



Partnerships for Strengthening SCHOOL PREPAREDNESS FOR TSUNAMI in the Asia-Pacific Region

Background: Most countries in the Asia-Pacific region are prone to tsunami. Early warning systems, preparedness plans and awareness campaigns help mitigate the impact of tsunami, which though infrequent, can be potentially devastating. The UNDP-Government of Japan project *Partnerships for Strengthening School Tsunami Preparedness in the Asia-Pacific Region* has helped schools in 24 countries to prepare or update their tsunami or disaster preparedness plans and test them through safe evacuation drills. The tsunami project contributes to the achievement of the Sendai Framework's seven targets to reduce lives lost, numbers of people affected, and economic damage from natural and human-induced hazards.

Objectives: Since 2016, the World Tsunami Awareness Day initiated by the Government of Japan is observed on 5th November. The purpose is to raise awareness of the need for tsunami preparedness. In partnership with the Government of Japan, the United Nations Development Programme Bangkok Regional Hub is helping tsunami prone schools in the region to strengthen their tsunami preparedness, based on Japan's experience. The project advocates with Governments to institutionalize such preparedness efforts, so that each year every student is aware and prepared on how to respond to a tsunami warning. With the COVID-19 pandemic forcing school closures, the project has expanded to integrating pandemic preparedness into the school preparedness plans and beyond schools to community preparedness.



Project Countries: Over three phases, the project is being implemented in 24 countries - Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Kiribati, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tuvalu, Tonga, Vanuatu, and Viet Nam.

Technical Partners: The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC), the International Tsunami Information Centre (ITIC), the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI) and Tohoku University, Japan are technical partners in the project.

Implementing Partners: The Ministries of Disaster Management and Education and UNDP Country Offices are the main implementers of the project. At the country level, additional partners may include sub-national governments, the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and others.

Project: Partnerships for Strengthening School Preparedness for Tsunami in the Asia-Pacific Region Phase III
Donor: The Government of Japan
Duration: Phase I (2017-18), Phase II (2018-2021), Phase III (2021-23)
Funds: US\$3.5 million

Project Results

170,000 participants: students, teachers and members of school administration have taken part in the drills

380 schools have organized tsunami education, developed emergency evacuation plans and conducted drills

24 countries have actively engaged in the implementation of the regional project



World Tsunami Awareness Day

In the last five years, the project commemorated World Tsunami Awareness Day through high visibility events:

- 2017: A multi-country video presented at a high-level event for World Tsunami Awareness Day involving Permanent Representatives to the UN including those from Japan, Maldives and Indonesia who commended the efforts of tsunami drills held in their respective countries
- 2018: Launch of the #90drills social media campaign (aimed at five school drills each in 18 countries), joint video with UNDRR Asia-Pacific on impact of tsunami on vulnerable groups in line with the theme of the year, and country videos and blogs featuring students trained in the drills
- 2019: Joint advocacy and video with UNDRR Asia-Pacific on the #BuildToLast campaign based on the theme of the year showing how preparedness and resilient infrastructure can save lives, launch of the #PrepareToWin advocacy campaign by UNDP Asia-Pacific reaching +600,000 people and generating +25,000 views in 24 countries
- 2020: Joint knowledge product with UNDRR Asia-Pacific on 'Tsunami Evacuation during COVID-19: A Guide for School Administrators' that was introduced live on NHK (Japanese TV Channel) for +7 Million people
- 2021: Launch of the first Tsunami Storybook 'Durie, the Tsunami Teacher' as part of a series of stories from the project countries.

Impact at Country Level

Highlights of the impact of the project in selected countries is below:

Cambodia: Following tsunami evacuation drills, a Training of Trainer module was developed which was adapted and scaled up by Save the Children in Cambodia.

Fiji: The National Disaster Management Organisation used a mobile application, the geoBing App, to coordinate and monitor the conduct of multiple drills simultaneously.

Indonesia: The Bali Provincial Government's decree on Disaster Resilience Education calls for high school/universities to mainstream disaster education into intra and extra curriculum.

Papua New Guinea: Following tsunami evacuation drills, the Provincial Administrator in Milne Bay Province made a commitment through a circular directing the Provincial Education Office to ensure all schools in Milne Bay Province observe World Tsunami Day.

Palau: A Presidential Proclamation marked September as the National Preparedness Month and all schools are expected to conduct evacuation drills annually.

Sri Lanka: The Disaster Management Centre secured an annual allocation of approximately US\$ 125,000 for disaster preparedness activities including school awareness and tsunami drills.

Viet Nam: A five-year plan was developed to incorporate disaster education and drills into the national school curriculum.

Visibility and Communications

Since 2017, the Tsunami project promoted more than 40 videos, 8 newsletters, +20 blogs, and photo stories, over 200 tweets, dozens of media pieces and 4 story books.

The communications efforts reached 1.1 million people, 40,000 video views, 12,000 engagements across 60 countries, expanding on the achievements of the 24 project countries.

Learn more in the Tsunami Project website



Contact us at shairi.mathur@undp.org

