SOP -NDMA

INTRODUCTION

Education, public awareness and proper training for enhancing the capacity is the cornerstone of approaches aimed at reducing vulnerabilities to natural hazards. The Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, adopted at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, highlights knowledge and education as one of the five main priorities of action. Attention should be accorded and support given to efforts targeting school children and youth with the aim of making people more aware of the threat of hazards and of the need and possibility to become better prepared before disasters strike.

VISION

To promote a culture of disaster preparedness in the school.

OBJECTIVES:

- To initiate policy level changes for ensuring safe school environment.
- To sensitize children and the school community on disaster preparedness and safety measures.
- To motivate direct participation of key stakeholders in activities that would help building towards a disaster resilient community.
- To promote capacity building of officials, teachers and students.
- To carry out Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities in schools and associated environment.
- To implement non-structural mitigation measures in select schools.
- To carry out demonstrative structural retrofitting in select schools.

IEC Activities

The school community (including teachers and administrative staffs) would be sensitized on issues of disaster preparedness and safety measures. The key stakeholders and the larger community members would be motivated to participate in disaster risk reduction activities and to enhance disaster resilience. Key activities under IEC would be:

1. Development of IEC materials and other learning aids (Booklets) for school children and school authorities in local language.
2. Conducting sensitization programmes and awareness programmes.
3. Other events can also be organized like painting competitions for school children, easy, quiz etc.

IMPLEMENTATION OF SAFETY ACTIONS

- ✓ Appropriate Siting, Design and detailing for structural safety in new schools and repairing of existing schools.
- ✓ Each class room should have two doors for easy evacuation; adequate openings for ventilation and lighting are some of the essential elements that need to be accommodated in the design.
- ✓ Doors opening outside, into open areas or corridors of adequate width are key details that need to be incorporated to make schools safer.
- ✓ All items of furniture such as almirahs, shelves, black boards etc., as well as any other items that may fall and cause injury to students and teachers such as ceiling fans, coolers, water tanks etc. need to be secured to the walls or floor.
- ✓ Any electrical items such as loose wires that may cause an exigency should be addressed promptly by the school.
- ✓ Chemical and any hazardous materials in the school laboratory should be handled and stored as per instructions to prevent any harm to students and school staff.
- ✓ Open areas including corridors and evacuation routes including staircases and ramps should be kept free from any hurdles and barriers so that evacuation is smooth and swift.
- ✓ Pots / planters in the play ground or corridors should be kept in a manner that does not affect smooth evacuation
- ✓ Any derelict or unused building, rubble, etc. should be removed to prevent any harmful animals or pests from accessing children.
- ✓ Traffic movement outside the school should be managed to minimize risk to students at the time of assembling and dispersal of school.
- ✓ During excursions, schools should carefully choose the location of excursion and the itinerary so that exposure to hazard is minimized. Extra precautions should be taken when students are being taken close to water bodies, narrow mountainous tracks etc.
- ✓ Buses or any other vehicles owned / hired by the school need to be maintained properly so that students are not at risk of accidents. Drivers need to be appropriately trained on speed limits, stoppage of vehicles as well as crisis management so that children remain safe during their travel to and from schools.
- ✓ Emergency equipment such as fire extinguishers, first aid kits, ropes etc. need to be procured and maintained regularly by the School Authorities.

FIRE PREVENTION AND FIRE SAFETY

Fire Prevention and Fire Safety measures should be part of initial school design, and also require regular maintenance and testing. The following must be ensured:

- Flammable and hazardous material sources are limited, isolated, eliminated, or secured. This includes electrical lines and appliances, heaters and stoves, natural gas pipelines and LPG canisters, flammable or combustible liquids;
- Exit routes are clear to facilitate safe evacuation in case of fire or another emergency;
- Detection and alarm systems (especially urban set ups) are working;

- Fire extinguishers are regularly refilled;
- Other fire materials and equipment are regularly maintained;
- Electrical systems are maintained and operable, in compliance with fire safety design criteria.

ANNEXURE – 6

The Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, Justice Dalveer Singh in response in response to Writ Petition (Civil) No.483 of 2004, Avinash Mehrotra vs Union of India has laid down the following minimum specifications for school buildings:

- The school buildings shall preferably be `A' Class construction with brick / stone masonry walls with RCC roofing. Where it is not possible to provide RCC roofing only non-combustible fireproof heat resistance materials should be used.
- The nursery and elementary schools should be housed in single storied buildings and the maximum number of floors in school buildings shall be restricted to three including the ground floor.
- The School building shall be free from inflammable and toxic materials, which if necessary, should be stored away from the school building.
- The staircases, which act as exits or escape routes, shall adhere to provisions specified in the National Building Code of India 2016 to ensure quick evacuation of children.
- The orientation of the buildings shall be in such a way that proper air circulation and lighting is available with open space all round the building as far as possible.
- Existing school buildings shall be provided with additional doors in the main entrances as well as the class rooms if required. The size of the main exit and classroom doors shall be enlarged if found inadequate.
- School buildings have to be insured against fire and natural calamities with Group Insurance of school pupils.
- Kitchen and other activities involving use of fire shall be carried out in a secure and safe location away from the main school building.
- All schools shall have water storage tanks.

SOURCES:

- *NDMA Guidelines-School Safety Policy-Government of India*