

## Short Commentary

### School's Emergency Preparedness

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#### Commentary

Education is a human right, inalienable and universal. Nowadays, education institution is especially important in enabling people to learn, get their academic certificates and start their career and reach their full potential. This right must not disappear or get suspended because of emergencies and disasters events. Yet, sometimes, in case of emergencies or disasters education might be interrupted resulting negative economic and social impacts for students, families, and communities.

The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion stated that "health is created and lived by people within the settings of their everyday life; where they learn, work, play and live" [1]. In our modern society, schools are common and central institution for sharing knowledge and skills, therefore the expectations for schools to be role models in safety and disaster prevention is great. School safety is the job of the entire school community and community members. This effort requires leadership and coordination by school administration, and involvement and participation from all sectors of the school community [2]. Emergency and disaster events can happen anywhere, anytime and because of many reasons. Although, some disaster events can be predicted, giving schools enough warning to take the needed safety precautions, others can happen unexpectedly that suddenly put a school and their staff and students in danger. School safety and educational continuity require a dynamic, continuous process initiated by management and involving workers, students, parents, and the local community [2]. Therefore, it is important to facilitate partnerships that empower communities and identify their needs.

Disaster risk reduction is considered everyone's business. Disaster risk reduction includes disciplines like disaster management, disaster mitigation and disaster preparedness [3]. Disaster risk reduction encompasses every part of society, every of the professionals and government. School disaster management involves the familiar cycle of steps found in all project management: assess hazards, vulnerabilities, capacities and resources; plan and implement for physical risk reduction, maintenance of safe facilities, standard operating procedures and training for disaster response;

test mitigation and preparedness plans and skills regularly, with realistic simulation drills; and revise your plan based on your experience [2]. School Disaster Management has been defined as "the process of assessment and planning, physical protection and response capacity development designed to protect students and the staff from physical harm; minimize disruption and ensure the continuity of education for all children; develop and maintain a culture of safety" [2]. Disaster mitigation is one of the ultimate goal of safety and emergency preparedness. However, with physical and environmental protection; assessment and planning, and response preparedness these events can be less harmful.

Comprehensive school safety is addressed by education policy and practices aligned with disaster management at national, regional, district, and local school site levels. The foundation of planning for Comprehensive School Safety is multi-hazard risk assessment. Ideally, this planning should be part of Educational Management Information Systems at national, sub-national, and local levels [4]. It is part of the broader analysis of education sector policy and management that provides the evidence base for planning and action. It rests on three pillars [4]:

1. Safe Learning Facilities
2. School Disaster Management
3. Risk Reduction and Resilience Education

The main goals of comprehensive school safety are to protect students and educators from death, injury, and harm in schools, to plan for continuity of education [4]. WHO defines a health-promoting school as "one that constantly strengthens its capacity as a healthy setting for living, learning and working, which imply the protection of students and staff against accidents, injury, disease and any health hazards" [5]. However, comprehensive school safety implying emergency preparedness and disaster risk reduction is also part of sustainable development. In order for development activities to be sustainable they must also reduce disaster risk. On the other hand, unsound development policies will increase disaster risk - and disaster losses [3]. Therefore, it is important to promote training within the community, whether it is training to build the capacity of the community in local economic development, enter-

prise development, sustainable livelihood improvement, strategic and business planning and construction. Information on the skills of the local community and community members can be generated from baseline surveys and community need assessment.

## Conclusion

Schools as a social and physical environment should be safe and secure to protect school staff and students' lives, foster healthful behaviors and enhance better academic achievement [6]. Therefore, schools are facing increased expectations and pressures that should be carefully addressed [6]. Emergencies and other disasters can happen at any time, and when they happen at school, everyone should be prepared to handle them safely and effectively. When emergencies and disasters events take place, school community need to know how to respond appropriately and as quickly as possible. The issue of school safety must be a major concern at all levels of community and government [6]. Educational administrators, school teachers, school staff, parents and students can work together to promote and maintain school-wide safety and minimize the effects of dangerous situations and other emergency events. School should be prepared for emergencies in a number of ways, from making sure the building's infrastructure is up to safety code, conducting regular emergency-specific drills to school staff and

students training. Efforts should be made to increase the awareness of the community and promote the education and training of school personnel in the assessment and management of safety and life-threatening emergencies [5]. Preventing hazards and emergency preparedness and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) are essential human right in any modern community and can eventually lead and support sustainable development.

## References

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