

# *What should I do in a Disaster ?*

An Initiation for Mainstreaming People With Disability in  
Disaster Risk Reduction



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*Supported by: Assam State Disaster Management Authority*

# INTRODUCTION

During the last decade, Disaster have had a significant impact on 2.5 billion people globally - a number that has doubled since 1990. In 2011, 332 natural disasters had been registered and it killed 3077 people.

Hundreds of children are affected every year by earthquakes, flood, fire and other disasters.

- In 1995, Davwali (Haryana) about 200 students were killed in a school fire
- In 2001, Bhuj Earthquake, 971 students and 31 teachers lost their lives
- Kumbakonam (Tamil Nadu) Fire tragedy killed 94 students in 2004
- Bus Accident in Yamuna River, Delhi killed 24 children
- Thousands of students and children were either killed or injured in the 2004 Tsunami

*"We can already see their potential contribution in the many persons with visible and invisible disabilities around the world who already serve as volunteers and workers helping communities when disaster hits to cope and bounce back.*

*On the International Day for Disaster Reduction, let us resolve to do everything possible to ensure that all persons with disabilities have the highest possible levels of safety and the greatest possible chance to contribute to the overall wellbeing of society"*

**- Ban Ki Moon, 2013**



Disasters have always been treated as crisis situation to be dealt with when they occur. But recently, the Hugo Framework For Action, a blueprint for Disaster Reduction which was formulated in January 2005, with the participation of 168 Governments, adopted a ten year plan to make the world safer from natural hazards. Its goal is to substantially reduce disaster loses by 2015, in human lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities & countries.

# WHAT IS A DISASTER?

A disaster is any event natural or man-made, which threatens human lives, damages private and public property, infrastructure & environment and disrupts social and economic lives beyond the coping capacity of the affected community. Onset of a disaster can be sudden (e.g. earthquake) or progressive (e.g. drought). Disasters may be classified into two broad categories.

## NATURAL DISASTER

Earthquake  
Flood  
Landslide  
Drought  
Cyclone etc.

## MAN-MADE DISASTER

Wars  
Riots  
Accidents  
Ecological Disasters  
Chemical leaks

### **DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HAZARDS & DISASTER**

*A hazard is a situation that poses a level of threat to life, health, property, or environment. Most hazards are dormant or potential, with only a theoretical risk of harm; however, once a hazard becomes "active", it can create an emergency situation or disaster.*

### **BUT**

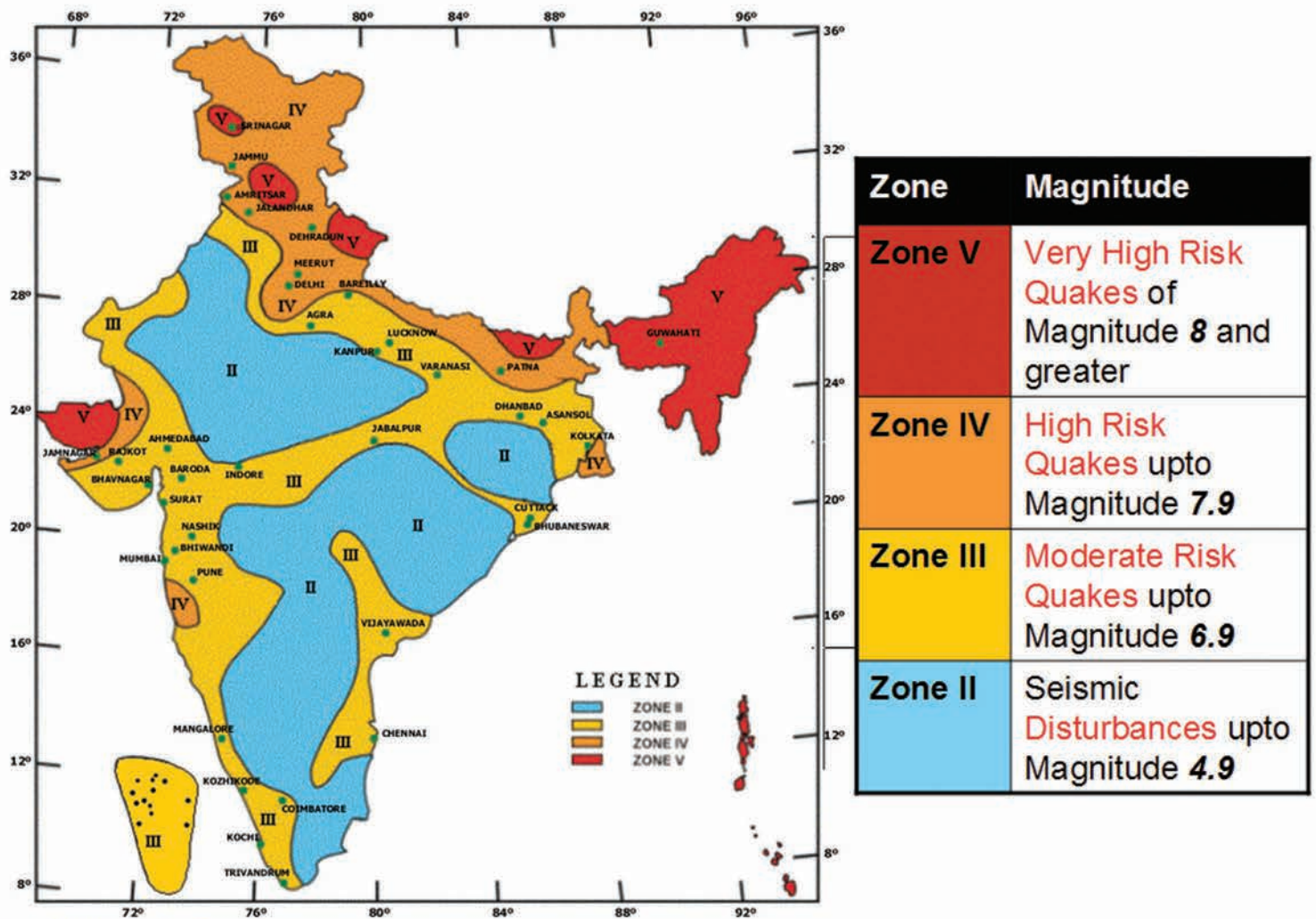
*A disaster is a natural or man-made (or technological) hazard resulting in an event of substantial extent causing widespread human, materials, economic, environmental losses which exceeds the coping capacity of the affected community or society with its own resources*



# INDIA'S HAZARD PROFILE



## SEISMIC HAZARD ZONATION MAP



Source: IS 1893 (Part 1) : 2002 (BIS)

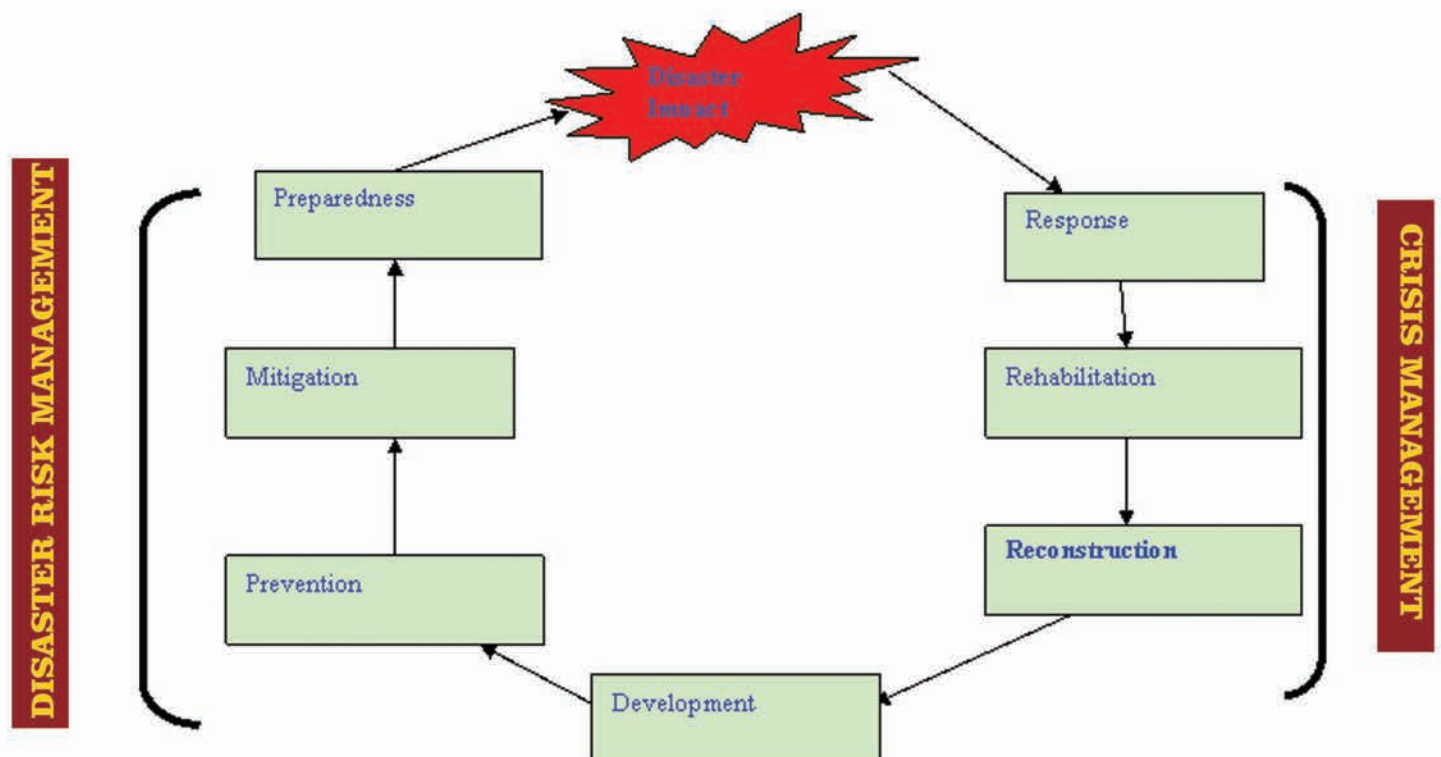
# What happens in a disaster?

- Loss of human lives
- Injuries
- Loss of property (home, land)
- Loss of economic assets (machines, vegetation, livestock)
- Loss of means of livelihood
- Loss of infrastructure (roads, public buildings, water systems, electricity, industry plants)

## Disaster Management

Disaster Management can be defined as the organization and management of resources & responsibilities for dealing with all humanitarian aspects of emergencies viz. preparedness, response and recovery in order to lessen the impact of disasters.

## Phases of Disaster Management



## Disability Status in Assam

TOTAL DISABLED POPULATION IN ASSAM			
	Total	Male	Female
VI (Visually impaired)	282,056	154136	127920
Speech disability	56,974	31783	25191
HI (Hearing impaired)	51,825	27554	24271
PH (Physically Handicapped)	91,970	56386	35584
MR (Mental Retardation)	47,475	27657	19818

Source: Census 2001

## Where do the People With Disability (PWD) Stand in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)?

### United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

- \* Article 11 states parties shall take in accordance with their obligation under International Law, necessary measures to ensure protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risks including situations of aroused conflict, humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters
- \* Article 32 expresses international cooperation highlighting the importance of cooperation in support of national efforts. The Article mentions amongst others that the international development programmes would be disability inclusive. UNCRPD clearly mentions disability as a cross cutting issue to be considered in all development actions. It's a Human rights instrument with explicit socio-economic and cultural rights

States must progressively realize access for People with Disability to these rights, rather than considering them to be a vulnerable group. They have to be considered in the group so that planning and care is given in the same footing.

### The SPHERE Guidelines 2011

It sets out that the people affected by disasters have a right to expect from humanitarian assistance. But in spite of all these legislations, the delivery systems are not disability friendly. There are many areas of concern.

- \* Community based early warning systems are not disability friendly
- \* No effective inter-agency coordination and standard operating procedures for stake holder groups, especially first line responders
- \* Lack of culture of preparedness

## What makes PWD more vulnerable during an Emergency Situation?

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- \* PWDs tend to be invisible in emergency registration systems
- \* Lack of awareness is one of the major factors for PWDs not to comprehend disasters and its consequences
- \* PWDs are often excluded from disaster response efforts and may get affected by changes in terrain resulting from disaster
- \* Because of inadequate physical accessibility or loss or lack of mobility aids or appropriate assistance, PWDs are deprived from rescue and evacuation services, relief services, safe locations, adequate shelter, water, sanitation and other services
- \* Emotional distress and trauma caused by crisis situation has long term effects on PWDs
- \* Misinterpretation of the situations and communication difficulties like; - what happened? What to do? Where is my family? makes PWD more vulnerable in disaster situation
- \* Lack of capacity building
- \* Lack of knowledge management documentation and dissemination of good practices
- \* Lack of inclusion of disabled person in planning and development
- \* Lack of information materials to reach the disabled in the way they understand
- \* Lack of community understanding of the different needs of different disabilities

Hence appropriate and timely help does not reach out to PWDs in terms of evacuation and response efforts



*Image source: Google images*

# DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Preparedness, Awareness and Knowledge are three main tools in Disaster Risk Reduction. There are two players;

- The person himself
- The first line responders

The person himself must be acquainted with the early warning systems. Early warning systems would provide information in both auditory and visual form

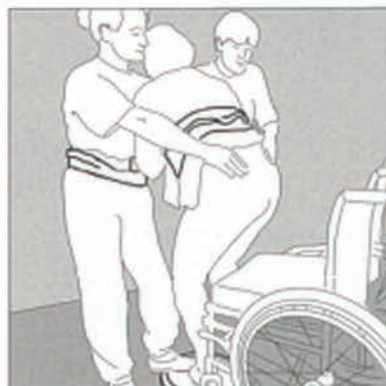
## ✓ Audio Signals or Alarms (Siren, Bells, Drums)



## ✓ Visual Signal system (Flags, posters with large characters or pictures with colour contrast, blinking lights, clear and brief announcement. Look for door to door notification for persons who have been pre identified )



## ✓ Persons with disability must participate in trainings (for E.g. to indicate floods the persons next to you will squeeze your forearm five times. These will give you adequate time to shelter immediately)



1. Transfers between a wheelchair and a toilet



# WHAT TO DO DURING AN EARTHQUAKE

Dali City, 1999 Taiwan earthquake

Image Source: [www.nees.org](http://www.nees.org)



## If you are indoors (in your school or house)

### DO'S

DROP, COVER & HOLD on to a sturdy table



Move to open space if in ground floor



Listen to Radio, Sirens, Bells & look for flashlights



### DONT'S

Do not stay near buildings



Do not stay under overhead power lines



Do not drive over/under the flyovers and bridges



# WHAT TO DO DURING AN EARTHQUAKE

## If you are indoors (in your school or house)

### DO'S

Keep away from glass door and windows. If they break during shake, they may hurt



### DONT'S

Do not use lifts or elevators



If trapped in a building, whistle/shout



If driving, do not park your cars near power lines. Park your car at the side of the road, Stay in with the safety belts on.



Stay Calm



Do not panic



# EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS MEASURES

## PREPARE AN EMERGENCY KIT. It should contain the following

### I) FIRST AID BOX



Cotton



Antiseptic like Betadine/Dettol



Antibiotic ointment like Fucidin



Band-Aid



Gauze Bandage



Triangular cloth



Safety Pin & Small Scissors



Essential medicines, personal prescriptions like for fever, vomiting, cough etc.



# EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS MEASURES

## II) CASH



## III) TORCH



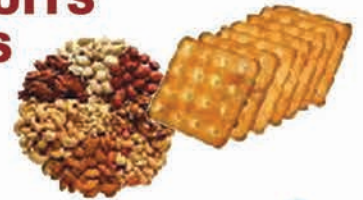
## IV) TRANSISTOR



## V) EXTRA BATTERIES



## VI) DRY FRUITS & BISCUITS



## VII) DRINKING WATER



## VIII) WHISTLE



## IX) EXTRA CLOTHES



## X) SLEEPING KIT



## Have Emergency Rescue Items at Home / Institutions

Helmet



Rope



Axe



Fire Extinguisher



Crow-bar



Hammer



# IMPORTANT TIPS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

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## 1. FOR VISUALLY-IMPAIRED PERSON:

- a) Keep an extra cane by your bed and attach a whistle with it to attract attention
- b) Practice for use of emergency exit route

## 2. FOR PHYSICALLY DISADVANTAGED:

- a) Plan for how you will evacuate in an emergency and discuss it with your care giver
- b) If you use a motorized wheelchair, have a manual wheelchair as a backup
- c) During earthquake, lock the wheels of wheelchair if you are using it and cover your head with pillow or hard book or cloths

## 3. FOR HEARING IMPAIRED PERSON:

- a) Keep extra batteries for your hearing aids with emergency supplies
- b) Store your hearing aids in a container attached to your bed, so that you can locate them quickly after a disaster



## 4. FOR PERSONS WITH COMMUNICATION DISABILITIES:

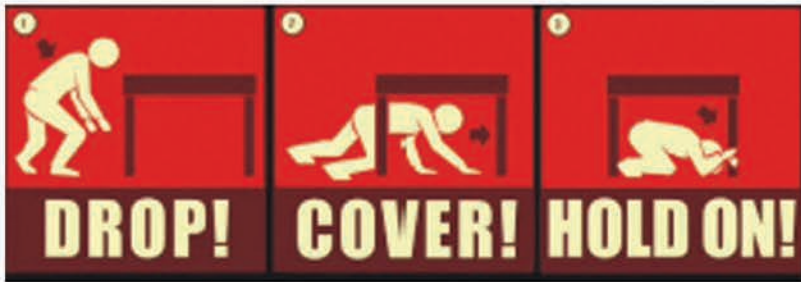
- a) Store paper, writing materials, copies of a word board
- b) Pre-printed key phrases in your emergency kit, your wallet, purse like "HELP ME", "NEED DRINKING WATER", "CALL DOCTOR" etc



# IMPORTANT TIPS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

## 5. FOR CARE GIVERS:

- Should practice "DROP,COVER,HOLD" with the individual they serve on a regular basis
- Should prepare a survival kit for the concerned individual
- Should train in for individual's special needs in emergencies like blood bank, phone number of concerned doctors, special help-aids etc



## 6. FOR TEACHERS:

- Train with a list of simple sign languages for asking help in emergencies like "I AM SCARED", "NEED DRINKING WATER", "HELP ME", "COVER YOUR HEAD", "DROP ,COVER, HOLD" etc

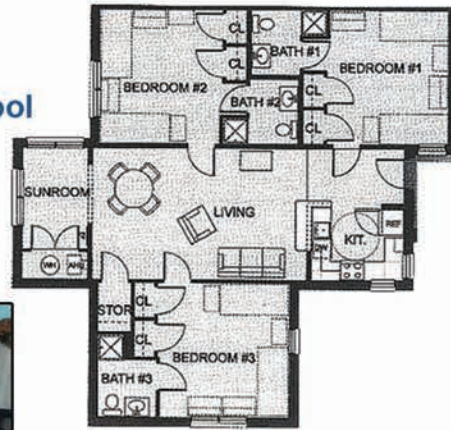


# REMEMBER EARTHQUAKES DO NOT KILL, UNSAFE BUILDINGS DO!

- 1 Identify a safe place in the house and at school
- 2 Mark & Know the Emergency EXITs in the house and school



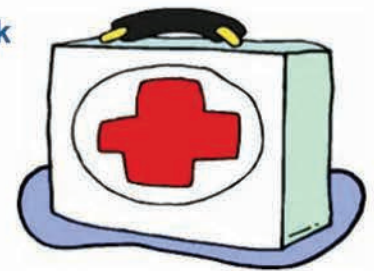
- 3 Learn the MAP of the house/ Apartment and school



- 4 Practise Mock Drill regularly



- 5 Check items in the Emergency Kit and try to change it every week
- 6 Be Alert! Earthquakes can never be predicted
- 7 Follow information from official source only



- 8 Know whether your house is Earthquake resistant. Contact qualified Engineer. Register with Assam State Disaster Management Authority for sensitization regarding earthquake safety



## IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

# CALL



**100**

FOR POLICE

**101**

FOR FIRE

**CALL 108  
EMERGENCY**

FOR MEDICAL  
HELP

FOR ABOVE MENTIONED EMERGENCIES VIZ. POLICE, FIRE, MEDICAL, YOU CAN DIAL **108** SPECIFYING YOUR NEED



# FIRE PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN FIRE FIGHTING

Fire tragedy in Park Street Kolkata in March 2010

Image Source: [www.news.outlookindia.com](http://www.news.outlookindia.com)



## COMMON CAUSES OF FIRE

1 Cooking Gas Leakage



2 During Cooking



3 Faulty electrical wiring



4 Lighted Diya, incense sticks & candles left attended



5 Fire Crackers



6 Electrical appliances like Irons, geysers plugged 'on' and left attended



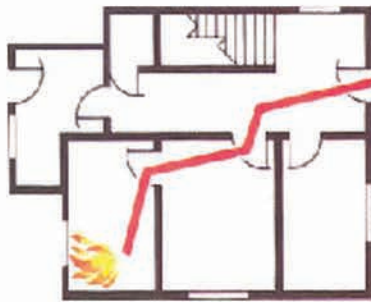
# FIRE PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN FIRE FIGHTING

## PREVENTIVE MEASURES FOR FIRE

- \* Make a Plan for Fire Emergency. Discuss it with your Family members.
- \* Practice Exiting through escape route

### REMEMBER:

- 1 Mark an escape route



- 2 Everybody in the house must know the keys to all doors



- 3 If there is smoke, Keep Low to the ground and cover yourself with a thick cloth



- 4 Fix a Meeting place in the House



## REFERENCES

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