



Education Community



Disaster Management Community

Solution Exchange for the Education Community Solution Exchange for the Disaster Management Community Consolidated Reply

Query: Restoring Schooling in Flood Affected Areas - Experiences; Referrals

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From [Cecilia Barbieri](#), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural
Organization (UNESCO), New Delhi

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The recent floods in northern Bihar, Orissa and other parts of the country have led to massive displacement and destruction of life and property. It has affected over half a million children who are the most vulnerable victims of child mortality, malnutrition, disease, trafficking, and of being orphaned. On top of all this, the educational loss faced by these children is enormous as regular life and schooling has been uprooted. We thus need to make attempts to minimize the educational loss (of at least one year) of these students. These children should not face discontinuity in their schooling, which increases their risk of dropping-out.

The Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) Mission needs to be equipped to deal with disasters, such as floods, which impede schooling. To help in this, civil society organizations, bilateral and multilateral agencies, philanthropists and the government need to synergize their efforts in the direction of restoring the educational vacuum for the flood affected children. The problem is even more acute as the floods have affected states with high dropout rates in schools.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as a nodal technical agency for education within the United Nations system, is interested in collaborating with organizations working at the field level for providing support and addressing the issue of discontinuity in schooling of the affected children. It is in this context that we seek inputs from members on:

- Experiences of viable and successful initiatives of providing alternate education that could be implemented to children during such disasters
- Alternative modes of education that could be provided to these children
- References of organizations who have developed similar kind of tools or have carried out such initiatives

We would also like to know of successful co-ordination and collaboration mechanisms to help prevent the replication/uneven distribution of such initiatives.

Inputs from members of the Education and Disaster Management Communities would be very useful in helping us develop an appropriate intervention strategy.

Responses were received, with thanks, from

1. [Anuradha Gupta](#), Prithvi Innovations, Lucknow
2. [Arun Jindal](#), Society for Sustainable Development, Rajasthan
3. [A. K. Pandeya](#), Bihar Education Project Council, Patna
4. [Rudra Prasanna Rath](#), GoI-UNDP Disaster Risk Management Programme, Orissa
5. [Lalit Mohan Mishra](#), Yojana, Orissa
6. [Shivangi Chavda](#), SEEDS, New Delhi
7. [Ashok Kumar Paikaray and Dhanada Kanta Mishra](#), Pratham, Bhubaneswar
8. [Mike Adams](#), Health Communications Resources, United Kingdom
9. [Amitabh Mukhopadhyay](#), Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi
10. [V.Palaniappan](#), Centre for Ecology and Research, Thanjavur
11. [Mahesh Arora](#), Anubhooti Society, Rajasthan
12. [Binay Pattanayak](#), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), New Delhi
13. [Sushil G](#), Risk Management Solutions International (RMSI), Noida
14. [Kiran Jayasa](#), Individual Consultant, Andhra Pradesh
15. [Gyana Das](#), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Orissa
16. Ananya S. Guha, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi ([Response 1](#); [Response 2](#))
17. [Col Prem Prakash](#), National Cadet Corps (NCC), Patna
18. [T. Prabu](#), Lutheran World Service-India, Tamil Nadu
19. [Ravishwar Sinha](#), Independent Consultant, New Delhi
20. [Colin Yarham](#), Health Education and Promotion International, Chennai
21. [Manoj Kumar](#), Spandana Sphoorty Financial Limited, Bihar
22. [Subbalakshmi Kumar](#), Centre for Development Education, Pune
23. [B. L. Kaul](#), Society for Popularization of Science and Progressive Educational Society, Jammu
24. [Deepa Das](#), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Guwahati

Further contributions are welcome!

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Summary of Responses

Responding to the query on models of educational intervention to ensure educational continuity for children displaced due to emergencies, discussants highlighted the need for rigorous alternative educational arrangements, stressed the importance for psychosocial support and suggested various approaches for providing schooling during disasters.

Disasters, members noted, take many forms natural (i.e. droughts, earthquakes, cyclones) and man-made (i.e. riots, bomb blasts), however, irrespective of the type of the disaster, educational discontinuity can occur. During disasters, such as the recent the floods in Bihar, educational interventions are often neglected as the focus is on providing immediate relief and basic amenities. Thus, respondents stressed the **importance of arranging for schooling** until children can return to regular schools to minimize the educational loss experienced by children. This also helps to relieve some of their psychological trauma by giving children an opportunity to share their experiences and engage intellectually. Discussants stressed that providing psychosocial support needs to be a priority before engaging with the formal syllabus.

After a disaster, members pointed out children are often compelled to contribute towards the family income by doing menial jobs or some sort of livelihood activity. This could lead to a permanent discontinuity of schooling. Alternative educational arrangements during emergencies help prevent children from dropping out of formal education by providing an interim arrangement such that they can be mainstreamed back into formal schools after life returns back to normalcy.

Providing **non-formal education to displaced children during disasters** calls for creative and innovative pedagogical methods, the use of local knowledge and teachers, and interactive techniques such as games and songs, argued respondents. For example, an organization working in relief camps in [Bihar](#) is providing teaching learning materials and equipment to alternate learning centers, and has employed local volunteers to teach children in camps using a play method, which involves singing, drawing and painting to help the children overcome the trauma of displacement. Similarly, in [Orissa](#) a civil society organization is working to establish Alternate Learning Centers and distribute Teaching Learning Materials, along with ongoing relief work in the state.

This approach has also proved effective during past disasters as well members noted, in [Tamil Nadu](#) after the 2004 Tsunami, childcare centers were set up in to normalize routine activities for children, such as schooling and playing and to enable them to overcome their emotional trauma. Additionally, in [Uttar Pradesh](#) an organization worked with flood affected communities to devise a strategy using local resources to enable children living in relief camps to continue their education.

In addition, discussants recommended **providing psychological counseling** to students as an accompaniment to the formal curriculum. They also emphasized the importance of building humane and empathetic relations with displaced and traumatized children to enable them to rebuild their morale and settle them psychologically. For example, in [Rajasthan](#) an organization as part of its alternative education program following the Gurjar-Meena agitation, offered counseling and support to victims.

Other experiences providing education during disaster situations, mentioned included the work of an NGO in [Orissa](#), following the 1999 super cyclone, which adopted a strategy of giving priority to students appearing for board examinations and NGO working in [Rajasthan](#) during the 2005 floods to restore schooling by mobilizing the local community.

Discussing **ways to provide non-formal education**, respondents suggested using rural houses and locating financially viable teaching-learning materials and keeping them in the house. They also advised training local teachers in alternative teaching methods, providing nutritious food supplement to students and using activity based teaching methods in the transaction of the curriculum. Another recommendation

was to enlist the services of the National Cadet Corps for assistance in providing alternative education to displaced children.

Members also suggested using radio as a medium of instruction in non-formal setups. They advised creating radio programs based on the formal curriculum and broadcasting them at specific times on different subjects, ideally telecasting them repeatedly throughout the day so that children can avail of it at any free time. This type of strategy was effectively utilized in [Somalia](#) to help children in conflict-affected areas continue their schooling. At the same time, some cautioned that providing education through radio programme necessitates resolving issues related to signal transmissions, access to affected children (particularly because many would be pre-engaged with earning a livelihood for their family), lack of teacher supervision and individual attention for students, and no mechanisms for evaluating the progress of students.

Finally, respondents recommended preparing for possible emergencies, by conducting vulnerability mapping of schools, etc. This strategy is especially applicable in flood and drought prone areas. They also suggested empowering students through rigorous life skills education in the course of the formal curriculum, on topics like health, sanitation, disaster management, peace education, the environment and other life related themes in culturally relevant contexts. This approach would equip children with practical skills to help them cope better with emergencies.

Comparative Experiences

Uttar Pradesh

Providing Educational Inputs to Flood Affected Local Schools, Supaul, Araria, Madehpura and Saharsa (from [Anuradha Gupta](#), *Prithvi Innovations, Lucknow*)

Prithvi Innovations sensitized local schools and community members to work out a follow-up plan specifically focusing on education in the relief camps for flood affected children. Their educational strategies are based on use the local knowledge, expertise, experience and manpower. Based on the plan developed with the community, they sent a team with relief material collected from various schools to the flood affected regions to enable them to provide education. Read [more](#)

Bihar

Alternative Learning Centers in Relief Camps (from [A. K. Pandeya](#), *Bihar Education Project Council, Patna*)

The Bihar Education Project Council set up alternative learning centers in the relief camps for those displaced by the Kosi River floods. This arrangement was made within 10 days of starting of the camps. Teaching learning materials and teaching learning equipment were arranged in all alternative learning centers. Additional books were prepared for out-of-school children besides the curriculum-based course books. As a result of this effort, the educational loss is being minimized. Read [more](#)

Orissa

Educational Intervention for Children Affected by Super-Cyclone (from [Lalit Mohan Mishra](#), *Yojana, Orissa*)

YOJANA, an NGO worked to restore the educational continuity of children following the 1999 super-cyclone. Children belonging to specific age-groups were identified on the basis of whether they were appearing for board examinations for class V, VII and X. The teachers were local, from the nearby villages or camps and taught the formal school syllabus. Due to such efforts, students were able to appear for examinations, minimizing their educational discontinuity. Read [more](#)

Non-Formal Learning Centers for Children Displaced due to Floods (from [Ashok Kumar Paikaray & Dhanada Kanta Mishra](#), Pratham, Bhubaneswar)

Alternative Learning Centers have been started by Pratham for children in relief camps and/or badly damaged villages with non-functional schools. Local volunteers, trained for relief work are involved in this effort, which is being supervised by the block coordinators. Teaching-learning materials along with relief materials will be collected from the block coordinator. The intervention is designed to prevent children from missing out on their schooling. Read [more](#)

Rajasthan

Ankur- School Restoration Project Mobilizes Community, Barmer (from [Shivangi Chavda](#), SEEDS, New Delhi)

Following the 2005 floods, the NGO SEEDS initiated a project aimed at restoring schools structurally and making them operational. They also built the local capacity of teachers and councilors to help children with the trauma of displacement by providing psychosocial care. Community involvement was central to the reconstruction process. As a result, the schools were restored to technical standards and according to the requirements of the local environment. Read [more](#)

Alternative Schooling for Conflict Affected Children (from [Mahesh Arora](#), Anubhooti Society, Rajasthan)

Anubhooti Society collaborated with Disaster Management and Health Consultants: India (DMHC) to provide alternative education to children adversely affected by the Gurjar-Meena agitation. Normal school services had been interrupted due to the agitation. The program also provided psychosocial support/counseling for adolescent girls and women along with other victims of the prolonged agitation. Read [more](#)

Tamil Nadu

Providing Educational Support to Tsunami Affected Children through Child Care Activity Centres (from [T. Prabu](#), Lutheran World Service-India, Tamil Nadu)

After the 2004 Tsunami, Lutheran World Service India (LWSI) set up child care activity centers (CCAC) for affected children to normalize their routine activities like schooling, playing, chatting, and also to help them recover from the emotional trauma due to the Tsunami. The CCAC teachers were trained to provide educational and emotional support (i.e. by sharing experiences) to the children. This approach helped the children overcome their traumatic and negative feelings and continue their education. Read [more](#)

"Schools Total Health Program" for Learning Life Skills (from [Colin Yarham](#), Health Education & Promotion International, Chennai)

For over 12 years, the Schools Total Health Program, a comprehensive program, has been using a culturally sensitive and child-centred approach. The objective is to empower students through skill development, improve infrastructure and sanitation in schools and reach out to families and the community. This approach has enabled to broaden the scope of teaching topics and issues on crisis programs to students. Read [more](#)

Assam

Government Initiatives in Providing Educational Facilities to Flood Affected Children, (from [Binay Pattanayak](#), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, New Delhi)

In Assam, District Primary Education Programme in 1990s and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in 2000s undertook various constructive activities for children in flood affected areas. They helped them by providing reading writing materials, alternative & innovative education along with support for their security measures. Read [more](#).

Somalia

Interactive Radio Instruction to Provide Alternative Education (from [Mike Adams](#), *Health Communications Resources, United Kingdom*)

Distance Learning Program used radio programmes to provide education when regular schooling was disrupted due to the war. Four-hundred thousand school children received daily lessons in reading, math and life skills. The lessons were developed for grades one through six, giving who had missed out on educational opportunities access to schooling. Due to the radio programs, not only did the children, but their families as well were influenced as it created awareness on disaster related issues. Read [more](#)

Related Resources

Recommended Documentation

Amid Fighting, Children Turn to Radio to Continue with Classroom Lessons: Radio Program Changes Family's Life (from [Mike Adams](#), *Health Communications Resources, United Kingdom*)

Article; USAID; United States; 29 August 2008

Available at http://www.usaid.gov/stories/eastafrica/ss_eaf_radio.html

Article describes how radio was used in Somalia as a medium for providing alternate education to children after war; describes how it can be tried in emergency situations.

Ankur-Post Flood School Restoration Initiative (from [Shivangi Chavda](#), *SEEDS, New Delhi*)

Project Report; SEEDS; New Delhi; March 2008

Available at <http://www.solutionexchange-un.net.in/education/cr/res29100801.pdf> (PDF Size: 1.45 MB)

Project report provides information about the organization's initiative to reconstruct 18 schools following the 2005 floods in Barmer, Rajasthan

From [Sudakshina Mallick](#), *Research Associate*

TISS Flood Relief Initiative in Bihar: Reaching the Unreached

Project Report; by Anup Tripathi, Dheeraj, Manoj Joseph & Dr. Swati Banerjee. Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS); Mumbai; October, 2008;

Available at <http://www.tiss.edu/Final%20report%20bihar%20flood%5B1%5D.doc.new.pdf> (PDF 980.36 KB)

Report describes the project's intervention strategy in Saharsa district which targeted at reaching out to the most marginalized victims of flood to provide them health education

Bihar Flood Takes a Toll on Education

Article; by Amitabh Srivastava. India Today; Patna; October 8, 2008;

Available at

http://indiatoday.digitaltoday.in/index.php?option=com_content&task=view§ionid=4&issueid=74&id=17062&Itemid=1 (HTML 84.8 KB)

Article provides information on the extent of devastation of schools due to Bihar floods, magnitude of out-of-school, displaced children and related government initiatives.

Recommended Organizations and Programmes

Prithvi Innovations, Lucknow (from [Anuradha Gupta](#))

535, IIm Campus, Off Sitapur Road, Prabandh Nagar, Lucknow 226013 Uttar Pradesh; Tel: 0522-2736535; akumarlko@gmail.com

Providing Bihar flood relief and working with the Department of Social Works, Delhi University to develop a follow-up plan focusing on providing education to children in relief camps

From [A. K. Pandeya](#), Bihar Education Project Council, Patna

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Department of School Education and Literacy, New Delhi

Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, Shastri Bhavan New Delhi 110001; Tel: 91-11-23383226; Fax: 91-11-23381355; vsarup@sb.nic.in; <http://ssa.nic.in/index.html>; Contact: Sarup Vrinda; Joint Secretary; Tel: 91-11-2338322

Government programme for universalization of elementary education; emphasizes on issues relating to physical infrastructure, including safety measures and prevention against disasters.

Bihar Education Project Council (BEPC), Patna

Beltron Bhawan, Shastri Nagar, Bailey Road, Patna 800023 Bihar.; Tel: 91-612-2286405/0699; Fax: 91-612-2281005; dpepbihar@hotmail.com

During the Bihar floods, BEPC made arrangements for providing alternate education in camps for displaced children.

Pratham, New Delhi

Pratham Resource Centre, Basement floor, A-1/7 Safdarjung Enclave (Near Kamal Cinema Complex) New Delhi 110029; Tel: 91-11-26716083/84; info@pratham.org; <http://www.pratham.org/>

Working with Bihar Education Project Council to provide alternative education arrangements for flood affected children living in relief camps.

M. V. Foundation, Secunderabad

201, Narayan Apartments, West Marredpally, Secunderabad 500026 Andhra Pradesh; Tel: 91-40-2780-1320; Fax: 91-40-2780-8808; mvfindia@gmail.com; <http://www.mvfindia.in/index.asp>

Working with the Bihar Education Project Council to offer alternative education arrangements for flood affected children living in relief camps for those affected by the Kosi flood.

YOJANA, Orissa (from [Lalit Mohan Mishra](#))

Puri 2, Orissa; Contact Lalit Mohan Mishra; Disaster Management Trainer; yojana@sify.com

Has experience providing alternate education to children affected by disasters, actively worked on the issue during the 1999 super-cyclone in Orissa.

SEEDS, New Delhi (from [Shivangi Chavda](#))

15 A, Institutional Area, Sector IV, R. K. Puram, New Delhi 110022; Tel: 91-11-26174272; http://www.seedsindia.org/our_campaign.htm

Following the 2005 floods in Barmer, Rajasthan, SEEDS restored 18 schools structurally and non-structurally.

Anubhooti Society, Rajasthan (from [Mahesh Arora](#))

A 13 A, Opposite Community Hall, Burmese Colony Rajasthan; Tel: 0141 2611838; Contact Mr. Mahesh Arora; Secretary; maurora@rediffmail.com

Following the 2007 riots in Rajasthan, worked to help children who faced an interruption in school services; has experience working in emergencies and can be contacted for consultation

From [Binay Pattanayak](#), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, New Delhi

Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti, New Delhi

Basement of Y.W.A. Hostel No. II, Avenue - 21, G-Block, Saket, New Delhi 110017; Tel: 011- 2656 9943; Fax: 011-2656-9773; bgvs_delhi@yahoo.co.in; <http://www.bgvs.org/rubrique29.html>

Worked in various states such as Orissa, Bihar and Assam to help children and their families during floods, including providing educational support

Action Aid, New Delhi

R-7, Hauz Khas Enclave, New Delhi 110016; Tel: 91-11-40640500; Fax: 91-11-41641891;
<http://actionaidindia.org/bih.htm>

Has supported victims of floods and other natural calamities in as timely manner; can be contacted for working for restoring education for displaced children

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Assam

Mission Director(SSA), APSAP, DPEP, Assam, (Near DPI), Kahilipara, Guwahati – 781019 ;
<http://ssa.nic.in/ssadoc/1st-apr07-30-sept-07/ASSAM.pdf/view>;

Government's premier flagship programme for universalization of elementary education undertook various educational programmes for flood affected children in 2000.

From [T. Prabu](#)

Lutheran World Service India (LWSI), Kolkata

84, Dr. Suresh Sarkar Road, Kolkata 700014 West Bengal; Tel: 91-33-22849200; Fax: 91-33-22443062;
lwsiv@vsnl.com ; http://www.lwsi.org/html/proj-costal_orisa-tamil.html

Organization set up child care activity centers (CCAC) which imparted education in the Tsunami affected districts of Cuddalore and Nagapattinam in Tamil Nadu .

National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHNS), Bangalore

Hosur Road, Bangalore 560029 Karnataka; <http://www.nimhans.kar.nic.in/>

Set-up childcare activity centers (CCAC) after the 2004 Tsunami to normalize children's routine activities including schooling

Antyodaya Lok Karyakram, Bihar (from [Amitabh Mukhopadhyay](#), Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi)

PO Majharia Kishun, Via Jagdishpur, Block Nautan Distt West Champaran, Bihar; Contact: Mr. Devnarain, Coordinator; Tel: 9934999529

For 18 years, has carried out a successful non-formal education project in over 100 villages in West Champaran District, Bihar, interested in helping provide education during emergencies

Society for Sustainable Development (SSD), Rajasthan (from [Arun Jindal](#))

Jagdamba Colony, Karauli 322241, Rajasthan; Tel: 044-07464-250288; Contact Arun Jundal; Executive Director; jindal1965@gmail.com

Working on educational issues in drought affected areas of Rajasthan, interested in working on providing education in flood-affected areas

Schools Total Health Program, Chennai (from [Colin Yarham](#), Health Education & Promotion International, Chennai)

3B, 10 Bishop Waller Avenue East, Mylapore, Chennai 600004 Tamil Nadu; Tel: 91-44-4983684;
info@hepi.net; <http://www.hepi.net/ProgramFrameset.html>

Developed a comprehensive school health and living skills curriculum to empower students and prepare them to deal with any disaster situation.

Recommended Contacts and Experts

Mr. V. Palaniappan, Organization Centre for Ecology and Research, Thanjavur (from [V. Palaniappan](#))

122, 5th Cross-, Natarajapuram, South Thanjavur 613007 Tamil Nadu; Tel: 044-04362-245077;

Conducted school programmes using with HAM radio for educating students on environmental protection, which worked very well; can be contacted for more info on the programme.

Recommended Portals and Information Bases

National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences, Bangalore (from [Binay Pattanayak, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, New Delhi](#))

http://www.nimhans.kar.nic.in/dis_man/default.htm

Portal contains standardized materials used for providing psychosocial care to children during rescue, relief, rehabilitation, and rebuilding phases of a disaster

Responses in Full

[Anuradha Gupta](#), Prithvi Innovations, Lucknow

We totally agree that during these disasters, besides the massive loss and destruction of livelihood, what suffers most is education. Since all the efforts are initially focused on restoring life, infrastructure and ensuring reasonable health-care facilities, the issue of education gets sidelined.

What most of us do not realize it that in comparison to other components of relief and rehabilitation, (which require fair amount of investment in terms of time, manpower, infrastructure, transport, money, distribution channels, technical expertise and other resources) providing educational inputs is just a matter of priority concern, sincere willingness, commitment, passion, energy, co-ordination skills, lots of patience, innovative mind, local experience & support, networking skills, and some basic resources on a continuous basis.

Since children are a most vulnerable lot during such situations and are too young and ill-equipped to cope up with this sudden drastic change in their life, it's all the more important to engage them in some creative and educational activities which will not only reduce the trauma and pain and make it easy for them to become normal, but also be a very big help to their parents, who can find some time to think about restoring their work etc..

Education is a very vast subject and covers all kinds of activities, including vocational skills, capacity building, training, income generation, hence it should not be restricted only to children but even adults, especially, women could be brought under this program. Though the focus and trust should be on elementary education, but the approach and strategy used for the purpose should be unconventional, non-formal and relevant to the local surrounding- like use of theatre, puppets, folksongs, art and craft etc...

We appreciate the concern shown by UNESCO and would be happy to contribute in this area.

Recently we had tried to sensitize the local schools in Lucknow and community members to come forward to help the flood victims of Bihar on Sept 08 and education was very much in our mind. We had sent a team of two people with the relief material collected from various schools, IIM and other areas to the flood affected regions in Supaul, Araria, Madehpura and Saharsa. We had requested support from UNDP Lucknow office too. We were in touch with the Department of Social Works, Delhi University too and wanted to work out a follow-up plan specifically focusing on education at the relief camps.

One need to find the right kind of motivators who can keep the children and others motivated for education and then gradually built the teaching modules. It is important to identify the local Youth or Senior Citizens or teachers who can be trained and equipped with the right strategies. It is important to build a local pool of passionate and committed volunteers who like teaching and are willing to donate few hours of their time on regular basis. Some kind of incentives could be provided to these volunteers for the wonderful work being done by them and time-to-time assessment could be made to evaluate if they are going in the right direction.

Since the flood victims' families may not readily accept any outside intervention, it's important to use the local knowledge, expertise, experience and manpower. We being outsiders may not understand lot of cultural implications, which can have a serious impact on defining the education strategies.

What best we could do is build their capacities, keep them motivated, train them in innovative and locally relevant teaching styles, provide them basic inputs, help them to manage and network within community and to help them to document and record their inputs.

There are so many ways of making it possible, provided we have the dedicated team who is passionate about teaching, with us and some amount of resources.

At any point if we could be of any help we would be happy to do so. It's time we all take it up.

[Arun Jindal](#), Society for Sustainable Development (SSD), Rajasthan

You have raised a pertinent issue at this forum. Congratulations.

Society for Sustainable Development (SSD) is working on the education issue in Rajasthan since last five years. I would like to raise my concern about education of children in drought situation. Drought disaster losses are not seen in short time spans, but it effects in long term. After loss of livelihood options, farmers and cattle rearers fall in debt/poverty trap and are unable to come out of this trap. Children suffer most in this situation. They have to forego everything barring work for maintaining their lives. There is a specific need to work on education of disaster-affected children.

An education center at the migration place can be a viable solution. Education through modern technology like radio and computer could also be used. SSD implemented a project on alternative education of children affected by disasters. We would be happy to work further on this issue with UNESCO.

[A. K. Pandeya](#), Bihar Education Project Council, Patna

In present floods of North Bihar, schooling for the children of flood affected districts were made by the Bihar education Project Council, Patna, an organization working for the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). Alternative arrangements for education were made in all the camps where the displaced people with their children were living. This arrangement was made within the 10 days of starting of the camps. Besides that arrangement, efforts were also being made on the other sites where people were living with their own initiatives on the high road sides.

Teaching learning materials, teaching learning equipments were arranged in all the alternative learning centers by the Bihar Education Project Council. In all alternative learning centers either started in camps or in other places. Teachers and the volunteers of Pratham and MV Foundation were deputed and they really worked well. We tried our best to maintain the teaching learning processes of all flood affected children.

The books prepared for the children who are out of school were provided to them besides the course books. Story cards prepared by the NGO Pratham were also provided to the children. In the early period, schooling was started just in a play method, like singing, doing activities, drawing, and painting with an aim to make the children free from the trauma of flood. Gradually, children were identified class wise in all the mega Camps arranged by the Bihar government and class wise tents were also arranged and class wise teaching was started.

I can not say that Bihar Education Project Council was successful in arranging the well prepared educational arrangements but it was also true that schooling of the flood affected children were arranged in quick succession and it was successful also. We are running our project even now in camps where people are staying.

As the flood situation is eased and the people are returning to their villages, we are planning to start residential alternative schooling for the children so that they can continue their education without any disturbances. We hope we will be successful in making these arrangements also within time limit. We are taking the support of two NGOs as mentioned above - Pratham and M.V. Foundation. Besides the alternative residential schools, we are also planning for non-residential alternative schools in a big number.

As Bihar Education Project Council is in a position to arrange every thing for these alternative schools, either residential or non-residential, we require some extra support of man power in the form of resource persons and planners who can support us for the successful implementation of the alternative schools. If UNESCO could collaborate with us and help us in arranging all things, it will be added support for our activities.

Rudra Prasanna Rath, GoI-UNDP Disaster Risk Management Programme, Orissa

This is a concern for all of us, as most of the students will take time to go back to their schools. The schools, which were already in a dilapidated condition, might find it difficult to gather resources for reconstruction. The NGOs, CBOs must identify resources available at locality to keep these students engaged during these crises period.

Following activities may be identified on a proactive basis-

1. Identification of rural houses at the village level for use it at alternate stop gap schooling arrangement
2. Make a quick village transact walk to find out no. of students who are delinked from educational set up
3. Locate low cost and no cost teaching and learning materials and keep these materials in the house itself for the popularization of stopgap school
4. These centers be named as activity cum tuition centre
5. Appoint village educated unemployed for giving tuitions in these centers
6. Take necessary steps to link these student with that of formal educational set up later on.
7. Provide nutritious food supplement to the students by harnessing the resources from the District Social welfare section.
8. Provide teaching learning materials, training aid to the school and activity centers until closure.

These activities are just a sketch and it may vary from time to time depending upon the location specific and disaster specific issues.

Lalit Mohan Mishra, Yojana, Orissa

The continuity of education of children in flood-hit areas is really a serious issue, which is normally ignored amidst physical rebuilding and livelihood restoration activities. The educational focus is very important and it is not difficult to work out a strategy.

As a NGO of Orissa, YOJANA has worked on this issue during 1999 super-cyclone time with the support of TDH, Germany. This time we are not able to do it due to lack of support from donors.

What we did identifying the focus groups is as follows-

- 1) Age 5 - 9 (from pre-enrolled up to class IV)

- 2) Age 10 (class 5 who are appearing for Board exams)
- 2) Age 12 (class 7 who are appearing for the Board exams)
- 3) Age 15 (who are appearing for the Board exams)

In all these groups, the girl children were given priority, as they are most vulnerable to dropouts. Similarly, the children of dalits / tribals were given prime focus, as these kids are most vulnerable to child labor and migrant labor or trafficking.

So, there were 4 sets of programmes for the children between 5-15 years of age.

With regard to the teachers, it is easy to find local teachers from the village or camps. The syllabus is a formal school syllabus with the inclusion of creativity, games and songs.

From the educational viewpoint, children appearing for the Board examinations at class V, class VII or class X are the greatest priority.

In the current situation of floods, the same strategy should be worked out with the help of volunteers and EGS teachers/govt teachers.

Physical inputs should include-

- a) Books and notebooks/ pencil/pen/ slate-chalks
- b) Play materials
- c) Shaded/ polythene for cover / carpets for sitting on floor
- d) Black boards
- e) Exam notebooks

The personnel cost includes:

- a) Cost of volunteers
- b) Supervisor cost

It is easier to work with children below class V. Here there are three subjects' viz. Math, language, social sciences and science.

The class V group and class VII group becomes a little more difficult as this is the group that appears for the board exam. The teacher should use the question bank and revision exercises after teaching in summary. It is like a condensed-bridge course.

Class X is really a challenge. Here, the weak subjects like the English, Math's and Science should be the focus of teaching and other subjects should be given for home study and clarification only can be done in the class as the time for exam is very close.

After the exam, the unsuccessful candidates or those who fear no success should continue coaching without waiting for the result. This would help the children to appear for the supplementary examination soon.

If the funds do not permit, then the group up to class V should be the focus and easily handled as the most priority group.

Usually, education intervention is left out and it is nice to learn that UNESCO is interested to intervene.

Shivangi Chavda, SEEDS, New Delhi

It is well-recognized fact that the impact of floods in recent times has caused a major disruption of the institutional functioning of the schools. It has been realized that the impact of a damaged education facility runs deeper and portrays a major challenge in achieving the MDGs target at achieving primary education. Disasters in the past have inflicted education processes in many ways. The long recovery period of getting back to school accentuates the possibility of these marginalized schoolchildren to be trapped between earning livelihood and getting basic needs. Some of these school children do not go back to schools as earnings for the distressed family supersede the requirement of getting education during the time of disaster.

The structural and non-structural safety along with the disaster risk management is “complimentary to” and “within the perspective of” education sector reforms. Hence, restoration is required to improve the access of these marginalized communities to quality education while making their coping capacities robust enough to be resilient to the natural disasters. While access to education is the priority need, “Safe Schools” are the crosscutting requirements to the basic need. The physical structure, coping capacities of the schools and the access to quality education are pivotal in reducing poverty and vulnerability of the communities. The interruption of the basic infra structure facility such as schools leads to further implication on the psychological trauma of such affected children.

SEEDS has worked extensively in different post disaster scenarios to address the need of strengthening the institutional capacities of schools. Primarily, the aim of such endeavors is to ensure that education is not disrupted, children go to schools, are safe and schools provide a suitable environment to learn and grow.

“Ankur”- a school restoration project - was initiated by SEEDS in post flood scenario, 2005, in Barmer, Rajasthan. The project aimed at “building back better”. 18 such schools were restored structurally and non structurally. The schools were restored to be resilient in compliance with technical standards and the local environment. The schools promoted learning aids and training on psycho social as well as water and sanitation issues. Orientation on Disaster Preparedness was organized in each of these schools.

Report of the project is shared herewith to help promote the cause of children’s education with a wider perspective. To access it, please click on, <http://www.solutionexchange-un.net.in/education/cr/res29100801.pdf> (Size: 1.45 MB)

Ashok Kumar Paikaray & Dhanada Kanta Mishra, Pratham, Bhubaneswar

We had a meeting at Pratham office in Cuttack to take stock of the flood situation, relief work and our plan for the rehabilitation phase. About 50 block coordinators of Pratham along with about 10 district coordinators and 5 zonal coordinators and others attended the meeting. We also had representatives of UNICEF who attended the meeting to explore possibility of opening informal education centers in worst hit areas of the flood zone until schools are back to normal.

In the morning, a brief motivational training session was organized by Madhusudan Das (ex-AID Saathi and National Youth Project Coordinator) to motivate the volunteers for engaging in flood relief work with energy and enthusiasm. He also shared his considerable experience of working in disasters such as the Super Cyclone.

Following the training, every one present wrote a one-page report on their experience of the flood in their area and the work they have been engaged in the last 10 days. Subsequently, 10 small groups were made under leadership of district coordinators to go out and collect donations from public in Cuttack city. A total Rs. 5087/- in cash was raised and many materials such as clothes, biscuit packets, medicines etc. were collected in large quantity. The experience of interacting with the public was very instructive.

For example, the team that I was with collected donations from shops, petrol pump and passers by. People invariably helped with amounts ranging from 50p to 100 Rs. Most of them shared their experience of the flood as many of them were from nearby flood-affected villages. People with tears in their eyes described how they had to pull out their near and dear ones from the flood and how they have been sending help to their near and dear ones. While many cursed politicians and professional social workers, who use the disasters for their personal benefits, but everybody appreciated Pratham's work and helped to their capability. It was a great opportunity to raise consciousness and awareness about the plight of flood affected.

It was decided to take up the following work in the next phase:

1. A list of about 58 sites was selected to start Alternative Learning Centers for Children in relief camps and/or badly damaged villages with non-functional schools. One or two volunteers from the area will be engaged in this work under supervision of block coordinators. An honorarium of Rs. 250/- per volunteer will be paid for one month or until situation improves significantly.
2. The package of compensation announced by government will be printed and distributed to all volunteers (10000 copies) so that people would be aware about the compensation package. Pratham volunteers will help those who are unable to get the compensation due to various difficulties and corruption.
3. A letter was given to BDO of different blocks to involve Pratham and its volunteers in the ongoing relief work - particularly in distribution of bleaching powder and halogen tablets to help purify contaminated water bodies in villages.

At the end of the meeting, each Block coordinator would be left with a packet of relief materials and Teaching Learning materials for use in his/her respective areas.

So far, an expense of 1.63 Lakhs has been incurred from the funds made available by AID. A break up of the expenses will be provided in a day or two.

Affected Area List for Non Formal Learning Centers

Sl/District Name/ Block Name/ Grama Panchyat /Village Name

- 1 Khurda Baliana Prataprudrapur Talaharijan, Sahi
- 2 Khurda Balipatana Pampola, Gadabantapur
- 3 Khurda Jatani Pradhan Sahi Pradhan Sahi
- 4 Nayagarh Bhapur Fatepur Manipur
- 5 Nayagarh Bhapur Karbar Badabar
- 6 Baudh Kantamal Ghantapada Ghantapada
- 7 Jagasinghpur Kujanga Sailo Teramanpur
- 8 Jagasinghpur Biridi Ukundara Ukundara
- 9 Jagasinghpur Biridi Purana Chuasikhanda
- 10 Jagasinghpur Tirtol Kanimul Lankapada
- 11 Bhadrak Dhamnagar Khadipada Khadipada
- 12 Puri Astaranga Nagar Dakhinapantala
- 13 Puri Pipil Teisipur Teisipur
- 14 Puri Delanga Siripurustampur Bidharpur
- 15 Puri Delanga Jenapur Jenapur
- 16 Puri Nimapara Salanga Odual
- 17 Puri Nimapara Badasirubula Badagaon
- 18 Jajpur Binjharpur Ranapur Naranpur
- 19 Jajpur Bianjharpur Ranapur Kantipur
- 20 Jajpur Bianjharpur Chadramua Malipur
- 21 Jajpur Dhamasala Patunia patunia
- 22 Jajpur Dhamasala Patunia Hamjapur
- 23 Jajpur Badachana Arakhapur Arakhapur

- 24 Jajpur Rasulpur Rahama Sukudeipur
- 25 Jajpur Bari Kalamatia Jorkul
- 26 Jajpur Dasarathpur Dattapur NarayanPur
- 27 Jajpur Korai Bandola Balia
- 28 Jajpur Korai Mulapal Salaba
- 29 Jajpur Jajpur Malaanandapur Arakhita Adibasi Sahi
- 30 Jajpur Jajpur Similia Sathiatikiri
- 31 Jajpur Jajpur Sandapur Madhapur
- 32 Jajpur Jajpur Nath Sahi Nath Sahi
- 33 Kendrapara Kendrapara Kalapada Tunupur
- 34 Kendrapara Kendrapara Kalapada Samagudia
- 35 Kendrapara Kendrapara Shyamsundarpur Jutaali
- 36 Kendrapara Kendrapara Shyamsundarpur Maradpur
- 37 Kendrapara Mahakalapara Baulakani Baulakani
- 38 Kendrapara Mahakalapara Ramnagar Pitapata
- 39 Kendrapara Mahakalapara Khurusia Khurusia
- 40 Kendrapara Mahakalapara Patalipanka Patali
- 41 Kendrapara Garadapur Bangalpur Sanasalar
- 42 Kendrapara Garadapur Bangalpur Lunakarandia Iland
- 43 Kendrapara Marhaghai Jalapaka Jalapaka
- 44 Kendrapara Marhaghai Jalapaka Smrutipur
- 45 Kendrapara Marhaghai jainpada jainpada
- 46 Kendrapara Marhaghai Antei Antei
- 47 Cuttack Kantapara Postala Sudusalio
- 48 Cuttack Kantapara Postala Andei Sahi
- 49 Cuttack Narsinghpur Padamal Padamal
- 50 Cuttack Narsinghpur Debabhuin kandhala
- 51 Cuttack Narsinghpur Debabhuin Bhusuka
- 52 Cuttack Narsinghpur kamaladhiha Ranibhuin Gaon
- 53 Cuttack Tigiria Badanauput Khandahata
- 54 Cuttack Cuttack Sadar Barala Chanduli
- 55 Cuttack Salepur Mutaripha Athamania
- 56 Cuttack Salepur Mutaripha Kothobada
- 57 Cuttack Salepur Champati Gopinathpur
- 58 Cuttack Salepur Champati Bateswar

[Mike Adams](#), Health Communications Resources, United Kingdom

I am a part of the se-drm group and this is my first post. I would like to suggest the use of radio to provide alternative education.

During the Bihar flooding, Health Communication Resources (HCR) assisted the FIRST Response team from Feba Radio, India to put Disaster Response Radio programming on the air. These radio programs were on the air for 6-7 weeks from the first week of September. While FM radio licenses were not granted, FIRST Response used international SW radio frequencies.

Programs were produced in Hindi from Saharsa district providing relief and aid information in cooperation with NGOs and GOI district Magistrates. This communications channel established communication with affected people all across the Bihar flood zone, indicated by 1800 phone calls and SMS received during that period. The power of radio during disaster response was obvious.

Where has radio been used to provide alternative education?

I was impressed by a project in Somalia that provided education through the "Somalia Interactive Radio Instruction Program". See the link below: http://www.usaid.gov/stories/eastafrica/ss_eaf_radio.html

This project uses a radio technique called "Interactive Radio Instruction" or IRI. This is a structured form of interactive education that can be a helpful alternative when regular education is interrupted.

The FIRST Response radio programs were one hour a day dedicated to Disaster Response information. I am also suggesting that several hours a day could also be added for education. Students could gather around radios (as they do in Somalia) at IDP camps, creating an educational environment and reducing boredom.

Amitabh Mukhopadhyay, Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi

It's heartening for me to know that Bihar Education Project is yielding good dividends. It was the first Education for All Project crafted by Ministry of HRD in 1990 and as the Convener of the team; I worked a lot on it.

Incidentally, there is an NGO called Antyodaya Lok Karyakram, near Bettiah that carried out a very successful non-formal education project over 100 villages in West Champaran District for 18 years. I have been associated with them since their inception. Devnarain, the Coordinator, can be contacted at 9934999529. They will be happy to lend a hand if you need them. They are great mobilisers of the community, which is crucial for a sustained effort.

V. Palaniappan, Centre for Ecology and Research, Thanjavur

Few years back I have conducted a school on air programme with HAM radio for educating students on Environment protection and it worked very well.

The same can be replicated where the listeners not only knows about disaster management, but also learns about HAM radio. It creates scientific temper in the minds of the students and also develops universal brotherhood.

Mahesh Arora, Anubhooti Society, Rajasthan

Disaster Management & Health Consultants: India (DMHC) in collaboration with an Ngo based in Jaipur, Rajasthan - Anubhooti Society had successfully filled in gaps in the interruption of school services in parts of Rajasthan that were adversely impacted during the Gurjar - Meena agitation that led to disruption of all kinds of services for over two months. Alternative arrangements were made for schooling for some of the impacted villages.

Besides, the program also utilized the arrangements for non-formal education and psychosocial support / counseling etc for adolescent girls & women and victims of the prolonged agitation.

DMHC: INDIA is willing to undertake some project in this regard in collaboration with Ngos based in Bihar.

Binay Pattanayak, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), New Delhi

Happy to learn from friends who are working in flood affected areas in different states.

I would like to bring to your notice the activities of couple of more organizations who have put their hard efforts to help children in such precarious situations.

One is Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti in different states such as Orissa, Bihar, Assam, etc. that has played active role in helping children and their families during floods from time to time.

Action Aid has also supported victims of floods and other natural calamities in as timely manner.

In Assam, District Primary Education Programme in 1990s and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in 2000s also have undertaken various constructive activities for children in flood-affected areas to help them in providing reading writing materials, alternative & innovative education along with support for their security measures.

I would also like to draw your attention to the contextual and low cost approach of the late Lauri Baker who worked on Mission mode to construct models for people in areas affected by natural calamities such as floods, earthquakes, etc.

Greetings to all those who are sharing their ideas and experiences on this theme.

Sushil G., Risk Management Solutions International (RMSI), Noida

The idea of radio education is quite popular and affordable as almost every household in rural India has a radio. However, there is a need to reach out to a large segment of population, informing them of the timings of the program, for the timing for different class. It should be a minimum of half an hour program daily for each standard on different subjects.

However, the school curriculum should be strictly adhered to. Also, the program should be repeated on the same day at different times, so that if a student has missed a certain program, he can listen to it at the repeat time. Timings should also be kept in mind depending upon the age of student. For example, if a class one student has a time, say of about 10 am, while a 9th class student can have a time of 6:30 am, because the younger child would not be able to wake up so early while a class 9th student can get up early easily.

A lot of people have already elaborated on this.

Kiran Jayasa, Individual Consultant, Andhra Pradesh

The concept of radio is fine to reach out to the students but we need to know that RADIO IS NOT SO COMPLETE A TOOL TO DEPEND since:

1. How many students are going to hear - can we know? During flood situation, there are pressing problems of finance, living and food problems, which involves the student and his/her family members also.
2. How many students can utilize this one completely with respect to lack of teacher supervision?
3. How many of them have radio?
4. How to know if students are progressing?
5. How to know if teachers are using the appropriate vocabulary with respect to different IQ students?
6. How to fix subjects schedule with respect to classes, including revision of concepts. In flood situations, we need to have at least one lesson on disaster in radio classes. Problems faced include,
 - a. Disturbance of receiving signals in some areas
 - b. Missing classes in some areas
7. Where & what is the place to listen?

Radio can reduce somewhat financial and teachers resources but not give adequate attention to students progress / standards.

Gyana Das, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Orissa

During the last flood in the Mahanadi river system, the schoolchildren were affected worst since

(1) the schools were suspended (not closed) as per the Government notification to make it function as a temporary shelter and storage/distribution point and

(2) the books and other study materials of the school going children were lost or damaged.

The schools could be reopened from 15th October after the Durga Puja holidays.

Schools play a key role in restoring normalcy in the life of disaster victims. Within eight weeks of disasters, we may set up temporary schools in case the school buildings are damaged. We may focus on bringing the teachers and children together. This process can be facilitated by supply of minimum furniture, learning tools and materials.

Ananya S. Guha, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi (response 1)

I think we have touched upon a most crucial and sensitive issue of children being displaced because of natural disasters such as floods. Add to this we have man made calamities like riots or bomb blasts. Children who are displaced are displaced from not only their houses, but their homes as well, since the school is virtually a home for the child. I once read in the bytes for all forums on how children who were affected by floods in Bangladesh, belonging to poor families were compelled to do menial jobs, until an NGO discovered innovative ways of building the school in boats, where the children could watch their favorite cartoons on television, and interact with one another.

So, in such a situation it is not the curriculum that is important, what is needed is to re settle these children into a familiar atmosphere of conviviality, fun and camaraderie. It is not pedagogy, which is important, but the touch of humaneness, emanating from innovation. We really have not thought of such situations and more so when children lose their parents because of instances such as ethnic violence or bomb blasts. I thank UNESCO for raising this issue and am willing to contribute my mite for a cause.

Prem Prakash, National Cadet Corps (NCC), Patna

I have been following most of the discussions on various subjects keenly. Being an Army man I do not have much experience in this field of education except during my tenure as Commandant, RIMC, Dehradun. This interest also enabled me to complete my MA-Eng and BEd sometimes back. Now I am posted in NCC as Gp Cdr at Patna.

A very crude/novice suggestion may be utilizing NCC for this purpose as it has social service and community development as part of its curriculum. I visited Purnea and areas ahead including the camps where flood affected people were staying. In fact, a few schools exist near these camps from where teachers may be sent to conduct classes. Also there are staff from the administration including doctors who are available. May be disaster management and appropriate staff may need to be apprised about this problem of education. Apex body of Disaster management and relief may have to include this aspect. I also remember Mayo College had sent teachers for 6-8 months to Andaman Islands after Tsunami.

I am getting educated, ladies and gentlemen. This State of mine of course needs a lot of it- one is making some contribution through the NCC cadets.

T. Prabu, Lutheran World Service-India, Tamil Nadu

We are aware that many instances of disasters impose significant effect on children. The magnitude is compounded with their age, sex, caste, etc. The children daily normal routine activities disturbed, displaced from home to camp, unexpected shock and leaving the children in confuse state. These situations make irretrievable pains in children mind and memory, which may impede their normal growth and development thereby causing damage to their adulthood. Psychosocial care support to children is one of the important tools to facilitate normal growth and recovery.

I was previously worked with Idhaya-Everychild , Psychosocial project in the Tamil Nadu Tsunami affected districts of Cuddalore, Nagapattinam and kanyakumari with technical support from NIMHANS, Bangalore. We set up childcare activity centers (CCAC) in the affected areas to normalize the children routine activities like schooling, playing, chatting, etc and also recovering the emotional trauma due to Tsunami. The childcare activity center teachers were trained and providing educational and emotional support to the children.

In emotional support, the CCAC teachers adopted the medium for working with the children survivors of Tsunami. This played significant role to minimizing the child fears, confusion, shock and fast recovery towards normalcy. Please visit the link to know more about the psychosocial care mediums for children to overcome the disaster difficulties.

http://www.nimhans.kar.nic.in/dis_man/train_nd2.pdf

http://www.nimhans.kar.nic.in/dis_man/train_nd3.pdf

http://www.nimhans.kar.nic.in/dis_man/train_nd4.pdf

http://www.nimhans.kar.nic.in/dis_man/train_nd5.pdf

http://www.nimhans.kar.nic.in/dis_man/train_nd7.pdf

http://www.nimhans.kar.nic.in/dis_man/train_nd8.pdf

Ravishwar Sinha, Independent Consultant, New Delhi

Thank you for highlighting a very important issue.

There is no doubt that education and associated play activities for children have a big role in erasing the worry lines and bringing forth smiles and hope with resolve to recover from the emergency.

In my experience, in managing the Tsunami and other emergency responses, it was very heartening to see children play and start going to schools or start attending AWCs. This not only had beneficial effects on children but also improved the ambiance of the camp and the community.

Children / women who had lost their families begin to compose themselves and start looking forward. It also improves bonding and instances of camp abandonment are much fewer. These are essential for a successful recovery and rehabilitation.

Helping augment the nutritional, health, prevention of abuse / trafficking and other relief and rehabilitation initiatives are important. International and national experiences reinforce this. UNICEF has very good experiences and materials nationally and internationally.

The organizations including the government and NGOs/CBOs do take steps within their means to start educational activities.

However, there is great room to improve priority and logistics of supply of educational and play materials with attendant organizational arrangements in the community to make best use of the supplies received. It is not the money but the initiative of such activities from within the community which are facilitated by the supporting agencies that makes the difference.

I am sure the NDMA will further prioritize this.

Resource allocation in the education departments of government should have special provisions and teams with emergency educational supplies should be present. It should form a part of the ongoing disaster response training with greater emphasis.

The inputs from other contributors are very informative and useful.

Colin Yarham, Health Education and Promotion International, Chennai

Warm greetings. Our group continues to appreciate and to learn from the inputs and experiences on disasters, flooding and each of the topics — all innovative and highly necessary measures under existing circumstances

We also would suggest that: "It is better to prepare the child, rather than repair the child".

The decisions people learn to make, and the behaviors they adopt during childhood and youth have a profound effect on their health as adults and have a cumulative impact on the length and quality of life. When we talk of Total Health, it is important to understand that we must consider a holistic approach — dealing not only with physical health but also emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual aspects of the whole person.

Language Literacy and Maths Literacy (Numeracy) are of little use if children's health is not sustained. Where there are adequate levels of health literacy, community members may have a greater confidence to guide their own growth and health. This is the only body we have in this life. It is essential that we all learn the rudiments of its care.

The health of people in many countries has captured the attention of world leaders, governments, philanthropies, policy makers and the general public as never before. "There is need of an overhaul of the education system and creation of a healthy environment in schools"
— Prime Minister Manmohan Singh

Two just-released reports, the World Health Organization report on "Social Determinants of Health" and the British Parliament Committee document entitled "Diseases Know No Frontiers", both emphasize the importance of health literacy and comprehensive school health education & promotion of the type so fully demonstrated by the TN Schools Total Health Program.

Over the last few years there has been a rush to demand "push-in-somewhere" programs on a plethora of crisis issue topics — population education, AIDS education, disaster management, terrorism, many other important issues and when this occurs, too often inadequate situational analysis is attempted. This inevitably results in existing overcrowded syllabuses being further eroded and leaves the schools with huge problems in programming. Internationally, it has been clearly shown that single/crisis issue programs are not successful. As recommended by the World Health Organization, to accomplish worthwhile action, comprehensive school health programs involving child-centered, action oriented, innovative lesson styles are needed.

To meet this challenge for health literacy and based on extensive educational research, the "Schools Total Health Program", a well planned, comprehensive, culturally significant health, life skills and social development syllabus has been designed and trialed by education and health professionals in Tamilnadu over a 12 year period.

The STHP meets the demand for an integrated, sustainable, comprehensive approach to dealing with health, life skills and social development issues such as: population education, HIV/AIDS, child health, community health, substance abuse, social health, mental health, values education, environmental health, maternal health, malaria, nutrition education, adolescent health, violence, safety education,

hygiene, growth & development, disease prevention, risk behavior, gender issues, disaster management, family life education, consumer health, personal health, relationships, school infrastructure, education of the girl-child and more- all organized into eight key Areas to cover all critical issues in the one required comprehensive examinable syllabus from standard 1 to 12.

The general objectives are to:

1. Empower children and youth so that they may enhance their own health and that of their families and community.
2. Raise the skills and self-esteem of teachers so that they may be proud to be a teacher and so facilitate the whole teaching-learning process.
3. Improve the infrastructure of all schools i.e. clean operating toilets, drinking water, classrooms, garbage disposal and the school physical and emotional environment as a whole.
4. Outreach in a positive way to families and community so that the school may better serve its community.

In the modern, forward thinking format utilized, the syllabus, scope and sequence chart, program, units of work and lessons have attempted to respect the past, acknowledge the present, and plan for the future.

It is dedicated to all children and youth.

Manoj Kumar, Spandana Sphoorty Financial Limited, Bihar

It's very good that international agency like UNESCO has taken initiatives to attract attention of the community towards affected children of natural calamities.

I don't think education through radio could be an effective means. Most of the points regarding non-effectiveness of this means has been well explained by [Kiran Jaysa](#). We should look for replicable model of means and which doesn't need much effort on part of children .One can imagine the mental state of a human being who loses her/his near and dear ones, shelter, livelihood and hope. When people are hungry and see their children crying and dying, they lose their faith in everything. At that point of time, each member of every affected family wants every other member of the family to be only before them to get solace.

The only method that could be effective is to heal their wounds and to keep them engaged so that they could keep their minds away from what has just happened. When we talk about children, we can keep them engaged in playful activities as being marvelously done by Bihar Shiksha Pariyojna Parishad (BSPP) with full support from Pratham . When a family loses everything in the calamity, thinking of a radio to be with them seems unrealistic. Pratham volunteers are well-versed in designing playful activities and these activities teaches lessons in languages, social sciences, mathematics without letting children feel that they are actually learning.

We often see that children drop out after calamities. This happens more with poor children. One of the reasons behind this is the death of the bread earners in the family. To check this, the state government could take innovative initiatives in getting every child's education insured. Under this, if a child's education gets affected due to the death of the father or mother or guardian who supports the child's education, the child's remaining education expenses whatsoever is borne by the insuring company. This is just another way of helping affected children.

Subbalakshmi Kumar, Centre for Development Education, Pune

Some suggestions:

1. Programmes for these children should be focused on reducing the trauma in their lives and related to it – not disconnected bits of history, maths and science that we teach in normal schools.
 2. The school/ temporary set-up where learning takes place should be a place where children enjoy coming – hence sensitive and experienced teachers should facilitate the learning process
 3. Topics on how to deal with such situations as a child should be added and focused on.
 4. The infrastructure is not as much important as the learning process and how relevant the school education can be made to the current situation they are in.
 5. So focus should be on good teachers who will be able to do the above in spite of seemingly fixed curriculums
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B. L. Kaul, Society for Popularization of Science and Progressive Educational Society, Jammu

Education through the medium of Radio is a very effective. I used to actively participate in Educational Broadcasts of All India Radio Jammu and Srinagar Stations from 1970 to 1995. The response from students used to be excellent. There used to be a very interesting non-formal educational Kashmiri programme for adults called "Pragash" meaning light (Prakash). The listener ship of the programme was massive and we used to discuss history, political systems, science and everything under the sky in a very lucid and understandable manner.

Often the topics were suggested by listeners themselves. The subsequent mails received from the listeners used to be more than pleasing and for answering questions posed we had to rush to library more often to find answers. Computers and internet were not in vogue and for finding answers to difficult questions one had to run from one library to another. It was an excellent learning process for me personally

Ananya S. Guha, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi (response 2)

In continuation to my defense I would also like to add that, now because of displacement of children all over the world, there is a drastic need of peace education. By that I do not subscribe to tautology like education for peace, but something that should be instilled in the minds of children, when their peers are affected.

Today we feel sorry for children affected by floods in Bihar and Orissa. I am also sad about this, but what about Assam, when year after year it is affected, when the aids donated by UNICEF and like minded people do not go to such families, but get siphoned off due to corruption? Today if the situation in North East India is disturbed, it is because of reasons such as this.

Children must be sensitized to feel for their neighbors, to respond sensitively to their immediate surroundings, because child likeness is a hangover which goes into the future. It is not for nothing that the great 'natural' poet Wordsworth exclaimed in moments of epiphany that the child is father of man...

Deepa Das, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Guwahati

Your question is very pertinent in the context of Assam, where floods are an annual feature. I happen to work in this State and look forward to some answers through your question for addressing the issue of restoring/continuing education following floods in Assam.

While it is easier to plan for the material inputs that children may require for continuing their education, we probably need to focus on flood preparedness. I am just sharing some thoughts and offer the following suggestions:

1. As a first step a vulnerability mapping of the schools in the flood prone areas must be taken up.

2. Infrastructural status of the identified schools must be carried out to plan necessary up gradation strategies for infrastructural reinforcement to withstand floods.
3. Carry out infrastructural reinforcement so that the annual damage/loss can be averted and loss of academic time can be minimized

To complement this effort through reinforcing the school infrastructure, adequate arrangements for locating flood relief activities must be planned so that the school building is not used for such purposes.

Unless measures as these are taken seriously, the floods will always be an impediment to children's education - something we can ill afford when education is a fundamental right!

Another important aspect that calls for adequate preparation is 'psycho-social counseling' of children and their families, particularly in areas where floods result in loss of life or cause serious damage to property and the chances of shock and trauma among the affected population are high.

Provision of regular MDMs would be essential. In fact, provision of additional food may also be contemplated for areas where large scale displacement of the local population has taken place due to floods.

Many thanks to all who contributed to this query!

If you have further information to share on this topic, please send it to Solution Exchange for the Education Community in India at se-ed@solutionexchange-un.net.in and/or Solution Exchange for the Disaster Management Community in India at se-drm@solutionexchange-un.net.in with the subject heading "Re: [se-ed] [se-drm] Query: Restoring Schooling in Flood Affected Areas - Experiences; Referrals. Additional Reply."

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