successfully done in Kashmir, and there are clear indications that it is possible to upscale and broaden the CSSSP across India.

The time has come for State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) and State Education Departments to find ways to design and develop CSSSP for 2018. ■

- AIDMI Team