

Promoting Children Friendly and Child Centered Disaster Risk Reduction in Sri Lanka

"If children are taught disaster preparedness, they will bring a revolutionary change in the society as they are the future keepers of the villages and schools. Besides, children of today will become parents of tomorrow which will ensure that they pass this knowledge to their children, making disaster preparedness a societal practice, which will keep on passing from generation to generation."

A Sri Lankan Child



*Promoting Children Friendly and
Child Centered Disaster Risk
Reduction in Sri Lanka*

Save the Children fights for children's rights.

We deliver immediate and lasting improvements to children's lives worldwide.

Save the Children works for:

- a world which respects and values each child
- a world which listens to children and learns
- a world where all children have hope and opportunity

ISBN 99946-???.-?-?

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Design and Film Separation:	Digiscan Pre-Press, Kathmandu
Printing:	Format Printing Press, Kathmandu

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Foreword

Sri Lanka had been subjected to natural disasters of small to medium scale on a regular basis till the unprecedented magnitude of the tsunami disaster on 26 December 2004. The rate of displacement created by the tsunami is still on the top of the ongoing conflict-related displacements created during the last two and half decades. While the tsunami affected the coastal belts in the North, East, South and South-West of the country, in the North and East already affected by war, the plight of men, women and children was exacerbated.

Save the Children in Sri Lanka had been working in all areas (affected by the disaster) before the tsunami. However, the tsunami disaster has brought a new sense of urgency to prioritising Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) as an integral part of addressing the rights of children in all of Save the Children's work. The disaster has also revived recognition of the organisation's capacity to respond to such disasters.

In the aftermath of the tsunami, some significant steps have been taken by Save the Children in Sri Lanka towards putting in place a Disaster Risk Reduction framework and acknowledging that this is an area of work with its own specialist and dedicated resources at all levels. More recently, Save the Children in Sri Lanka has adopted DRR as an approach to all that it endeavours to achieve in its four-year Country Strategy Plan (2007-2010). These priorities are consistent with the Government of Sri Lanka's Disaster Management Act No.13 of 2005, and also build on the Hyogo Framework.

This document covers the areas of work done to date on existing initiatives to promote children-friendly and children-sensitive DRR and facilitating children's participation in promoting DRR based on Save the Children in Sri Lanka's own work in the North East and South of the country. In addition, it looks at how DRR work with children has led to children coping effectively in the recent conflict-related displacements while ensuring that their rights were respected.

We sincerely hope that this document will lead to a better understanding of Save the Children in Sri Lanka's DRR work and learning so that it can be taken forward as an initiative for the Alliance and other partners.

We also take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in the production of this document and appreciate the support extended by Save the Children Sweden, Regional Office for South and Central Asia.

Prasant Naik

Director - Programme Operations
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Acknowledgement

Children in tsunami affected districts suffered hugely yet they showed a very high degree of resilience and participated actively in Save the Children's Disaster Risk Reduction programme. Children in Ampara, Matara and Trincomalee enthusiastically joined in the field research. They are too numerous to thank individually, my appreciation extends to each one of them.

Special thanks are due to Prasant Naik and Ravi Karkara who planned and initiated the review and provided guidance. Thanks to Richard Mawer for supporting the initiative. We also thank Arulnesan Satcunanayagam, David Sathanandan, Mohamed Saifulla, Padmasiri Bandara and Zihan Zarouk for supporting the field research in their respective districts.

We thank Sibghatullah Ahmed who did the hard work of collecting and collating information and writing this document along with Ravi Karkara, and Karna Maharajan for contributing to this document through video documentation.

We are grateful to Arjuna Eramudugolla, Mayooran Therasingamani, Maleec Calyanaratne, Jeyadash Jeyadarshini, Rasthurai Hemalatha, Subogini Kopal Krishnan and Gayathiri Thanabalasingham for their very active and enthusiastic participation in the field research.

Thanks Marina Sappideen and the logistic unit who arranged for travel, accommodation and other logistics for the documentation team.

We thank Save the Children Sweden, Regional Office for South and Central Asia for publishing this document.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
DEC	Disaster Emergency Committee
DMC	Disaster Management Centre
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
ECDC	Early Childhood Development Centre
HIV	Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus
IDP	Internally Displaced People
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
SLA	Sri Lankan Army
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

1 Introduction

Save the Children fights for rights of the child. It bases its work on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) to achieve lasting benefits for children within the communities in which they live, influencing policy and practice based on hands-on experience and research.

As a pioneering child rights agency, Save the Children has the global mandate and commitment to protect, respect and promote the rights of children in any situation including emergencies. Responding to emergencies and reducing children's risks to disasters¹ has always been a core element of Save the Children's work because gross violation of child rights occurs in disaster situations.

Being a right based organisation that works from a Child Rights Programming approach, Save the Children is committed to address the principles of accountability, non-discrimination and child participation.

Child Rights and Disasters

A single disaster can devastate a country's economy. The tsunami that struck many parts of South and South East Asia on 26 December 2004, affected thousands of lives in the

¹ The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) defines disaster as "A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society causing widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources". Of late the occurrence of disasters in South Asian countries has become a very common phenomenon.



region. Given the limited resources available to the governments in Asia, bureaucrats have been reluctant to spend on long term mitigation plans. The government plans focus more on short term material help such as relief and response.

In this policy context, child rights and children's needs have not received adequate attention. Children and adolescents must not be perceived as mere victims but as effective actors, taking into account their levels of physical, social and emotional development, assessing their capacities and opinions, and promoting spaces and mechanisms for their full participation². According to recent research findings, voices of children affected by disasters (for e.g. the tsunami) have been less heard in the South Asian region.³

In disaster situations, all structures and actors at different levels must ensure the protection of children and adolescents. While child participation is not a replacement for adult responsibility, empowering children through their participation is an important protection strategy as well as a right. Norms, values and political structures and resources available in each situation affect how children are able to participate.

These aspects raise the need to examine and discuss how child rights have been recognised or not recognised during pre and post disaster activities. There is a need to understand how bureaucrats and politicians choose to invest in preparedness and mitigation. Have children's needs and rights been addressed by the duty bearers while preparing and responding to natural disasters? More case studies and comparative analyses are required to document the actions communities have taken to build development into recovery, hence

strengthening and improving competence in communities prone to destructive hazards.

Additionally, with emergency response and preparedness coming into greater focus within relief and development actors, the time is appropriate for Save the Children to develop a resource package of materials supporting child-led disaster risk reduction and to develop a strategy to address the various concerns and to influence other key actors in emergencies.

As a response to the tsunami, Save the Children in Sri Lanka undertook relief and rehabilitation work in the affected areas. They also worked in emergency preparedness with the overall objective being **to strengthen capacity of vulnerable communities to survive and recover from emergencies/disasters; build technical capacity in emergency preparedness and emergency response.**

Working from a rights' perspective in emergencies implies strengthening the accountability and capacity of all actors such as governments, communities and families to address child protection issues and to reconstruct the communities accordingly. It also implies that all actors must listen to the voices of girls and boys and take actions based on their agenda/ priorities and to involve them in designing intervention for reconstructions. It implies that we reach girls and boys from various backgrounds (age, caste, class, religion, ethnicity, disabilities, etc.) and give them equal opportunity to have their voices heard. It also implies addressing root causes of rights' violations in the reconstruction phase and to take action to challenge inequalities and discrimination. Furthermore, we have to build a large constituency of actors and strengthen rights of children and communities.

2 Codeni (2002) Role of Child Brigade in Disaster Relief for Children in Widespread fire in Bangladesh, *Save the Children* p 37. It is a good example to further understand Child Rights Programming in Disaster Relief.

3 Murthy and Josephine (2006) *A Study on Non-Discrimination in the Tsunami Rehabilitation Programme in India*, *Save the Children Tsunami Rehabilitation Programme in India*



Types of protection children need most in emergencies

Save the Children has identified seven critical types of protection that children require in disaster areas and war zones⁴:

1. Protection from physical harm
2. Protection from exploitation and gender-based violence
3. Protection from psychosocial distress
4. Protection from recruitment into armed groups
5. Protection from family separation
6. Protection from abuses related to forced displacement
7. Protection from denial of children's access to quality education

“Natural disasters such as the Asian tsunami of 26 December 2004, can affect even more children, causing them to lose their homes, their families, their schools, their access to adequate food, water and sanitation and even their lives in a matter of minutes. Despite these statistics, however, the protection of children remains a secondary concern for the international community in all phases of emergency response. The failure to protect children from these escalating threats not only results in personal tragedy but carries a long-term social cost as well, including the spread of HIV/AIDS, an elevated maternal and infant mortality rate, a loss of education and a generation of marginalized youth”.

- this is said by whom ???(Ravi Bhai please give the reference, as this part was done by you)

Disaster Risk Reduction

There is increasing awareness among the global humanitarian assistance system that hazards have become a regular part of current physical and political environment and that disasters are rising and causing huge losses in terms of human lives, assets and environment. The Humanitarian Assistance System, despite its preparedness, often does not reach affected people timely and adequately. The (Disaster Risk Reduction) DRR framework presents an alternative to the conventional approach for managing disaster.

Disaster Risk Reduction is defined as a *“conceptual framework of elements considered with the possibilities to minimise vulnerabilities and disaster risks throughout a society, to avoid (prevention) or to limit (mitigation and preparedness) the adverse impacts of hazards, within the broad context of sustainable development”*⁵. It locates the risks at point where hazards, communities and environments interact, and strives for a systematic approach to reducing risks associated with them.

In January 2005, 168 Governments adopted a 10-year plan to make the world safer from natural hazards at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, held in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan. The Hyogo Framework is a global blueprint for disaster risk reduction efforts during the next decade. Its goal is to substantially reduce disaster losses by 2015; in lives, and in the social, economic, and environmental assets of communities and countries. The Framework offers guiding principles, priorities for action, and practical means for achieving disaster resilience for vulnerable communities.

4 Policy Brief (2005) *Protecting Children in Emergencies*, Save the Children

5 International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, <http://www.unisdr.org>



The Hyogo Framework sets three strategic goals and outlines five priorities for actions.

Strategic Goals

1. The integration of disaster risk reduction into sustainable development policies and planning;
2. Development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms and capacities to build resilience to hazards;
3. The systematic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into the implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery programmes.

Priorities for actions

- **Make Disaster Risk Reduction a Priority** - ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.
- **Know the Risks and Take Action** - identify, assess and monitor disaster risks; enhance early warning.
- **Build Understanding and Awareness** – use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels.

- **Reduce risk** – reduce the underlying risk factors.
- **Be Prepared and Ready to Act** – strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.

The Save the Children Alliance in South Asia region has adopted the Hyogo Framework. Following the tsunami on 26 December 2004, the Government of Sri Lanka developed its Disaster Risk Management Strategy. This strategy is based on the Hyogo Framework of Action 2005-2015. Save the Children in Sri Lanka has developed its strategy in accordance with the Hyogo Framework and has tried to integrate DRR in all four thematic areas of its programme in Sri Lanka.

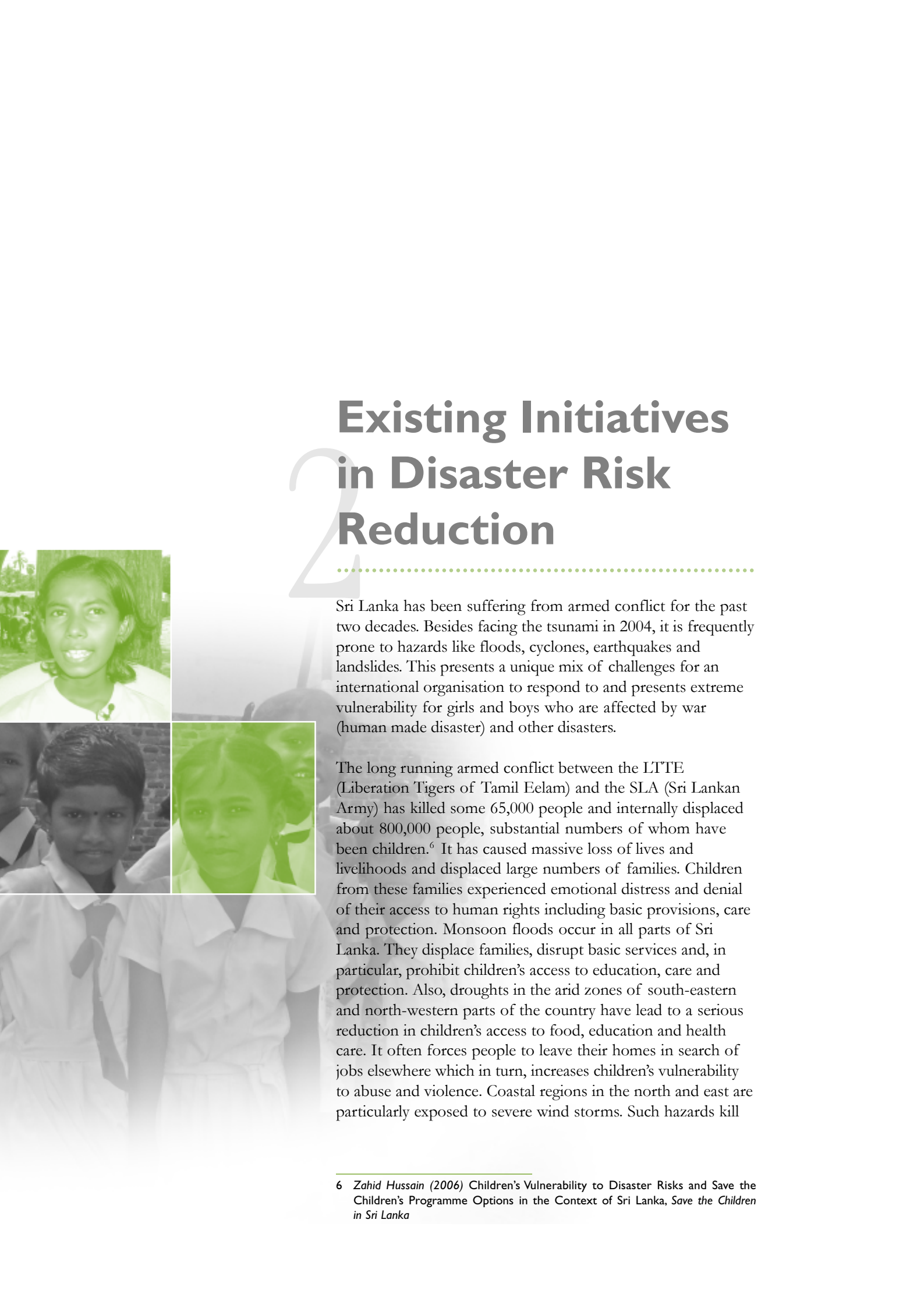
Limitation

This document is not intended to present a holistic picture of DRR work in Sri Lanka. It captures some of the existing initiatives including examples of strengthening children's participation in DRR. There are many more examples which could not be included due to time constraints.

The intention is to create a discussion among development professionals on the importance of working with children in DRR.

Available with this document, is a visual documentation of Save the Children in Sri Lanka's DRR programme. It captures the participation of children and communities in DRR activities, giving a face to the discussions in this document.

Existing Initiatives in Disaster Risk Reduction



Sri Lanka has been suffering from armed conflict for the past two decades. Besides facing the tsunami in 2004, it is frequently prone to hazards like floods, cyclones, earthquakes and landslides. This presents a unique mix of challenges for an international organisation to respond to and presents extreme vulnerability for girls and boys who are affected by war (human made disaster) and other disasters.

The long running armed conflict between the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) and the SLA (Sri Lankan Army) has killed some 65,000 people and internally displaced about 800,000 people, substantial numbers of whom have been children.⁶ It has caused massive loss of lives and livelihoods and displaced large numbers of families. Children from these families experienced emotional distress and denial of their access to human rights including basic provisions, care and protection. Monsoon floods occur in all parts of Sri Lanka. They displace families, disrupt basic services and, in particular, prohibit children's access to education, care and protection. Also, droughts in the arid zones of south-eastern and north-western parts of the country have led to a serious reduction in children's access to food, education and health care. It often forces people to leave their homes in search of jobs elsewhere which in turn, increases children's vulnerability to abuse and violence. Coastal regions in the north and east are particularly exposed to severe wind storms. Such hazards kill

⁶ Zahid Hussain (2006) Children's Vulnerability to Disaster Risks and Save the Children's Programme Options in the Context of Sri Lanka, *Save the Children in Sri Lanka*



and injure people and make many children and their families homeless and victims of emotional distress.

A disaster like the tsunami in 2004 is rare but severe. The impact of the tsunami in Sri Lanka was devastating. According to the latest available figures, over 35,000 people were killed and half a million displaced and two thirds of the Island's coastline was affected. Over 119,000 houses were either partially or completely destroyed. There was large-scale damage to coastal infrastructure systems with the tourism and fisheries sectors being particularly hard-hit; 80 per cent of fishing boats in the affected districts were destroyed. As many as 163 schools were fully or partially damaged directly affecting 79,016 school-going children and an estimated 1000 children were orphaned.⁷

Save the Children in Sri Lanka started its operation in the country in 1974 through the intervention of Save the Children Norway in that year. Its programme focuses on promoting and protecting children's rights. Save the Children in Sri Lanka works with and provides support to children's groups, communities, institutions, local structures and government agencies. Prior to the tsunami its programmes aimed at⁸:

Save the Children in Sri Lanka responded to the tsunami through Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC) funding and Save the Children Alliance support. DEC had allocated five per cent of the funds for disaster preparedness elements in the response. Taking opportunity of this DEC allocation, Save the Children in Sri Lanka, at the outset, made some key decisions.

Children's sustained access to quality education – this includes

- improving the quality and relevance of early childhood and basic education;
- removing children's, their families' and communities' constraints that prohibits access to education;
- developing mechanisms and expertise in the education system;

Children's protection against violence in their families and communities – this includes

- participation of children in promoting peace building in communities;
- better understanding and capacities in state institutions;

Secure environment for children despite disaster or armed conflict – this includes

- developing knowledge and institutional mechanisms in the communities to protect children;
- release and reintegration of underage recruits in families and communities.

Key Decisions

a) *Having DRR as a separate sector*: This means developing specific objectives and operation plans for DRR, allocating budget for it and recruiting personnel dedicated for DRR interventions. Subsequently, mainstreaming DRR through integration in all other thematic areas of work in the country strategy for 2007-2010, namely,

- **Protection of children from violence and abuse** – Ensuring that children displaced by disaster or within their communities have protection against violence and abuse by family, community and state functionaries.

7 Annual Report of Save the Children Alliance on Save the Children in Sri Lanka's Tsunami Response, January– December 2005

8 Zahid Hussain (2006) *Children's Vulnerability to Disaster Risks and Save the Children's Programme Options in the Context of Sri Lanka*. Save the Children in Sri Lanka



- **Household economic security** – Ensuring poorest households have secured income to cover costs to meet their children’s survival and developmental needs.
- **Realising child rights** - that children and their families have resource, knowledge and access to political, legislative and community environments for advancing, monitoring and realising child rights despite disasters.
- **Basic education and early childhood development** - Children affected by conflict to have access to quality and relevant learning opportunities.

b) Investment in human resources: Save the Children in Sri Lanka created an international position for DRR adviser and recruited an expatriate staff. Furthermore, it arranged for two district managers to visit Cuba and Vietnam to gain first hand knowledge about DRR interventions and children’s involvement in those countries.

c) Multi hazard DRR approach: Although the funding support came through Disaster Emergency Committee of tsunami response, Save the Children in Sri Lanka took the threats from the two decade long conflict and other likely hazards into account in developing and planning its DRR interventions. Thus, large elements of its DRR intervention comprised of working children and their communities to reduce their risks to floods and displacement caused by armed conflict.

d) Work within the framework of National Disaster Risk Management Strategy: Mainly, for wider impact and sustainability, Save the Children in Sri Lanka made a deliberate choice to plan and implement its DRR programme within the framework of the Sri Lankan National Disaster Management Strategy. It required significant involvement to promote and establish children’s participation in the national DRR programmes and instil sensitivity to children’s particular needs in the response plans.

Geographic decentralisation in management structure

Geographic decentralisation in management structure has been adopted to replace the sectoral division practiced earlier. It was essentially done to cope with rapid expansion necessitated by the size of the tsunami response. Nevertheless, it capacitated the district teams and gave them clear mandate and authority to plan and implement DRR intervention on the basis of local context. The district offices have their own response strategy which includes clearly defined objectives, roles of staff at different levels, hazard profiles, resources in stock for immediate and defined chain of communication and decision making (refer to Annexure 2 for Trincomalee District’s Disaster Response Plan 2006)

Interventions

Save the Children in Sri Lanka’s DRR interventions were conducted in two phases. First, by introducing a disaster risk reducing element in the relief/recovery package aimed at improving quality and relevance of the support so that children can sustain future disasters. Second, through the Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction programme, which aimed at enhancing children’s resilience to help them cope better in a disaster situation.

a) Introducing DRR elements in Save the Children in Sri Lanka’s relief/recovery package: Save the Children in Sri Lanka was the only organisation which involved elements of preparedness in its first phase of relief response. Initiatives taken were:

- Livelihood support provided to the tsunami fishermen which included lifejacket and radios along with boats, nets and other fishing gear. This is a crucial strategic initiative taken to promote the culture of preparedness in vulnerable communities.



- Temporary shelters were constructed taking the hazard risks of the localities in consideration. Floods and heavy rains were the major hazards, therefore designing of shelters, use of building materials and selection of sites were done considering the plinth level, roof slope and drainage facilities.
- School/Early Childhood Development Centre (ECDC) constructions aimed at making them structurally sound to cope with likely floods, cyclones, tsunamis and earthquakes in future.

b) Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction programme interventions: These were planned in 24 divisions under six districts, namely Jaffna, Killinochchi, Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Ampara and Matara, for a four year (2006-2009) period.⁹ They sought that,

- 265 communities have Disaster Management Centres (DMC) and child sensitive preparedness plans;
- 265 communities have awareness about disaster warning and timely evacuation;
- 1,600 teachers from ECDC and schools in six districts are trained on how to protect children in crisis times;
- 182 communities have hazard risk maps done by children;
- 668 emergency management personnel in Sri Lanka have better understanding of child sensitive disaster preparedness and response through participating in workshop on Disaster Risk Management;
- 24 divisional DMC plans have details of procedures and provisions for children in crisis.

Advocacy

The most crucial but neglected area of disaster response is advocacy with different duty bearers. Save the Children in Sri Lanka took it on board from the very beginning. It concentrated on establishing children's participation in the national disaster risk reduction programme and sensitivity to children's particular needs in the national response plans. Save the Children in Sri Lanka engaged with the DMC both at national and district levels through meetings and workshops and succeeded to include School Children Awareness programmes in the National Disaster Risk Reduction strategy.¹⁰

Save the Children in Sri Lanka also succeeded in including provisions for child care and children's protection through recreational activities and their continued access to education in the district response plans in Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Ampara and Matara.

Participation of Girls and Boys in DRR

“Through the disaster management committee we learn how to save ourselves and others in a disaster and how to act promptly.”

- A school going girl from Matara

One of the most important tasks achieved by Save the Children in Sri Lanka was successful engagement of children in DRR activities in all the six districts. These included involving children in the IDP (Internally Displaced People) camps in Child Led School Disaster Risk Reduction Plan and through children's clubs. The children clubs exist in schools, in safe play areas and in IDP camps. Various methodologies have been used to ensure child participation in DRR from school level to the community level. (See Chapter 3 for details)

⁹ Save the Children in Sri Lanka (2005) Emergency Preparedness Concept Note, Community Based Disaster Risk Management

¹⁰ Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights, *Towards Safer Sri Lanka – Road Map for Disaster Risk Management*, Volume 2, Government of Sri Lanka, PA 3.2 (School Children Awareness Programme), p 252 - 254



The children have been involved in the following:

- a) Investigations – village mapping, risk mapping, resource mapping, body mapping, etc.
- b) Awareness raising in communities, through,
 - Discussion sessions
 - Evacuation drills
 - Drama
 - Cultural Songs
 - Child-to-child/adult activities
- c) Designing of schools and safe play areas.

Children identified the following places as disaster prone areas in their schools and community in Villuppaddu, Matara District.

- No speed breakers on the road near the school;
- Broken bridge near the school;
- No sign board to indicate that there is a school ahead;
- Landslide prone areas within school premises;
- Six feet ditch near the play ground;
- A stream by the side of the play ground which children have to cross every time;
- Exposed main power line within children's reach in the school premises;
- Access roads to schools are slippery and not properly paved.

Achievements

As noted above, Sri Lanka's National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (Road Map) included projects for children's participation in awareness raising programme.

DMC's district Disaster Response Plans in Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Ampara and Matara include provisions for child care and children's protection through recreational activities and children's continued access to education. It means that all present and future responses by Government of Sri Lanka or Interagency group in any part of the districts should include such assistance for children.

Schools' child sensitive preparedness plan in 20 schools in Matara district.

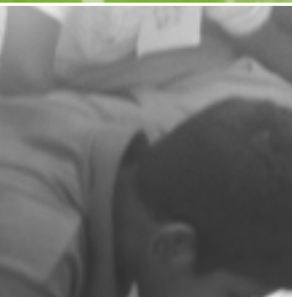
Raising awareness about disaster risks and remedial action through events and evacuation drills organised by children and community meetings in 115 communities.

507 teachers trained on child care and child protection in disaster and developing child-sensitive preparedness plan through 19 workshops.

491 disaster management professionals trained on child care and child protection through 24 workshops organised by Save the Children in Sri Lanka and its partner RedR.

Children from 18 schools participated in awareness raising in their schools and communities through hazard risk mapping, evacuation drills and various social events such as drama and songs.

Facilitating Children's Participation in 3 promoting Disaster Risk Reduction



Opportunities to foster children's understanding, values and experience of democratic participation and active citizenship occur in families, schools, local and national communities. Children have been involved in participation activities in diverse geographic and institutional settings at different levels. These include personal and local as well as national, regional and global levels. Children's participation in the institutions and processes of their every day reality is more likely to have a deeper and sustainable impact than participation located in remote settings. Home, school, street (for children living on the streets), workplace (for child workers) and children's organisations are all important focus areas for participation work. The strength and experience gained in these arenas enhances children's engagement in policy development.¹¹

'Participation' is used by Save the Children and others to mean children and young people

- Thinking for themselves,
- Expressing their views effectively,
- And, interacting in a positive way with other people.

It means involving girls and boys in the decisions that affect their lives, the lives of their families and community and the larger society in which they live. For Save the Children, the core purpose of children's participation is to empower them as individuals and members of civil society (citizens). It gives them the opportunity to exercise their citizenship rights and to influence the actions and decisions that affect their lives.

¹¹ Claire O'Kane (2003) *Children and Young People as Citizens: Partners for social change, exploring concepts, learning from experience and highlighting positive impact*, Save the Children Sweden



Children can participate (as individuals or as organised groups):

- Through speaking out – for e.g. expose abuse, make a complaint about services, ask questions, raise awareness of a problem, press for a change in policy, etc.
- Through their involvement in decision making – for e.g. assessing needs, designing projects/programmes, sharing in school management, drawing up policy guidelines, developing legislation, evaluating services, and others.
- Through practical action – for e.g. peer education, supporting/setting up a child-led initiative or organisation, carrying out research, children's involvement in the media, etc.

Adults – parents, teachers, development workers etc. play an important role in supporting children's participation. They can do this through

- Encouraging children's involvement,
- Sharing information,
- Modelling participatory behaviour,
- Developing the skills needed for participation,
- Creating safe environments for children to practice participation.

For Save the Children, meaningful children's participation is characterised by:

- **An ethical approach** and a commitment to transparency, honesty and accountability e.g. as regards the potential impact on decisions that children might have.

- **A safe approach** in which children's protection rights are properly safeguarded. A non-discriminatory approach that ensures that all children - regardless of their gender, ability, language, ethnicity, class, etc. have an equal opportunity to be involved and where inclusive and age specific structures and mechanisms are created, and
- **A 'child-friendly' approach** which enables children to contribute to the best of their abilities e.g. through access to good child-friendly and age specific information and the use of venues, procedures and support that encourage rather than get in the way of children's involvement¹².

Following pages offer a few examples of strengthening Child Participation in DRR in Sri Lanka

Children's participation can yield benefits for the children themselves, and also for the community and the development agency. When children are able to participate they have access to available resources in their community that outside development workers and other adults do not. Children's local knowledge systems can contribute greatly in the various stages of the project cycle.¹³

¹² Save the Children (2003) Position Paper on Child Participation

¹³ Alfini Naomi, Marshall Becky and Ravi Karkara (2005) *Strengthening Participation of Girls and Boys in Tsunami Response Programme, A workshop report*, Save the Children Sweden



Case Study I: Body Mapping

Body Mapping is a technique that is used with younger children (6–12 yrs). This technique is being used in various districts, particularly in IDP camps in Trincomalee and Thambalagamam village of Trincomalee district.

Below is the picture of a body mapping exercise being carried out in Thambalagamam.

Process: A boy or girl is asked to lie down on a chart paper while other children draw the outline of his/her body. After the outline is done, children give it a face and identify different parts of the body.

They use the body map to discuss:

- What they see that makes them happy/sad?
- What they hear that makes them happy/sad?
- What they taste that makes them happy/sad?
- What they smell that makes them happy/sad?
- How to use hands/feet that makes them happy and sad?
- What they feel (in their heart) that makes them happy/sad?



This process was used with young children at St. Joseph's College in Trincomalee District. The children were asked, "What are the good and bad things you see through your eyes?" And the same questions were asked for each part of the body. Children's answers are given below.¹⁴

Body Part	Good things	Bad things
Eyes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to see their loved ones like their friends, parents and relations, etc. • Able to identify things e.g. trees, flowers, sea, school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misbehaviour of adults. e.g. fighting, smoking, drinking, • Dirty surrounding, garbage, • Channels with polluted water.
Nose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breathing, • Smelling flowers, foods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bad smell from garbage, toilets, etc
Ears	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing good stories, songs, ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing blasts, shelling, firings. • Use of bad language by adults. • Scolding.
Mouth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to speak, eat, sing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biting • Scolding with awful words.
Hands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to write, clap, play, sweep. • Help others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fighting • Throw waste into a common place.
Feet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can walk, dance, run, jump. 	

¹⁴ Consultation with Children in IDP Camps, Trincomalee District, Save the Children in Sri Lanka



Children's Feelings (from their heart)

- When they hear shelling, blasts or firing sounds they feel fear and their heart beat increases.
- They feel happy when they gather with other children and play; sometimes they are unhappy because they don't have a separate place to play.
- They feel anxious when the electricity is cut off.
- Some children feel that camps are a safer place than their home because they can live together with other people.
- Some said that the lack of proper fencing in the camp makes them feel unsafe.

The body mapping technique has been used effectively to learn children's views in the IDP camps which helps in taking measures to address their psychosocial issues. Further, this technique is used as a child to child activity through which the younger children explain other children how to use their body parts if a disaster occurs, e.g. legs are used to run to safe areas, hands are used to save other people's lives. It is a very diverse and effective tool of child participation and helps in designing of child-friendly spaces, safe play areas, and school buildings.

Case Study 2: School Mapping

School mapping is done at three levels. First, children draw a map of their school on a piece of paper. Next, they identify the possible areas where a disaster or accident can happen and identify the safe areas or routes of evacuation. The areas identified as risk areas are then physically marked by a danger sign in the schools.

"This (activity) has helped us to identify risk areas in our village and our school."

- A school going boy from Matara

As a third step, child to child activities are conducted in which girls and boys, with the help of the paper, explain to other children the risk areas, safe areas and evacuation routes. These children then visit the physical sites identified. If the programme reaches this level, an evacuation mock drill is conducted for all the children. Such evacuation drills have been conducted in Matara district.

Hetti is a 13-year-old Sinhala boy studying in 8th grade in Matara District. He lost his house in the 2003 floods in the district. He still remembers how the water destroyed two essential parts of his life, his house and school.

Currently he is involved in school mapping exercises being conducted in his school by Save the Children in Sri Lanka. He conducts a detailed school mapping exercise for his classmates, seniors, juniors and teachers.

On being asked why he does this activity, he explains with extreme pride, "This way I am serving the large child community and my society. Through this many people can save lives and be better prepared to face floods."

Asked why it is important for children to be part of disaster preparedness, he says, "Children will bring a revolutionary change in society as they are the future keepers of the villages and schools. Further, children of today will be parents of tomorrow, which ensures that they pass this knowledge to their children and this will make disaster preparedness a societal practice which will keep on passing from generation to generation."



Case Study 3: Raising Awareness through Drama and Folk Songs

Drama and folk songs are two of the oldest and strongest techniques of communication. These techniques have been used in spreading disaster awareness and preparedness in Save the Children in Sri Lanka DRR initiatives in all the six districts.

“We are the ones who are going to take up responsibilities in the future. We can use this knowledge (DRR) and reduce the risk of disasters in our schools and villages.”

– A school going boy from Matara

The main objective of these initiatives has been to raise community awareness on the effects and causes of disasters both natural and man made, and to popularise the DRR activities.

*Bow and Arrow Folk Song and Drame by school children in Matara District
(Language: Sinhala and Tamil)*

Part 1

Group of 4 to 5 girls –

*Good Morning Motherland
Good Morning Save the Children
Good Morning Children, Parents and Teachers.*

Teacher- *Good Morning*
Student 1- *What story are you going to tell us today?*
Student 2- *Is it a fairy tale?*
Teacher- *No it is a story about Disaster.*
Student 1- *What is that?*
Teacher- *Disasters are of two types: Natural and Man made.*
Chorus Song- *Disasters Man Made and Natural.*
Student 1- *What is the meaning of Man Made Disaster?*
Student 2- *Killing people, firing, knives and guns....am I right teacher?*

All students Chorus Song- ‘Death river runs faster than us....oh it takes all human beings.....’

Student 2- *Oh teacher I am afraid ...please tell us what are natural disasters?*
Teacher- *There are five elements in the world. Can you tell me what these are?*
Student 1- *They are earth, air, fire, space and water.*
Teacher- *Yes you are right. And these elements create tsunamis, landslides, wild fire, thunder and lightning. They bring great sufferings with them. All these make people suffer....they bring death and destruction with them.*

Part 2

Teacher- *Do you want me to tell you about tsunami?*
Student 1- *Yes. Yes. Talk about the tsunami.*
Student 2- *Why are we talking about tsunami? It never visited us. It did not come to our house.*
Student 1- *Have you booked a hotel for tsunami?*

Chorus Song- I have seen the sky and earth, but have not seen tsunami.



- Teacher- When there is an earthquake on the surface of the ocean; it creates huge mountainous tidal waves called tsunamis.
- Student 2- What are the effects of tsunami?
- Student 1- I will tell you and you will be shocked. A friend of mine had gone to the market to buy fish and then he saw huge waves rising from the ocean. Everyone ran towards the beach to see these huge waves of water. But he didn't because he was very scared. And then he saw people who were watching the waves....being swept away....the waves took everything with it....
- Teacher- It's not a story of one or two persons....nearly 40,000 people died. And their houses and belongings were totally destroyed.

Chorus Song- Everyday it makes us cry...every minute we shiver...oh God please save us from tsunami.

- Student 2- Teacher, water is alright....tell us something else.
- Student 1- Tell us something about landslides.
- Student 2- Teacher, landslide is the incident that happened in 2003. Am I right?
- Teacher- Yes, you are right. Landslides happen due to human faults.
- Student 1- Why are you putting all the blame on us...?
- Teacher- Because that is the truth. Landslides occur due to human behaviour like cutting of trees, digging and removing soil and blasting rocks.....

Chorus Song- Rain rain heavy rain...

Part 3

Similarly, cyclones and floods are explained to the audience.

Translated by Mr. Subramanyam- Consultant, Save the Children in Sri Lanka.

Case Study 4: Child Participation in School Reconstruction

Save the Children has been promoting children's participation in school reconstruction committees. Physical environment is a very important aspect of children's lives. Children should definitely have a say in the designing of their school. Save the Children in Sri Lanka school reconstruction committees are a very effective tool of engaging children in designing their physical environment with strong focus on Disaster Risk Reduction.

All the reconstruction being carried out by Save the Children in Sri Lanka are flood proof, tsunami proof, cyclone proof and earthquake proof. All construction designs consist of basic emergency exits and fire exits. The designs are child-friendly and have been made by taking children's suggestions into account.

"We mostly face cyclones. It will be good if this building is constructed to protect us from such disasters."

- A school going girl from Trincomalee

The school committees consist of a Senior Construction Manager, District Manager, Contractor, Principal, Technical Officer, teachers, students and government officials among others. See below for one such example.



Progress Review Meeting Held on 13 October 2006
Name of School- Tr/ Abeyapura Maha Vidiyalayam - Trincomalee

School Reconstruction Committee-

Mr S Dissanayake	Sr. Construction Manager, Save the Children in Sri Lanka, Colombo
Mr S Arulnesan	District Manager, Save the Children in Sri Lanka, Trincomalee
Mr S Subramaniam	Consultant, R D C (I will try find out the full forms till morning, please bear)
Mr HT Wijayasooriya	Contractor – Abeyapura School Building
Mr S Varathaseelan	PDM (what is this???), (Education) Save the Children in Sri Lanka, Trincomalee
Mrs. Hewawitharana	Principal - Abeyapura MV
Mr A Yogendran	Technical Officer RDC
Mr W Chandradas	Site Technical Officer R D C
Mr KS Karthik	PMO Education, Save the Children in Sri Lanka, Trincomalee
Mr N Andrew	PDM, (Child Protection) Save the Children in Sri Lanka, Trincomalee
Ms DVP Pathmalatah	Teacher Rep. Abeyapura MV
Ms JPC Jeyaweera	Teacher, Abeyapura MV
Ms Madusanka	Student Rep. Year 13
Ms HM Dayamenthi	Student grade 11
Ms PRB Suvimali	Student grade 11
Mas DM Nishani	Student grade 11
Mas Mihiran	Student grade 11
Mas Mathusanka	Student grade 11
Mr K Shanmuganathan	Construction Officer, Save the Children in Sri Lanka, Trincomalee

Representative of TERM Consultants and Representative of Ministry of Education

Every fortnight this committee meets to discuss the progress and to take into account considerations of all members. One of the important aspects is that this committee engages teachers and Zonal Educational Government Officers, which presents a good example of adult participation in Child Sensitive DRR reconstruction.

Some suggestions given by children

- Construction of separate toilets for boys and girls.
- Construction of one disabled friendly toilet as there are two disabled children in the school.
- Construction of ramp next to the staircase going to the first floor.
- Increase the length of what? (Karna Dai gave this so he will be able to tell) by another 15 feet. Near the stage, facilities for sound and chair should be provided. This will be very useful.
- Since this is a disaster prone area, the building should be strong enough to resist any possible disaster in future.
- Ensure that construction materials (sand, cement and concrete) are of high quality and the right proportion.
- The assembly hall should be equipped with light and sound system and also needs chairs.



Case Study 5: Painting Exercises in IDP Camps and Children's Schools

Painting exercises were introduced by Save the Children in Sri Lanka under its DRR initiative in the IDP camps and schools affected by the tsunami in Batticaloa and Trincomalee. The initiative is mainly targeted towards children who have witnessed and experienced highly traumatic incidents like shelling, killing of family and friends in conflict or the tsunami.

Painting is an important medium of learning children's views. The colours used as well as the drawing itself are expressions of children's thoughts and experiences. It has been used by Save the Children in Sri Lanka:

- a) To address the psychosocial needs of children and for long term trauma healing.
- b) To de-stress children from the effects of tsunami and conflict.
- c) To know children's opinions about their experiences and the reconstruction phase. How do they view things after disasters and how do they want things related to them to be?
- d) To spread a culture of preparedness by depiction of DRR activities through paintings.

In the first stage, a chart paper is given to children either to be shared in a group or individually. They are then asked to draw and paint their recent experiences and things they have witnessed. Usually, they draw horrors of war or any disaster they have witnessed.

It has been observed that after days of drawing violent experiences of life children start drawing pictures which depict the environment and other beautiful facets of nature and society, for e.g. doves of peace, trees, streams and pictures of family and friends.

4 Conclusion

Save the Children is committed to bring about positive changes in the lives of girls and boys from various backgrounds. Save the Children bases its programme from a Child Rights Programming perspective thereby strengthening child participation, promoting non-discrimination and inclusion, and strengthening accountability.

- **Advocating child rights into larger community's DRR framework**

It is important to continuously create awareness and lobby for integrating child rights into the larger disaster risk reduction programmes. Save the Children in Sri Lanka should continuously work with the Government and other duty bearers to strengthen their commitment and deliverables on child rights.

- **Strengthening child participation**

Save the Children has initiated innovative work on strengthening participation of boys and girls in DRR. Article 5 - Evolving Capacities of the Child - has special significance which is reflected in the existing DRR work in Sri Lanka. Save the Children in Sri Lanka should promote tools and techniques keeping children's age and capacity in mind.

- **Promoting accountability**

It will be important to see how child rights and DRR get reflected in the next UNCRC State Party Reporting. It needs to be implemented accordingly, keeping in mind child rights and participation so as to have a broader perspective on understanding DRR.





- **Enlisting adult support for child rights and participation**
Adults can play a vital role encouraging children's involvement, sharing information in child-friendly methods, modelling participatory behaviour, developing the skills needed for participation and creating safe environments for children to practice participation.
- **Creating a safe and enabling environment for child protection**
In places where violence persists in one form or another, it becomes adult responsibility to ensure a safe and enabling environment for children to realise their rights. Adults can create an environment where girls and boys from various backgrounds, ages, disabilities, ethnicity and religion can freely express their opinions, concerns and recommendations.
- **Applying child-friendly techniques**
As facilitators of child rights we need to continuously develop and innovate child-centred and child-friendly methodologies and techniques rooted in experiential learning processes. Save the Children in Sri Lanka has used many such techniques like art for therapy, Theatre for Development, games, child-centred research and consultations, folk songs, paintings, etc. It is important that we include children in deciding the techniques which best suit their context and involve them as facilitators and resource people.
- **Working with children on child-led indicators**
It is important that a system for monitoring and evaluation is in place while working on child-friendly and child sensitive DRR. Children can also be involved in identifying child-led indicators. They are the best people to recognise changes in their lives and communities. Boys and girls from various backgrounds should be involved in evaluating the impact of DRR programme.
- **Integrating child-centred DRR across thematic areas and settings**
Save the Children in Sri Lanka has been able to raise the need to integrate DRR as part of all thematic sectors. DRR should not be a stand alone initiative. Rather, its main function is to be integrated in all thematic issues across settings such as family, school, workplace, institutions and communities.



Annexure I¹⁵

Agencies involved:

Disaster Management Centre, National Science Foundation (NSF), NIE, MoE, Dept. of Probation & Child Care, UNICEF, Save the Children, SLRCS, other partner agencies

Background and rationale:

SLUMDMP has already carried out a pilot project in community animation through school children which has clearly established the potential for such work. Under this activity 15 schools were selected where school societies were formed and children were encouraged to carry out various activities related to disasters prevalent in the surrounding areas. Activities included rain fall monitoring with rain gauges, information gathering related to landslide or flood disasters which had taken place earlier, etc. which increases awareness as well as sharpen their knowledge about DRM.

The National Disaster Management Centre of the then Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Social Welfare also conducted school awareness programmes in selected schools of the country and conducted essay and art competitions.

The initiatives could be replicated in other severely prone areas initially and subsequently in other areas making them mandatory in collaboration with the MoE. These could be enriched with awareness material in print, video and multimedia. These can be supplemented with half-day awareness programmes focusing on preparedness for possible disasters in the area, community based mitigation, and other selected titles decided upon by the DMC, MoE and NIE. District-wise or all-island Essay and Art competitions, Drama competitions, debates are other possible activities under organised campaigns.

One major activity under this initiative is development of School Emergency Response Plan. The higher grade children can be involved in the development of School Emergency Response Plans based on guidelines provided by DMC and under supervision of the staff. Training on these has to be provided to staff. DM can be an extra curricular activity in schools through Scout and Girl Guide movements for training on Medical First responders and SAR parties.

These will lead to increased awareness of disaster management related issues among school children and this will help create generation of knowledge about DRM and preparedness in the future generations too. With regard to infrequent but very destructive hazards such as tsunami or major dam related hazards etc, this is especially vital.

¹⁵ Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights, *Towards Safer Sri Lanka – Road Map for Disaster Risk Management, Volume 2*, Government of Sri Lanka



Annexure 2

Revised Draft, 20 July 2006

SAVE THE CHILDREN IN SRI LANKA: TRINCOMALEE DISTRICT DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN 2006

A. Introduction

1. Background

Save the Children has been heavily involved in post tsunami relief, rehabilitation and recovery programme in Trincomalee. Tsunami is the biggest natural disaster that Sri Lanka ever faced but a perpetual threat of natural and manmade disasters holds the lives of some 209,000 people of the 10 Divisional Secretariat (DS) divisions in the district to uncertainty and anxiety.

Threats come mainly from

- a. escalation of violence – ethnic clashes or military engagement between SLA and LTTE – causing killing and injuring people, destroying their houses and assets and forcing people into displacement;
- b. floods and cyclones which often destroy people's houses and household assets and force them into temporary displacement.

2. Aim of Disaster Response Plan

Goal

Protect children against harms caused by man-made or natural disasters in Trincomalee District.

Objective

To respond to disaster rapidly and effectively.

3. Risks and vulnerabilities

A significant part of the district is under LTTE's control. LTTE's grandee/claymore mine attacks and SLA's retaliatory attacks on LTTE held areas cause civilian casualties and property losses. People flee their homes leaving their belongings behind. They become distressed by severe reduction in their access to food, shelter, water and sanitation, medical care as well as by fear and uncertainty. Children, in particular, suffer additionally from lack of care and protection against abuse and violence.

Many people live in low lying areas. Nearly every year they suffer from floods and sometimes experience cyclones which displace families and seriously reduce people's access to basic services.



4. External preparedness

To deal with disasters and create a safer Sri Lanka, the Government has developed a legal framework (Sri Lanka Disaster Management Act No. 13 of 2005) and institutional arrangements (National Disaster Management Council and the National Disaster Management Centre). District and divisional disaster management committees are established to handle district and divisional level activity.

Humanitarian agencies have established Inter Agency Coordination Forum and mechanisms for collaborative response. They have also developed District Contingency Plans – linked to the national Contingency plan, and have initiated pre-positioning of relief items.

5. Internal capacity of Save the Children

Save the Children Trincomalee Team

- is a part of the Inter Agency Coordination/Collaboration Group; it participates in joint review, monitoring, assessment, planning and response;
- has developed a rapid response team within its structure and established a decision-making mechanism and monitoring system;
- has developed trigger indicators and support packages;
- has pre-positioned selected relief items and made logistical arrangements for procurement and distribution;
- has made arrangement with NGO partners for relief operations.

B. Strategy

1. Working Definition of Disaster.

‘A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society causing widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources.

A natural or human induced situation that causes displacement of significant number of people.’

2. Objective of Response

Meet children’s immediate needs during disasters.

3. Response Criteria

Save the Children in Sri Lanka Trincomalee will intervene when, due to any natural hazard or human induced crisis

- significant proportion of the families in the district are displaced
or
- significant numbers of children are unable to participate in school activities.

4. Approach

The Trincomalee team will

- monitor crisis events or their threats on a routine basis;
- intervene on the basis of assessment;
- involve children in planning, implementing and monitoring responses;
- collaborate with district authorities and other humanitarian agencies;
- operate directly as well through partners.



5. Support Package

Save the Children in Sri Lanka Trincomalee team will provide

- educational items to children and education institutes for continuity of children's studies;
- care and recreation facilities to help children cope with their fear and anxieties and access protection against abuse;
- non-food relief items to the affected families to improve quantitative coverage of the Inter Agency response.

List and quantities of items pre-positioned

S. No	Item	Unit	quantity	S. no	Item	unit	quantity
1	Tarpaulin sheet	Pc	1,000	10	Match box	Box	20,000
2	Cooking pan	x5 set	375	11	Soap (baby & sunlight)	Bar	1,500
3	Bed sheet	Pc	1,500	12	Mop	Pc	500
4	Bucket	Set	1,500	13	Scrub brush	Pc	500
5	Sarong	Pc	1,000	14	Rubber gloves	Pair	7,000
6	Children clothes	Set	1,500	15	Phenol	Bottle	300
7	Plastic mat	Pc	1,500	16	School bags	Pc	1,500
8	Silver plates	Pc	5,500	17	Stationary items	Set	800
9	Silver tumblers	Pc	6,500				

Provisions of recreation

Save the Children in Sri Lanka Trincomalee will provide children's play, recreational and drawing items as well space in the welfare centres or temporary shelter locations for children to

- seek mutual support,
- find amusement,
- express feelings,
- share experience,
- show solidarity,
- meet friends,
- raise concerns.



6. Decision making body and rapid response team

Save the Children in Sri Lanka Trincomalee Rapid Response Team

Save the Children in Sri Lanka Trincomalee Rapid Response Team					
1	2	3	4	5	6
Assessment Team	Planning and Decision making Team	Resource Management Team	Distribution Team	Reporting and Documentation Team	Co-ordination Team
Lead role Ranjini	Lead role District Manager	Lead role Indran	Lead role Mayooran	Lead role Geetha	Lead role Varathaseelan
Members • Torhil • Ranjini • Disa • Karthik	Members • PDM- Education • PDM- Livelihoods • PDM-Child Protection • PDM- Disaster Risk Reduction • Assistant Officer - Disaster Risk Reduction (Gaya, Tharshi)	Members • Thomas • Yogen • Thirosi • Priya, Jamuna • Tharshi • Gaya	Members • Nithiya • Gowri, • Karthik • Arunakumar • Tharshini, Jamuna • Gaya, • Sasi, • Marry • Praba, • Torhil • Sutha, • Ruby • Mahendran • Ahilan, • Selvan • Jaso, • Dilani • Hillmy, • Ganga • Sanmuganathan • Marcus, • Safeek	Members • Atheek • Sasi • Gaya	Members • Arul • Torhil • Mayooran • Atheek



C. Preparedness Action

Monitoring and need assessment

- Establish database for Trincomalee district;
- Routine monitoring of situation.

Children's participation

- Consult and agree with children's groups about planning, assessment and monitoring process.

Decision making

- Formalise a decision making group's structure, Terms of Reference and authority through the approval of Country Programme Director.

Pre-positioning of emergency stock

- Routine check and stock taking of pre-positioned relief items.

Human resource

Series of in house training workshop on:

- Child right programming
- Monitoring and assessment
- Children's participation
- Disaster Risk Reduction Framework
- Logistic management
- Staff safety and security
- Advocacy and influencing

Staff capacity building through attending short courses/training workshops on

- Disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction
- SPHERE Standards

Review of preparedness plan

The planning and decision making team will review this preparedness plan on a six monthly basis. The next review will be in the third week of December 2006.



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Save the Children fights for children's rights.
We deliver immediate and lasting improvements to children's lives worldwide.

Save the Children works for:

- a world which respects and values each child
- a world which listens to children and learns
- a world where all children have hope and opportunity

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