



Ministry of Education  
National Institute of Education

**Ministry of Education and National Institute of Education**  
**Education for Social Cohesion, Disaster Risk Management and**  
**Psycho-Social Care Programme (ESC, DRM & PC Programme)**



Ministry of Disaster Management  
and Human Rights  
Disaster Management Centre

## **Towards a Disaster Safe School**

# **National Guidelines for School Disaster Safety**

### **Sri Lankan-German Development Cooperation**

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

DDE	Deputy Director Education
ADPC	Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre
DMC	Disaster Management Centre
GN	Grama Niladhary
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ISA	In-Service-Advisor
MET	Department of Meteorology
MOH	Medical Officer Health
NBRO	National Building Research Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PHI	Public Health Inspector
SDS	School Disaster Safety
ZDE	Zonal Director Education

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## **PREFACE**

*Two distinct messages by Ministers for Education and for Disaster Management – providing an overview of key challenges that need to be met in securing school disaster safety in Sri Lanka*

## I. BACKGROUND & INTRODUCTION

The first and foremost desire of every person is to ensure the safety and well being of their children. In schools we find children from primary to advance level and it is essential to provide adequate infrastructure and educational facilities for them, in order to create a positive learning environment. The concept of a safe school and overall well being of school children is gaining its significance under the overarching commitment towards quality education for all.

Hence being alert about possible hazards is an important aspect in a school and is strongly felt in the context of Sri Lanka, which has a multi hazard vulnerability profile. The damages caused by recurrent floods, landslides, terrorism and last not least the tsunami in December 2004 have convinced us that the society should be better prepared to cope with such disasters in the future. Therefore, the Disaster Management Act of 2005 was enacted providing strong legislative and institutional arrangements for disaster risk reduction.

Education is considered to be the best way for making a safe and disaster resilient society. School is an important agency to reduce disasters risk through knowledge, innovation and education. Teachers and students play crucial roles in the development of a culture of prevention and preparedness, because they can transfer knowledge and skills to the family and community. Therefore, the active participation of teachers and students in school disaster safety programmes is desired for moving the world towards a safer living place and sustainable developed society.

If we look out carefully, we can see that the environment of the school is full of hazards, which might result in natural or man-made disasters. The incidents of the recent past provide evidence that Sri Lankan school children are much vulnerable for all these types of hazards. Hence, it is the right time for us to develop our own school disaster safety plans. Our objective is to provide maximum protection to each of our students and the school community and to prevent possible damages that could happen during and after a disaster.

The establishment and training of a school disaster safety team, awareness creation, the analysis of the specific vulnerability and hazards of the school environment, the school and village mapping with evacuation routes and identified safe places, the cooperation with the community and finally practical exercises and evacuation mock drills will enable the school community to be prepared and to act adequately to save lives in case of an emergency.

This document was produced with the valuable support of the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre ADPC, the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (Manual for school preparedness), the Sri Lankan Disaster Management Centre DMC, the Education Leadership Development Center/Meepe, based on the experiences from the pilot project that included schools from Colombo, Rathnepura, Trincomalee and Batticaloa.

## II. 7 STEPS IN SCHOOL DISASTER SAFETY PLANNING

A school disaster safety plan has a holistic approach to combat any disaster and encompassing all activities from prevention through crisis response. Not all emergencies can be prevented, therefore the plan needs to describe arrangements for responding to those emergencies that might occur in the school environment or in the school. In a written description the hazards to which the school might be exposed are identified and this allows to develop prevention and response activities to minimize them.

While preparing the plan school leaders, teachers, students, parents, public safety agencies and other key partners should be involved. Participation by community members will gain their support for the plans. The roles and responsibilities of each member of the school safety team should be clearly defined. It is crucial that all key persons know what they and the other team members have to do in an emergency. Plans should be coordinated with local administration and government.

Leadership is needed throughout the planning process and the school principal plays a crucial role in the development of the plan. Furthermore for plans to be effective, staff and other involved individuals need to develop the necessary skills to cope with an emergency, therefore staff training should be included in the planning process.

Plans should be easy to read and understandable. They should be disseminated within the school and also in the community to foster broad acceptance and participation. In order to make them sustainable, they should be continually reviewed and updated regarding changes in personnel and local conditions.

### **The following seven steps help to develop the school disaster safety plan:**

1. Establish the school safety nuclear team
2. Create awareness among the school community
3. Identify hazards and resources
4. Establish and train the school disaster safety team
5. Prepare the school safety plan document
6. Disseminate the plan and conduct mock drills
7. Evaluate and update the plan

## Step 1: Establish the school safety nuclear team

The first step is to identify the persons who are responsible for the management and coordination of the whole school disaster safety program. This nuclear team should be formed and start to prepare the school disaster safety plan. They are not only the responsible body to prepare and implement the plan, but also to disseminate and update it. Further they should give leadership to the school, while the extended school disaster safety team will be responsible for specific tasks during the implementation of the plan, for example Warning & Communication, Evacuation & Mock drills and First Aid.

The nuclear team may comprise with three (3) to five (5) members, depending on the size of the school and available human resources. The composition could be:

- Principal or deputy principal (Chairperson)
- Vice Principal, Sectional Head, Teacher, Member of School Development Committee

## Step 2: Create awareness among the school community

The second step towards making a school disaster safety plan is to create understanding for the need of the plan by awareness creation among school members. The topics of an awareness meeting could be: what are hazards and disasters, how the school could be affected, how teachers and students can protect themselves and behave correctly during emergencies, how preparedness can minimize losses and damages.

Public awareness is understood to be a core element of successful disaster reduction. It is considered essential to motivate vulnerable population to become more active in risk reduction. Awareness allows people to protect themselves in their everyday lives and contributes to build a culture of safety in the community and society. Schools play a pivotal role in reaching the community: An effective educational programme conducted through the schools not only teaches children but also reaches deep into the community through them, their parents and teachers.

Awareness-rising is an interactive process in which different parties are engaged, each with its own roles and ways to make its voice heard. Typically, awareness activities focus on providing information and knowledge to influence individual attitudes. Knowing the results of their behaviour and realizing the importance of change can influence people to alter their conduct. The behaviour changes sought should not only reflect understanding of issues that are important to people's own lives, but also need to be practical and easy to carry out (see also Chapter 3 'Do's and Don'ts before and during disasters').

The most important and most effective way to deliver messages is through personal communication through discussions, "days of open doors", projects, sports/cultural events etc. Other ways are via means of brochures, leaflets, school magazine, etc.

Enthusiasm can be stimulated by weaving disaster reduction concepts into popular culture, as for example through street theatre and drama. Art, crafts, drama or music teachers as well as parents and students could support the awareness program. The existing Environment Circles where teachers and pupils take part could also contribute.

Furthermore, a yearly School Disaster Safety Day could be very useful for schools to promote their activities and create awareness in the community.



Awareness creating activities, i.e. exhibitions, school projects, writing competitions, debates and dramas, should be organized by the team in the whole school, targeting different classes and teachers. The students can be divided in groups according to the sections (1–5; 6–9; 10–13) in order to address them adequately to their level of understanding. Messages can also be delivered during the morning assembly.

*Awareness meeting at Padukka Central College*

Resource persons like members of the District Disaster Management Coordination Unit (at the District Secretariat) can support the school in these first activities. Available material like posters, pamphlets, films can be arranged with support of the DMC or education authorities. Additional material will be developed by the team, such as cartoons, posters and songs.

### Step 3: Identify hazards and resources

A historical profile of natural hazards in the school environment is needed to be identified. This can be used to get information on prevailing hazards, their frequency and seasonality. To get data different information sources can be used, such as interviews with elders in the community, newspaper articles etc. After identifying the hazards it is necessary to prepare a disaster calendar in order to identify the temporal variation of disasters. The table below gives examples, others which are not included here, might be mentioned.

**Hazards Calendar (Seasonality of Hazards) Table 1**

Hazard / Period	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Floods												
Landslide												
Cyclone												
Drought												
Lightening												



## Hazard Assessment (structural & non structural)



The structural safety of a building needs to be assessed with regards to its safety from hazards as cyclones, floods and fire. If your school building is very old or the building codes are not up to date there may be a risk being in the building. In this case, the school authority should contact their architect, the nearest local disaster management authority or the district administration, which can guide them in getting their building assessed.

*School team in Kalmunai*

It is necessary for us to identify potential hazards to which the school might be exposed. The hazards assessment could be carried out by children of the school under the guidance of their teachers within the school premises and outside the school (neighboring area) by walking around the school. Ask students to make notes, as they go along, of things that might become hazards during a cyclone, fire etc. When you are back in the classroom, discuss about what they noticed or hazards they thought.

### A list of such hazards could be:

- Fire smoke in the hallway
- Exit doors and windows locked
- Power failure
- Electrical wires on the ground
- Tall bookcases or cabinets not bolted to the wall
- Accidents from sports equipment
- Area where inflammable liquids are stored and not secured

### Potential hazards close to the school could be:

- Power lines and electricity transformer
- Big trees and branches
- Highway or railway line
- Flood areas
- War activities and explosives



*The cupboard is not fixed to the wall, it might fall and block the emergency exit*

When you return to class room, discuss with the students how the hazards could be reduced, and/ or how they could cope with them if they happened. If during hazards assessment the existing coping mechanisms are found inadequately, necessary measures should be incorporated while developing response plan of the school. Also available resources in the school which can be used during an emergency need to be identified (i.e. fire extinguisher). Based on the hazards assessment, the members of the SDS team will prepare the school disaster safety plan.



*Landslide affected school in Ratnapura district*

Example **Table 2**

Type of hazard	Places	Solution identified
Fire in electric cables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ in the Main hall</li> <li>▪ in the Library</li> <li>▪ in the Physics labs</li> <li>▪ in the Office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Rewiring the electric system</li> <li>▪ Using trip switches</li> <li>▪ Display instructions</li> <li>▪ Use fire braking mechanisms (fire extinguisher/ sand baskets)</li> </ul>
Tsunami	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Class rooms in lower elevations (grade 4,5,6)</li> <li>▪ Children in the playground</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify a safer place to be evacuated in a tsunami emergency</li> <li>▪ Receive official information</li> <li>▪ Do regular evacuation mock drills</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪</li> </ul>

## Step 4: Establish and train the school disaster safety team

The school disaster safety team is the group who is implementing all the activities in school disaster safety. The whole team is coordinated by school disaster safety nuclear team (see Step 1) and its chairman is the principal or deputy principal.

### Team composition

The team composition and number of its members should be flexible according to the school's capacity and specific requirements. The team should include teachers, students and parents, including members of the School Development Committee. As the team is responsible for different tasks a minimum size of five (5) to seven (7) members is advisable.

### Resource persons

For the realization of an annual big mock drill, which involves the community, the participation of resource persons from outside the school is essential. The resource persons may include representatives of organizations who are specialized in safety matters.

### Team meetings

The full team should meet at least four times a year in order to prepare and conduct awareness activities and school mock drills as well as to update the school disaster safety plan. A meeting with resource persons should take place at least once a year for the preparation of an annual mock drill together with the community. At the beginning of the school year disaster safety activities shall be included in the School Development Plan.

### Team structure

School disaster safety has the overall objectives of Awareness, Preparedness and Mitigation. The whole team should be engaged in creating awareness among the students and school community and promoting activities for better preparedness against local hazards and mitigation of their impact. In an emergency or during practicing emergency management skills (e.g. mock drill) the same team has to act as emergency team.

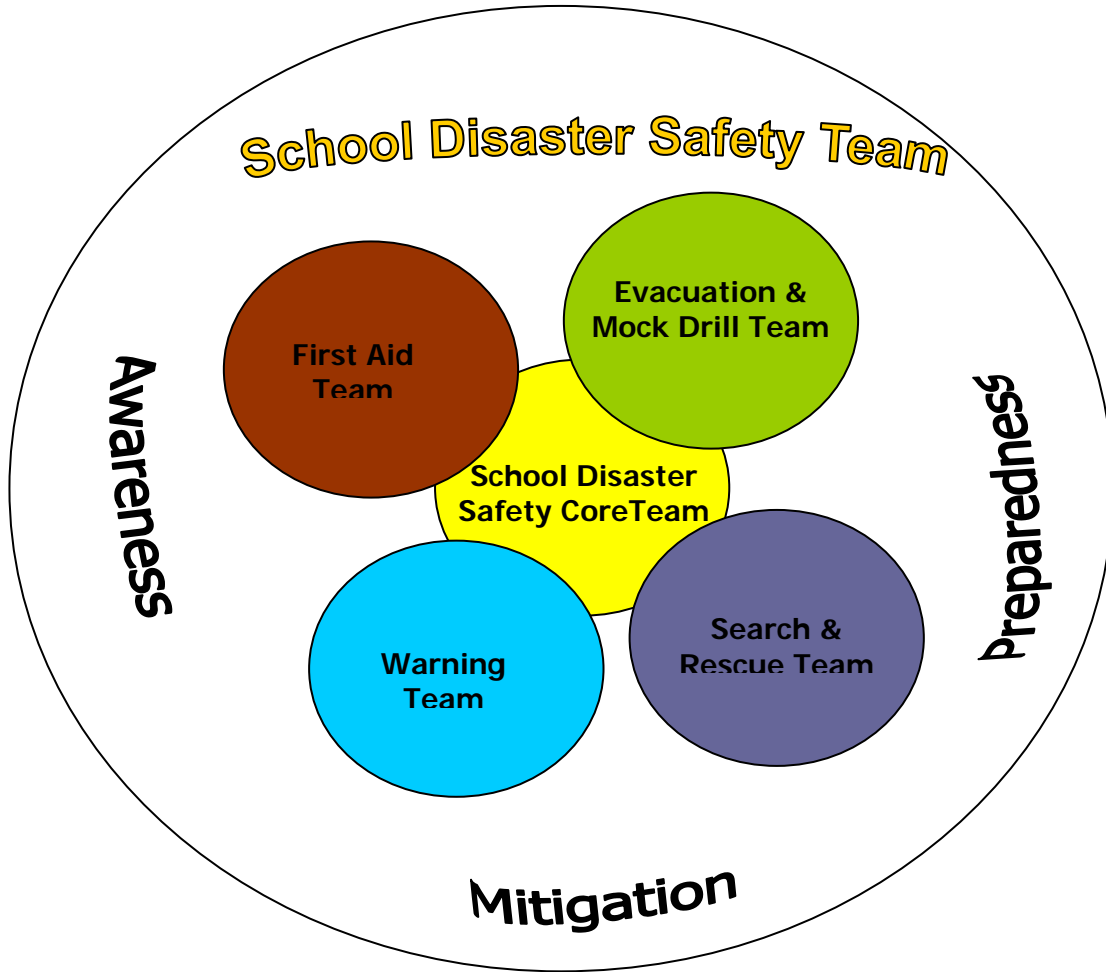
The team will break into sub-teams according to the requirements and specific hazards in the school. The minimum requirement is one person responsible for each of the below mentioned tasks. The following sub-teams can be appointed to perform:

1. Warning and communication
2. Evacuation and mock drills
3. First Aid

If the school is having more potential for different capacities they can also include the following additional sub-teams:

4. Fire safety
5. Search & Rescue
6. Site security

Graph 1



**Roles and responsibilities**

All team members are responsible for Awareness, Preparedness and Mitigation. Additionally, specific functions have been identified for emergency management.



The definition of roles and responsibilities of the team can be made accordingly to the requirements of the specific school, see below an example that may be adapted to the available resources of the school:

*School Safety team conducting mock drill*

Table 3

Name/ Designation	Position & Responsibilities in the Team	Contact details (Address/Tel/Mobile)
1. The Principal	<u>Chairman and head of Warning team</u> - Coordination with emergency officials - Assigning team members - Receiving accurate information	XXXXXX
2. The Vice Principal	<u>Head of Search &amp; Rescue team</u> - Keeping the records of daily attendance of students & Teachers - Identify vulnerable places in the school	XXXXXX
3. Teacher	<u>Head of Evacuation team.</u> - Conduct evacuation drills and update procedures - Direct students to safe areas - Count heads & reporting missing	XXXXXX
4. Teacher	<u>Head of First Aid team.</u> - Maintain the first aid kit - Inform the principal about injured persons	XXXXXX
5. Teacher	<u>Head of Site Security team</u> - Prevent unnecessary people entering - Protect property - Observe unidentified, suspicious objects	XXXXXX

### 1. Warning and communication



The head of the warning team is responsible for informing the school about possible disasters and to give the evacuation warning. He or she has to prepare the warning signal (bell, public address system, megaphone, etc.) and operate it in an emergency. Other necessary material would be telephone or mobile phone, radio and contact information of the various local authorities like DMC, police, hospital, fire brigade etc.

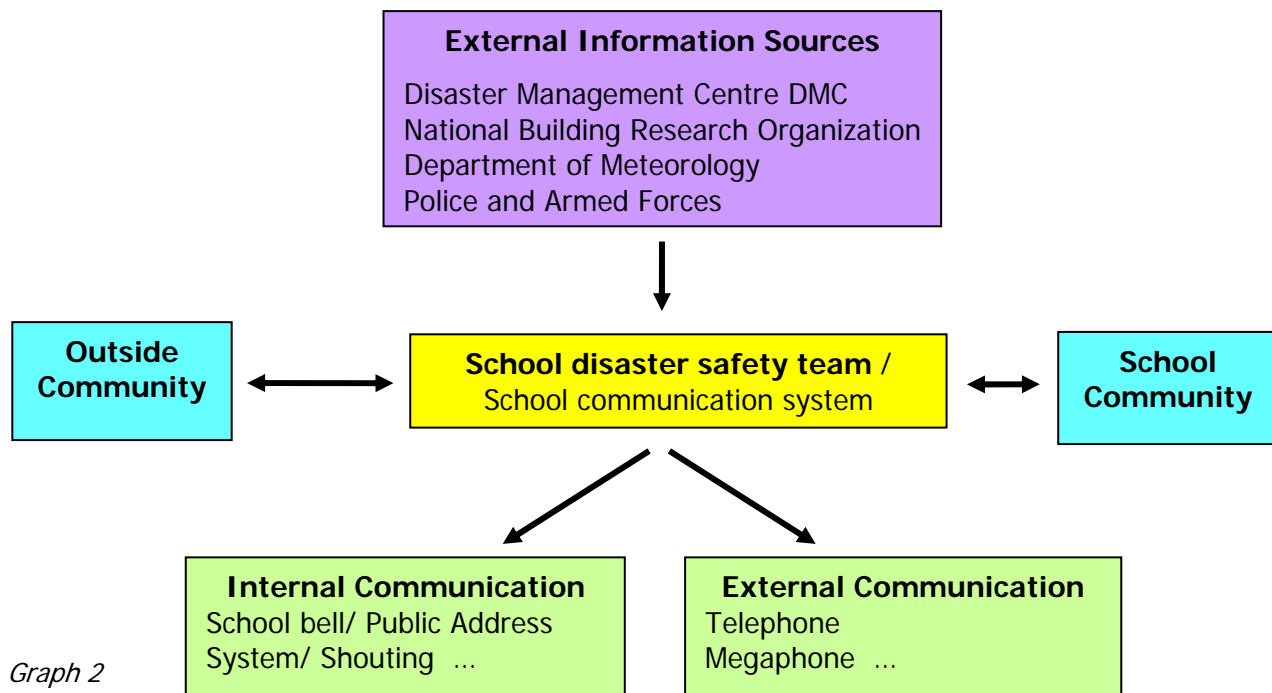
Before the disaster, regular updates from official sources in radio/TV/Internet on the potential hazard have to be taken, i.e. weather updates in case of floods, landslides and cyclones. On the one hand, the school authorities have to be informed of any impending hazardous situations and on the other hand, contact with district authorities has to be maintained to receive any

*Student giving the alarm sign* orders for the school.

The warning team is responsible for informing the other team members about the latest weather or warning situation.

During the disaster the team has to disseminate the warning to all classrooms and teachers by using the warning signal. Furthermore they have to report about the disaster to the other team members and local authorities. It has to be clear, who will call whom and what information would be given (-> short message about the incident, location of school, information on injuries or casualties).

After the disaster the various information sources should be monitored and the other team members keeping informed.



Graph 2

## 2. Evacuation and mock drills

In case of an emergency evacuation or a mock drill, all class teachers and prefects have to help to guide the students safely out of the classroom to the safe area and to control if all of them arrived there. They all need to know the school evacuation map, which shows the routes of evacuation and assembly points. They also need to know the number of students in their class on a given day.

The proper evacuation team has to be prepared for a disaster by knowing about the warning signal, the evacuation plan, the emergency exits, keys and emergency equipment. They also should take measures in advance to guarantee that handicapped students can be safely evacuated.





*Teacher supervising the class evacuation at Thalahene School*

The team is responsible for conducting regular mock drills – at least once per term – in coordination with the other teams. They should practice different procedures for different hazards as fire outbreak or tsunami. During a disaster they have to coordinate the evacuation as practiced in the drills. After a disaster they have to ensure that the assembly area is safe and determine if any additional assistance is required for evacuation.

### 3. First Aid

A medical kit has to be available for the school. The First Aid team is responsible to keep the supplies up to date and complete. Further it should be aware of special medical requirements for students and have some stock medication.

The team should ensure training for all new members and refreshment training for existing members once a year.

The team has to participate in the mock drills. In case of a disaster, it has to administer first aid and record all cases and treatments. They should be able to determine need for further medical assistance.

### 4. Fire safety

The Fire Safety team needs to know how to operate the emergency equipment (fire extinguishers etc.) and the details of the school plan, including electric main switches and location of emergency equipment. They are responsible that the equipment is in working order and that staff has received training to use it.

In case of a fire outbreak the team has to control the fire, if possible, and report to the school administration as quick as possible.

### 5. Search & Rescue

The Search & Rescue team needs a map of the school with different exits, doors and windows marked as well as information about the number of students and classes. Master keys, stretchers, ropes and ladders should also be available for the case of an emergency.

During a disaster they conduct search & rescue operations if students or teachers are missing. They also have to know with which external Search & Rescue Teams they should coordinate in a severe event.

After a disaster they have to check every room in the building and report injured to the First Aid team and any damage to the school principal.

## 6. Site security

This team is responsible for securing the school in case of a disaster. Parents can be asked to help. Prefects, scouts and cadets can also be associated with the security team.

In case of an emergency, after evacuation all external gates and doors have to be locked in order to protect the school properties.



*Emergency equipment at schools in the Eastern Province*

## Team training

The sub-teams should be trained for their responsibilities such as evacuation, first aid, fire safety and search & rescue. They should meet regularly for practical exercises to maintain their acquired skills.

Training of selected team members and doing mock drills is an essential to keep the aliveness of the plan with the time.

The training component should be discussed in the plan and identify the necessary resources like material and trainers. Organizations that can help to provide training are DMC (mock drills, evacuation, warning), police and army (search & rescue, evacuation, fire safety), fire brigade (fire safety), Health Department/ Red Cross/ St. Johns Ambulance (first aid).



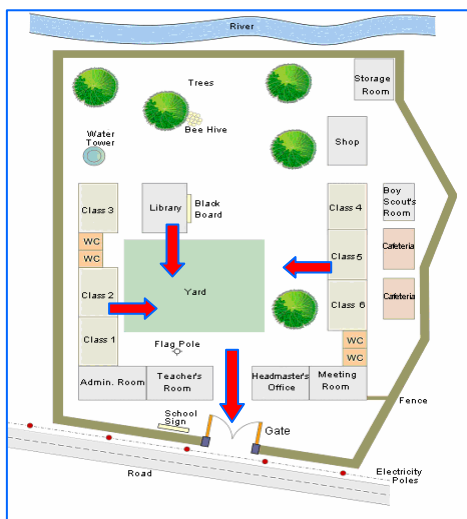
## Step 5: Prepare the school safety plan document

The School disaster safety plan should be a simple, easily understandable and school specific document. The document can be arranged to fit to the school context as school administrators wish. It should include the following elements:

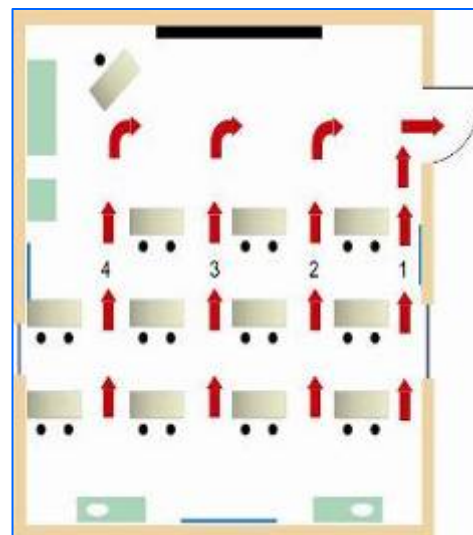
- Introduction about the school (see Model plan)
- List of Members of the disaster safety team with their responsibilities and contact details (see Step 4/ Roles and Responsibilities list)
- Hazards and Resources identification in the school (see Step 3; Model plan)
- School and Community maps (see Model plan)
- Program for school disaster safety team training, mock drills and updating of the plan (see Model plan)
- Dos and don'ts during an emergency (see chapter III)

The school map is an essential part of the plan and requires a detailed situation analysis of the school. This exercise can be carried out by the teachers and later shared with the students. The map shall show the following components:

- All physical structures as buildings, classrooms, staff room, laboratories, playground and natural geographic locations
- Identified places to keep emergency equipments (Communication system, Fire extinguisher, First Aid boxes, etc.)
- Identified, undisturbed evacuation paths which are used in an emergency
- Identified safe place (assembly point) within or outside the school premises where students can be evacuated
- Classroom evacuation maps might be included to show the process of evacuation of students by columns, beginning at the tables next to the exit (see below)



Map 1



Map 2

A second map should include the school environment or the community where the school belongs to. It should be produced in cooperation with parents and community representatives. This map shall include the following components:

- Geographical characteristics (lakes, rivers, higher/lower grounds, hills, beach, etc.)
- Transport (roads, bridges, boats, railway, etc.), evacuation routes and safe areas or shelters
- Buildings including the nearest available resources (Public Phone, Police, Hospital/Health Center, Red Cross, Temple/Church, etc.)

Examples of village map and school map



Map 3



Map 4



The school map should be posted at various points in the school. This will help to show the nearest exit and evacuation route to anyone who looks at the map. The safe evacuation paths should be clearly marked with arrows. Alternative access routes to the school along with the nearest key infrastructures should also be included.

Evacuation routes and emergency exits in the school can be indicated with signs.

*School evacuation map at a class room entrance*

## Step 6: Disseminate the plan and conduct mock drills

Once the plan is made it becomes very important that it should reach each and every teacher and student of the school. The way of dissemination can be arranged by the schools themselves. This dissemination can be made as an interesting event in the school such as art work, creative activities, poetry writing, slogan writing, drama, games, memory games, observation games, sports, rescue drill, evacuation drill etc.

If a mock drill can be done once a term it is very useful. One drill can be an informed and the other can be a surprise one. After each mock drill evaluation should be done to get feedback of the mock drill practices. Each and every comment after the drills should be used to upgrade the school disaster safety plan.

The preparation of the mock drill includes:

- Maps of classroom, school and surroundings for self-rescue are pictures or site plans that visualize the location and evacuation routes. The school evacuation map should be displayed in each classroom and other common places where it can be seen easily.
- The school safety team should study the emergency plan carefully and make sure they understand all aspects of the plan.
- The warning team must decide on the mode of alarm and let all persons know the form of the alarm (Bell, megaphone, etc.).
- The evacuation team must designate the safe areas and evacuation routes according to the type of disaster, i.e. when bomb blast occurs outside the school it is safe inside; when it occurs inside the school then evacuating outside is safe. These details must be made available to all by means of maps displayed at prominent locations.
- All the staff and students must know what they are to do once they hear the alarm.
- Parents must be made aware of the process so they do not interfere in the safe evacuation.
- The outside agencies such as police, local administration, DMC, etc. must be informed of the mock drill and sometimes asked to be present during the drill.

First priority in a school should be for evacuation of the junior classes and physically challenged persons as they are the most vulnerable.

Make sure of that the total number of students before they leave the room.

In the classroom all persons must line up, form a queue, and leave to the outside assembly area or safe area. No one will run, turn back or shout. This is important to prevent panic and stampede.

*Self-evacuation of a disabled child*



If there are injured students who are unable to leave on their own, the teacher should ask for help from others to take them outside the classroom.

The class teacher must be the last to leave the room, and will walk along with the students.

Girl guides, scouts, prefects and monitors must help in this process.

At the safe area there will be a head count. If any person is missing then the information must be given to the school administration and search & rescue team.

The last to leave the premises should be the principal and senior staff. They can lock the valuables before leaving.

If there is need to evacuate outside the school premises then traffic police must help, especially at junctions, to enable safe crossing of roads by the children.

Take feedback from all participants for amendments to the emergency plan.

**The basic mock drill is for evacuation, e.g. for fire or bomb threat. Depending on the local hazard, specific mock drills for tsunami or earthquake shall be practiced. Floods and cyclones are not considered as emergencies for schools, because the communities will receive warning in advance and take the necessary measures.**

In case of an emergency the following are the essential steps that should be practiced during the mock drills:

1. As soon as an emergency occurs the students and the staff should be informed by the Warning team.
2. Initial steps should be taken to control the emergency e.g. fire using available resources.
3. At the same time the warning should be immediately followed by evacuation by the Evacuation team.
4. If there is a trained Search and Rescue team, it should conduct a head count and search for missing persons.
5. The First Aid group will treat the victims on the spot, at a pre-designated first aid post.
6. After first aid operations victims should be rushed to the nearest hospital as soon as possible, if necessary.
7. Fire brigade and police should be informed immediately.
8. The situation should be handled calmly by all the teams. Students should be kept calm and controlled by their teachers.
9. The Site Security team should prevent any person running into a disaster site.
10. Future measures should be discussed with the participation of the school community.



## Step 7: Evaluate and update the plan

The School Disaster Safety Plan should be updated and evaluated periodically. The school should fix a time in the year (i.e. January), when they will evaluate and update the plan to make sure that it remains effective even after years of being made. This should then be disseminated again amongst the school community through drills and workshops.

The responsibility of this will be laid to school disaster safety nuclear team.

The following questions may help to ensure the quality of the plan:

1. Has the school established the school safety team and considered including students and parents who may be helpful as members?
2. Have team members been notified and their roles and responsibilities defined?
3. Has the school developed a list of team members and resource persons with names, addresses and telephone numbers?
4. Has the school organized training for the members of the school safety team?
5. Has the school considered the relationship between the district administration and the school safety team and how these groups interact?
6. Has the school developed and distributed the disaster safety plan document and made provisions for its review by the school safety team?
7. Have arrangements been made for regularly scheduled meetings, mock drills and other awareness and training activities?



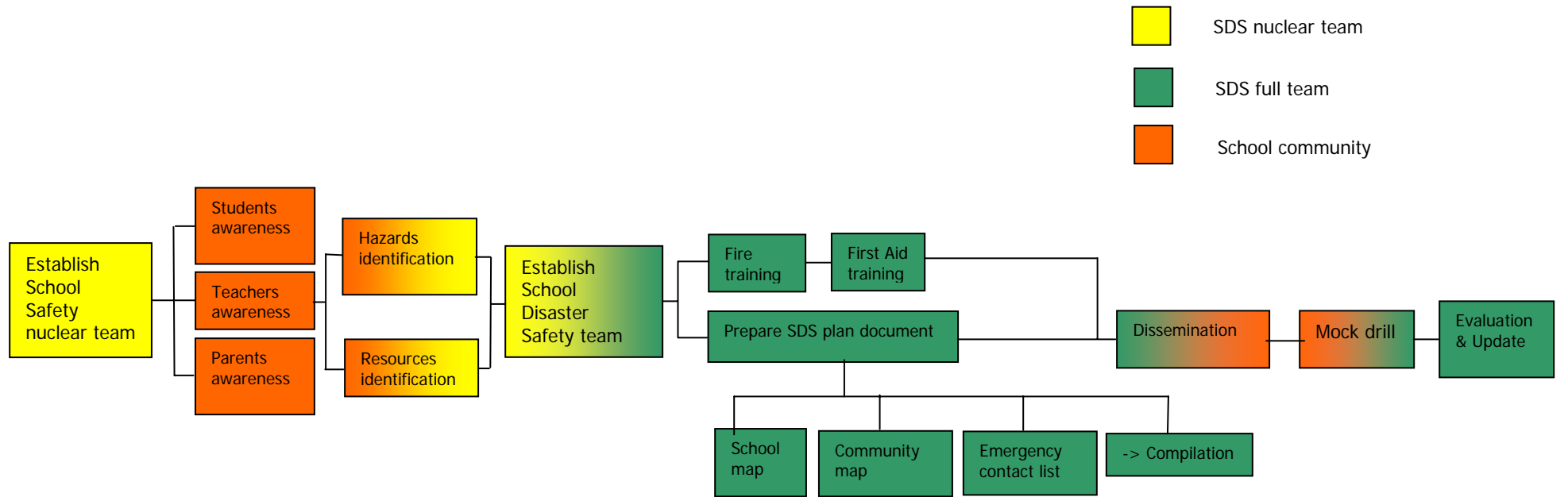
*Mock drill at Thalahene including the school pet*



*Fire Safety demonstration by the SL Air force*

The following flow chart shows the sequence of the steps taken and how the process of establishing the School Disaster Safety plan may be organized.

Graph 3



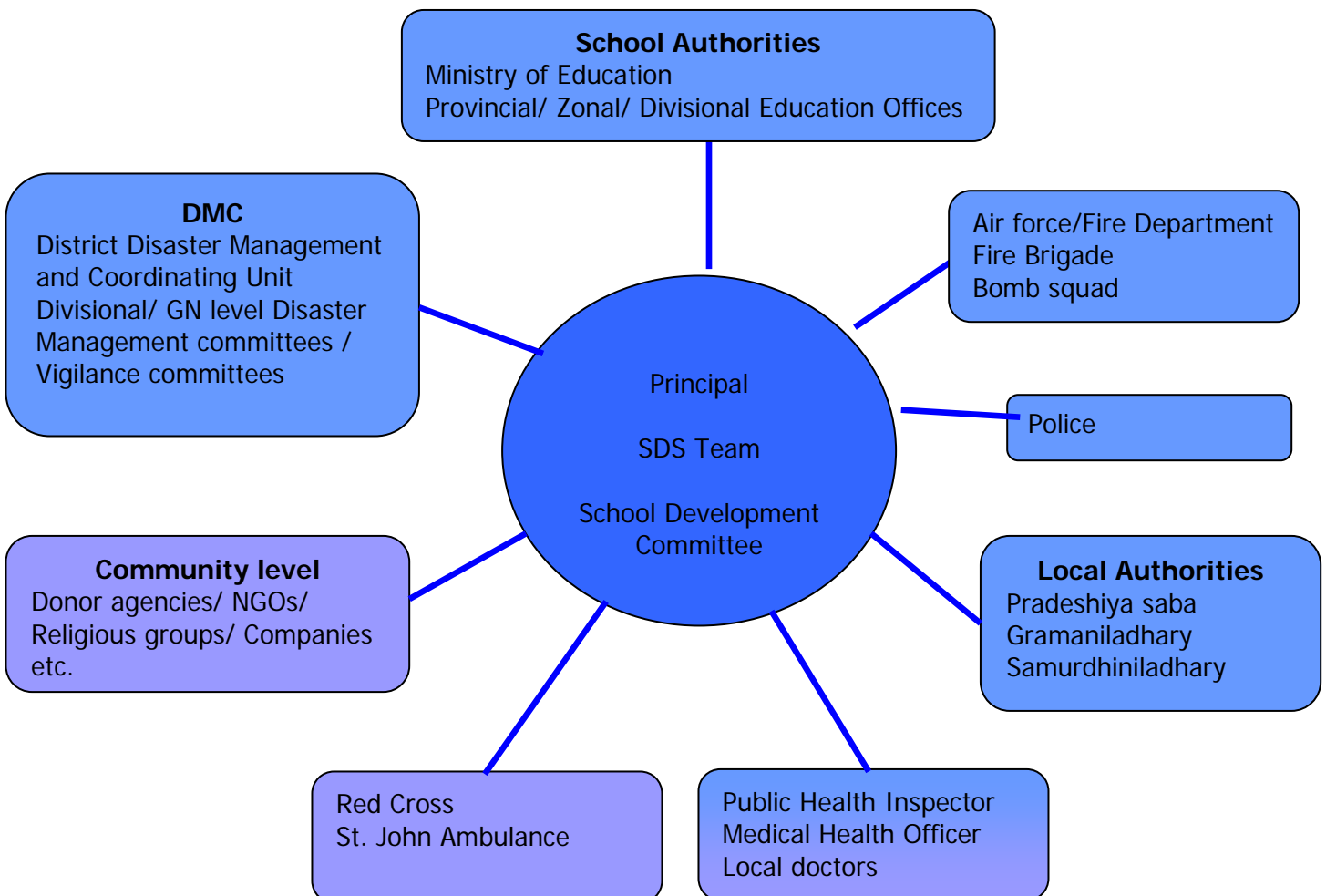
1 <sup>st</sup> Month	2 <sup>nd</sup> Month	3 <sup>rd</sup> Month	4 <sup>th</sup> Month	5 <sup>th</sup> Month	6 <sup>th</sup> Month
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Timing

### III. GOVERNMENT AND COUNTERPART ACTORS

The following chart shows the governmental and non-governmental agencies which can support the school community in its Disaster Safety programme.

On the back cover page of this manual the most important contact details of the disaster relevant agencies can be found.



Graph 4.

## IV. DO'S AND DON'TS BEFORE AND DURING DISASTERS

### Fire

#### Preparedness

- Identify the vulnerable places for fire and try to minimize the risk.
- Prepare a school emergency plan.
- Prepare a warning signal (i.e. bell – permanent ringing for 1 minute).
- Identify the safe area in the open grounds and evacuation routes in the school.
- Keep contact details which are needed during the emergency (fire brigade, hospital).
- Do regular mock drills to practice proper evacuation during the fire emergency.
- Train at least two teachers on how to use fire extinguishers.
- Keep sand baskets at the classrooms to use in an emergency
- Instruct school children on what to do when they see a fire in the school.

#### SAFETY TIPS

- Raise the alarm to warn the others.
- In case that it is a small fire, try to extinguish it. Do not go towards a big fire.
- Evacuate your students accordingly to the emergency plan.
- Leave the building going in single files and by the stairs.
- Keep calm and avoid running and pushing. Support the handicapped students.
- Assemble your class at the safe area and make the head count.
- Send out a search and rescue team to look for missing students or teachers.
- Provide first aid to injured persons.
- Call the emergency fire service number and tell them where your school is and what happened. It is important that you listen and do what they tell you.



## Lightning & thunderstorm

### Preparedness

In case your school is located in an area prone to thunderstorms and lightning, try to install a lightning conductor.

Give instructions to students how to behave during thunder & lightning.

### Emergency

**During thunderstorms it is dangerous to stay outside, therefore remain indoors or inside a covered vehicle.**

- If you are in an open area in the school ground, make sure to get to the class room as quickly as possible.
- Do not seek shelter under or near tall trees and on high grounds.

### SAFETY TIPS

- Avoid touching objects of metal and electrical instruments.
- Stay away from metal poles, fences, antennas etc.
- Avoid places where water is collected.
- Avoid travel in uncovered vehicles such as motor cycles, bicycles and tractors.
- If lightning is about to strike, squat on your toes and curl in a ball as shown.



## Cyclones and Floods

### Preparedness

If your area is prone to storm surge or floods, contact your village disaster management committee. A safe area will be located for evacuation in case of an emergency.

Keep important documents in the school in a tight plastic or water proof bag and at a safe place.

### Early warning

Most probably for cyclones and floods, early warning comes 48 and/or 24 hrs in advance. Keep receiving information on cyclone or floods warning from government institutions by sources such as radio and TV. You need to get accurate information by a trusted information source. Do not listen to rumors, but to all official warnings and do not go sightseeing.

**When the warning comes, it is advisable to keep children at their homes.**

- Remain indoors whether there is wind or not. Avoid windows.
- Be vigilant in flood prone areas during incessant rain.
- Switch off the electricity in the house.

### SAFETY TIPS

- If a warning is received, evacuate to an identified safe area.
- There is the possibility of tidal waves. Hence avoid the sea shore.
- Avoid electrical wires or posts that have collapsed.
- Keep away from damaged bridges, buildings and trees.
- Fishermen should avoid going to the sea. If in deep sea, return to land.
- Drink only boiled water during floods or after a cyclone as epidemics can spread.
- Avoid food contaminated with flood water.
- Avoid flowing water while walking or driving.

### Psycho-social aspects

Speak clearly to your family about facing difficult situations and how best to respond in a time of crisis. Be free to talk about ideas such as:

- Being prepared in your mind to face any eventuality, being courageous
- Staying calm, thinking clearly, and acting thoughtfully
- Staying together and supporting each other
- Looking out for the most vulnerable like small children, old people, sick or disabled people

Make sure children and family are mentally prepared for floods if this is common in the area. A positive mind set needs to be inculcated which will help them to cope:

- Floods are a constant occurrence in my area.
- If it happens, I know what to do, where to go and I am able to cope. I am not afraid.
- My family and community are prepared for this, we have faced it before we can do it again.

## Tsunami

### Preparedness:

If your area is prone to tsunami, contact your village disaster management committee. Prepare a school disaster safety plan in cooperation with the committee. Identify the safe area closest to the school and the evacuation paths to get there. Do regular evacuation mock drills for tsunami in the school and minimize drawbacks.

### Early warning

Early warning might be given in case of Tsunami, but the warning could be short notice.

If the warning gives enough time arrange to save important school documents, but do not involve students to do it and also do not delay the evacuation process.

Turn on your radio to learn if there is a tsunami warning if an earthquake occurs and you are in a coastal area. Keep receiving information from government institutions by sources such as radio and TV. You need to get accurate information by a trusted information source. Do not listen to rumors.

**When the warning comes, arrange immediate evacuation.**

### SAFETY TIPS

- Move inland to higher ground immediately and stay there.
- Never go down to the beach to watch a tsunami come in.
- If you can see the wave you are too close to escape it.
- If you are in a boat and on the sea, stay there and do not return to the land.
- After the tsunami; stay away from flooded areas until officials say it is safe to return.
- Arrange to send school children to their home safely or handover them to their parents.

### Mock drill:

The warning team of the school gives the signal that a tsunami is occurring and the school has to be evacuated as fast as possible. Accordingly to the evacuation map, students and teachers leave the class rooms and gather at the designed safe area on higher ground. There, the teachers make the head count to control if everybody is safe. All stay in safe place until the danger is over.

## Earthquakes

### Preparedness:

#### **Earthquakes usually give no warning at all.**

Before the earthquake is the time to make a safety plan for the school. Consider the following:

- Always keep the following in a designated place: bottled drinking water, non-perishable food, first-aid kit, torch-light and if possible battery-operated radio with extra batteries.
- Identify places in the school that can provide cover during an earthquake.
- Conduct regular earthquake mock drills with the teachers and students.

### SAFETY TIPS

When an earthquake occurs, there is no time to think about where you will be safe. You need to be prepared so that you can react appropriately and immediately and move to a safer location. Here are some tips for keeping safe during a quake:

- **Drop, cover and hold:** Get down low. Cover your head and neck with your arms. Hold on to something stable so that you do not go sliding.
- If no sturdy cover is nearby, kneel or sit on the floor next to a structurally sound interior wall. Place your hands on the floor for balance.
- Move away from windows, bookcases and other unsecured heavy objects.
- Do not run outside if you are inside.
- If you are outside, try to go to an open area while keeping away from falling debris, electric wires and trees. Stay there until the shaking stops



After the quake: Here are a few things to keep in mind after an earthquake:

- After the first tremor, be prepared for aftershocks. Though less intense, aftershocks cause additional damages and may bring down weakened structures
- Do not re-enter damaged buildings and stay away from badly damaged structures.
- Help injured or trapped persons. Give first aid where appropriate.
- Return home only when authorities say it is safe.

### Mock drill:

The teacher blows the whistle as the signal that an earthquake is occurring; students take shelter underneath the tables. The teacher checks the correctness of their self preservation and gives feedback. Then the students leave the self preservation place and the teacher explains the evacuation procedures. While evacuating the classroom and school building towards the agreed safe place, the students protect their heads with schoolbags to avoid being hit by falling objects.

## **Bomb threats in the school**

### Preparedness

Identify an emergency response team who will receive any emergency message regarding such event.

The team has to identify the safe locations and safe routes in the school where children have to be evacuated. They also need to do practice regular mock drills in the school. The team should know in advance what are the responsible agencies need to be contacted during such emergency.

The school children should be made aware about what to do in an emergency.

### SAFETY TIPS

- Be aware of unidentified bags or parcels or any unusual objects in the school.
- Take bomb threats by phone calls seriously.
- If such an incident happens, inform the school official and the emergency team as quickly as possible.
- Keep children away from the suspected object and evacuate them from the dangerous area.
- In case the bomb threat is inside the school, evacuate the students to a safe area.
- In case the bomb threat is outside the school, keep the children in the classroom and away from windows.
- Inform Police and Bomb Explosion Unit as quick as possible.

## V A SCHOOL DISASTER SAFETY PLAN EXAMPLE

### SCHOOL DISASTER SAFETY PLAN

Wickrama College

*Ratnapura*



Education zone: Niwithigala

School Class: 1C

***This model school plan is fictional and based on the plans drafted from pilot schools.***

## **Content of the plan**

- Introduction
- Members of the disaster safety teams
- Hazards and Resources identification
- Community and School maps
- Evacuation procedures
- School Action Plan for disaster safety activities

## **Introduction**

Wickrama College is in Niwithigala Education zone in Ratnapura district. The school consists of 65 teachers and 1.220 students. Out of them 670 are male students and 550 are female students. The college is under the category of class 1C. It is having classes from grade 1 to 13. For each grade there are 1 to 3 classes.

The school is located in front of the Niwithigala - Kalawana main road. It has two multi story buildings and ten single story buildings. In addition to those there are one main hall, shrine room, staff room.

The road to the school is passing the low land area of Niwithigala town which is prone to floods during the south west monsoonal period. The last heavy flood was recorded in 2003, May. The school is located in the valley surrounded by Niwithigal and Puwak henna mountains. The two mountains are highly prone to landslides. It was recorded a heavy landslide in 2003, May which damaged part of the school building. Also the school got slightly damaged during the flood in 2007. Lightning was also recorded during the month of November in the area.

Under the above context the school administration has identified the need for a proper disaster safety plan in order to face emergency situations.

**Members of the school disaster safety nuclear team**

<b>Name of the person/ Designation</b>	<b>Position &amp; Responsibilities in the Team</b>	<b>Contact details (Address/Tel/Mobile)</b>
1. NN The Principal	Chairman	XXXXXX
2. NN The Vice Principal	Head of Search & Rescue team	XXXXXX
3. NN Teacher	Head of Evacuation team	XXXXXX
4. NN Teacher	Head of First aid team	XXXXXX
5. NN Parent	Head of Site security team	XXXXXX

**Emergency Contact list (Hambantota District / National)**

<b>Designation/Organization</b>	<b>Telephone Office</b>
District Secretary	047 2220235
Additional District Secretary	047 2220232
Fire Station: Air Force Camp, Weeravila	047 2237169
Sri Lanka Army Camp, Weeravila	047 2220120
Department of Meteorology	047 2220188
Area Superintendent of Police	0472220228
Base Hospital	047 2220266
Chairman, Hambantota Urban Council	047 2220727
Director, National DMC, Colombo	011 2861137
Director, Department of Social Services, Colombo	011 2825235
Director, Meteorological Department, Colombo	011 2694104
Head, Land Slides Studies & Services Division, NBRO, Colombo	011 2588946



### Members of the school disaster safety team and resource persons

Name / Designation	Position & Responsibilities in the Team	Contact details (Address/Tel/Mobile)
1. NN The Principal	<u>Chairman of SDST and head of warning team</u> - Coordination with emergency officials - Assigning team members - Receiving accurate information	XXXXXX
2. NN The Vice Principal	<u>Head-search &amp; Rescue team</u> - Keeping the records of daily attendance - Identify vulnerable places in the school	XXXXXX
3. NN Teacher	<u>Head of Evacuation team.</u> - Conducting evacuation drills and update - Directing students to safe areas - Counting heads & reporting missing	XXXXXX
4. NN Teacher (Head-Science)	<u>Head of first aid team.</u> - Maintain first aid kit - Inform the principal about injured	XXXXXX
5. NN Teacher	<u>Head of site security team.</u> - Prevent unnecessary people entering. - Protect property	XXXXXX
6. NN Teacher	Member of first aid - Giving first aid - Taking injured to hospital	XXXXXX
7. NN Teacher	Member of evacuation team - Directing students to safe areas. - Opening locked doors/gates	XXXXXX
8. NN Member School Development Committee	Member of evacuation team - Directing students to safe areas. - Opening locked doors/gates	XXXXXX
9. NN Parent	Member of first aid team - Giving first aid	XXXXXX
10. NN Parent	Member of site security team. - Protects property - Prevent outsiders entering	XXXXXX
12. NN Prefect	Member of warning team - Give the warning signal	XXXXXX
13. NN Prefect	Member of search & rescue team - Help to find missing people	XXXXXX
14. NN Doctor	Resource person - Instructor for health aspects	XXXXXX
15. NN Police inspector	Resource person - Giving instruction to school protection	XXXXXX
16. NN GN	Resource person - Establishing links with the community	XXXXXX
17. NN Pradeshiasaba	Resource person - Coordinator for government authorities	XXXXXX

**INFORMATION SHEET****RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EMERGENCY TEAMS****1. EARLY WARNING TEAM**

- MAKE THE COMMUNITY BOTH WITHIN AND OUT SIDE THE SCHOOL
- AWARE OF THE TYPE OF WARNING SIGNAL
- CONDUCT MOCK DRILLS
- MAINTAIN LIST OF IMPORTANT CONTACTS
- INFORM WITHIN THE SCHOOL ABOUT ANY EMERGENCY
- INFORM OUTSIDE AGENCIES SUCH AS FIRE BRIGADE, POLICE STATION AND EDUCATION OFFICE FOR HELP IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

**2. EVACUATION TEAM**

- MAKE THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY AWARE OF THE SAFE AREAS TO ASSEMBLE IN CASE OF EMERGENCY.
- MAKE AN EVACUATION PLAN FOR THE BUILDINGS WITHIN THE SCHOOL
- MAKE THE EVACUATION PLAN EASILY AVAILABLE TO ALL CONCERNED
- CONDUCT MOCK DRILLS ON EVACUATION
- GUIDE THE STUDENTS TO THE SAFE AREAS IN CASE OF EMERGENCY
- CONDUCT HEAD COUNT TO ENSURE ALL ARE SAFE
- INFORM SEARCH & RESCUE TEAM / FIRE SERVICES ABOUT MISSING PERSONS

**3. FIRST AID TEAM**

- RECEIVE TRAINING IN FIRST AID
- CONDUCT PRACTICE SESSIONS
- SET UP A FIRST AID POST DURING EMERGENCY AND PROVIDE FIRST AID
- INTERACT WITH EVACUATION TEAM FOR BEST LOCATION OF FIRST AID POST
- MAINTAIN FIRST AID KIT IN THE SCHOOL
- MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH LOCAL HOSPITALS AND DOCTORS
- PLAN FOR TRANSPORTATION OF INJURED TO HOSPITAL

**4. SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM (IF TRAINED AND AVAILABLE)**

- RECEIVE TRAINING
- CONDUCT PRACTICE SESSIONS
- OBTAIN INFORMATION ON MISSING PERSONS FROM EVACUATION TEAM
- SEARCH FOR MISSING PEOPLE
- TAKE INJURED TO FIRST AID POST FOR FURTHER MEDICAL TREATMENT

**5. SITE SECURITY TEAM**

- PREVENT ENTRY OF UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS INTO THE INCIDENT SITE
- MAINTAIN SECURITY OF PREMISES AND SCHOOL PROPERTY
- MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH AND COOPERATE WITH LOCAL POLICE

**Hazards and resources identification****Natural hazards calendar**

Hazard	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Floods												
Landslide												
Cyclone												
Drought												
Lightening												

**Potential hazards in and around the school**

Type of hazards	Possible places/	Possible solution identified
Fire in electric cables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ in the Main hall</li> <li>▪ in the Library</li> <li>▪ in the Physics labs</li> <li>▪ in the Office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Rewiring the electric system</li> <li>▪ Using trip switches</li> <li>▪ Display instructions</li> <li>▪ Use fire braking mechanisms (fire extinguisher/ sand baskets)</li> </ul>
Chemical spill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ in the chemistry lab</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use proper storing mechanisms</li> <li>▪ Use proper instructions</li> <li>▪ Keep chemical protective equipments</li> </ul>
Damages from older buildings (Breaking the Ceiling/Tiles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grade 8 class rooms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reconstruct the ceiling</li> </ul>
No zebra crossing on the main road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In the main gate road crossing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use school prefects for traffic control in the morning and the afternoon</li> <li>▪ Avoid student crossing the road during school hours</li> <li>▪ Keep the main gate closed during the school hours</li> <li>▪ Get support from the pradeshiya saba to draw the zebra crossing</li> </ul>
Falling of book shelves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In the library</li> <li>▪ In the office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fix to wall</li> <li>▪ Use shorter shelves</li> </ul>
Street dogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In the school ground</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Immunize them</li> <li>▪ Contact PHI</li> </ul>

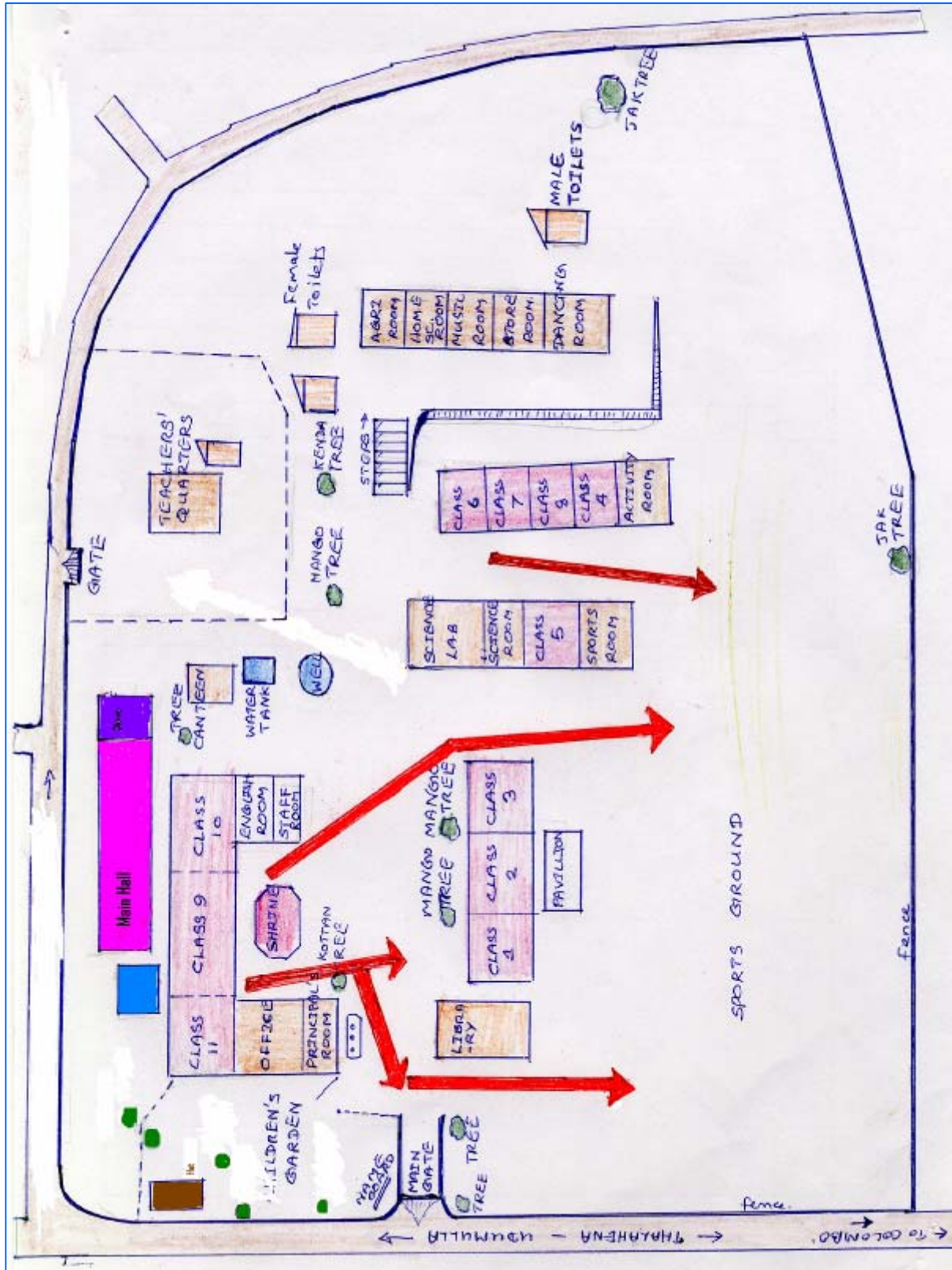
**Available Resources in the school**

<b>Type of resource</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Places</b>
Fire extinguishers	03	Library:1 Office :1 Main hall: 1
First aid boxes	02	Office: 1 Sport room: 1
Ladder	01	Store Room
Sand baskets	08	Library : 2 Office: 2 Main hall: 2 Staff Room: 2
Megaphone	01	Office Room
School evacuation map	25	Each class room Office : 1 Staff Room : 1 Sport Room: 1 Library : 1 Main hall : 1
Emergency contact details list	02	Office : 1 Staff Room: 1
Radio	01	Office
Telephone	01	Office
Safety helmets	02	Office

Village evacuation map



School evacuation map



## INFORMATION SHEET

### Evacuation procedures

#### Before emergency

- Give information about the possible hazards
- Instruct how to escape
- Instruct how to reduce damages
- Instruct how to respond to the emergency signals
- Conduct Mock drills

#### During emergency

- Follow the Instructions
- Act as soon as possible
- Help others
- Inform the relevant internal and external agencies for help

#### After emergency

- Search & rescue, First aid, head count
- Trauma counseling

#### Evacuation routes (internal & external)

- Follow the safety routes already prepared

#### Sheltering sites and Safe areas (internal & external)

- According to the type of disaster select the safe area

#### Procedures for addressing medical needs

- Do First Aid
- Calling ambulance
- Calling security forces
- Send the serious cases to the hospital

#### Transportation

- Use available Transportation – List of taxi services, transporters with contact numbers



**School action plan for disaster safety programme**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Resource Persons</b>	<b>Resource Materials</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Outputs</b>
1. Conducting Awareness Programmes for students	Principal, Geography Subject teacher	Divisional DMC coordinator	Posters, Video, Tapes	January, February, March	Students gain clear knowledge and confidence to save themselves and the community during disasters
2. Establish Disaster Safety teams at school level	Vice Principal			2 weeks	Functional team, divided into groups
3. Assessment on Disasters and Hazards	Disaster Safety Team	Group members	Observation sheet	2 weeks	Disasters and hazards noted in tables
4. Organize training materials	Group		Rope, mat, first aid box, fire extinguisher, megaphone	1 month	All the resources needed for the training will be available at the school
5. Organize training groups of students	Scouts and Physical Education teacher	St. Johns Ambulance, Cadets, Hospital	First aid box, ladder, ropes, fire extinguisher	1 month	The students will be prepared for sudden action



## Plan for First Aid Training

1. **Target Groups:**

Students	-	40 (Grade 10-13)
Teachers	-	10
  
2. **Venue:** School Hall
  
3. **Duration:** January – April, Saturday, Sunday – 120 hrs.
  
4. **Resource Persons:**

-	St.John Ambulance	
-	ICRC, MOH	
  
- ❖ **Cost:**

-	Participants	50x300	=	15,000.00
-	Stationeries	50x50	=	2,500.00
-	Refreshments	50x15x50	=	1,875.00
	<b>Total</b>			<b>55,500.00</b>
  
5. **Resource Materials:**

-	Triangular cloths
-	Stretchers, Emergency kit
-	First aid box
-	Dummy
-	Tent
-	Flip chart
-	Multimedia Projector
  
6. **Preparation & Implementation** – School Disaster Safety Team
  
7. **Other Suggestion** - Frequently exercise with the students!