

SCHOOL EDUCATION ON NATURAL DISASTER PREVENTION AND RISK REDUCTION

Report of Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) -Vietnam

at

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1. Summary of impact of natural disasters on Vietnam

According to the UN report, the world disaster situation is currently at high alert level: in the past three decades, because of the global climate change, the number of natural disasters has increased three times and the number of victims caused by natural disasters doubled every 10 years cycle.

Vietnam is located in the tropical monsoon climate and at the same time it is near one of the five major storm centres of the world. This has caused an extremely complex changes in the weather and hydrology to Vietnam. The hurricane season coinciding with the rainy season in Vietnam together with its complex slope terrain dividing the narrow valley is a permanent threat to life, daily activities and farming of the Vietnamese people.

There is announcement on the mass media almost every day about the effects of weather to the lives of the Vietnamese people.

The impact of climate change is at present occurring in Vietnam nationwide. The Cuu Long river delta which was, in the past, always blessed by the favorable weather is nowadays seriously affected by the weather and hydrology. With frequent storms, whirlwind, tides, floods and sea level rise much land have been submerged; the Delta in the North and North Central Region has been frequently affected by storms, floods, droughts, hail...; the Central coastal region has been affected by hurricanes, floods, sea level rise, tsunamis, salt-marsh, drought, dust storms...; the Central Highlands have been affected by flash floods, landslides, floods, drought...; the Northern Mountains have been affected by flash floods, floods, landslides, forest fires, drought, hail, tornadoes...

In 2009 the storms No. 9 , 10, 11 landed in the central provinces and Central Highlands have caused heavy damage to the life and common physical facilities of concerned communities including the damage of schools. According to the specific report of the Provincial Departments of Education and Training, the number of officers, teachers and students dead and missing were 44, the injured were 24; 5,445 schools were collapsed, flooded and with roofs blown up; teachers and students in flood areas lost their textbooks, notebooks and school supplies.

In 2010, heavy floods have caused damage to the life and common physical facilities of concerned communities including the damage of schools. According to the specific report of the Provincial Departments of Education and Training, the number of officers, teachers and students dead and missing were 22, the injured were 20; more than 12,260 schools were submerged from 0.5m to 2.5m. In many provinces such as Quang Binh, Ha Tinh, Nghe An, Quang Nam, Thua Thien Hue...teachers and students in flood areas lost their textbooks, notebooks and school supplies. Schools were seriously damaged and students couldn't go to school in as long as one week to several months; People in flood areas lost their accommodation and didn't have access to food, clean water, essential drugs. The disaster was really hard.

2. Several solutions have been implemented to mitigate natural disasters of the education sector

-The Prime Minister have issued the Decision No. 172/2007/QD-TTg in 2007 on approving the National Strategy for prevention and mitigation of natural disasters to 2020, has indicated clearly education related mission: "To strengthen the advocacy and education measures, raising awareness of the community on natural disaster prevention and mitigation. Introduce the basic knowledge on natural disaster prevention and mitigation to education programs in schools in order to educate students to understand and know how to respond to disasters and to support families and communities as well".

To implement Decision No. 172 of Prime Minister, MOET has been implementing and directing:

- Development of Action Plan of Education Sector on prevention and mitigation of natural disasters in 2011-2015.

- Introduction of the education for children on the ability to respond and adapt to the impact of natural disasters and climate change in the education development strategy in 2011-2015.

- Development of education materials on prevention and mitigation of disaster risk for primary students.
 - Coordination with UNICEF and Save the Children to organize training on education in emergencies for core officials of MOET and local authorities.
 - Coordination with UNICEF in developing the tools for assessment and information management of education in emergencies (pre-, during and post disasters).
 - Coordination with UNICEF, UNESCO and Save the Children in developing the tools for school self assessment for pre- and post disasters.
 - Development of education materials on injuries prevention for lower secondary education and conducting the pilot teaching in 120 schools in 10 provinces and cities.
 - Besides, injuries prevention theme is one of the contents of ‘Health Education’ for primary schools which has been integrated in the ‘Socio-natural sciences’ subject.
 - For lower and upper secondary education, injuries prevention content are either taught as an extracurricular subject or integrated in ‘Civic education’, ‘Biology’ and ‘Geography’.
 - Development of related education materials and directing schools nationwide to implement the tasks of environmental protection in general and climate change in particular. Minister of Education and Training has issued Directive 40/2008 launching the movement to build ‘child friendly schools’ with ‘active students’ in which the criteria of ‘green, clean and safe school’ is put at the top.
 - Directing localities to build the model of ‘safe school for injuries prevention’. This is a timely solution to reduce to the minimum nay risks that can cause injuries to students in the learning, working, physical, sports and entertainment activities in schools especially in natural disasters. Based on the criteria for the construction of school safety and injuries prevention, schools have established Directing board on ‘school health’ including injuries and natural disasters prevention with specific tasks assigned to its members.
- Injuries prevention measures include advocacy, education, intervention, remedy, accidents and injuries risk reduction; mobilizing school teachers and staff to take part in activities such as advocacy and education to raise awareness on school safety, injuries and disasters prevention through brochures, banners, posters, slogans, extracurricular activities, intervention to minimize the risk of accidents, injuries and reduce the harmful effect of natural disasters in schools.
- Raising awareness and interest of young people about climate change, MOET in collaboration with Oxfam and Save the Children launched a contest to learn about climate change for pupils and students across the country. The Organizing Committee received nearly 20,000 competitive entries from 21 provinces and

cities from all parts of the country. The outstanding writings and drawings collected from the contest were compiled into a book called: “*Call to Action - The look of the young on climate change*”. The first bilingual version of 1,000 copies was published in time for use by Vietnamese delegation at the Summit of the United Nations in Copenhagen. MOET will use this book as material for advocacy and education at all levels to raise awareness about climate change in line with the National Target Program on Climate Change.

- Collaborating with UNICEF on an annual basis to develop the list of relief supplies and to rescue in time school students and teachers on occurrence of natural disasters at the most affected provinces.
- Developing swimming instruction program for all school students.
- Constructing sanitation and clean water facilities in schools (The goal of National Target Program on rural clean water, environment and sanitation for 2011-2015 is that 100% of schools have adequate clean water and sanitation facilities), advocating information on environment, climate change and civilized lifestyle, personal hygiene and environmental sanitation.
- Directing education units on organization of school hygiene festival day, green-clean-beautiful and school-greening movements, drawing and art performance contests on the subject of environment protection, activities in response to the World Environment Day and National Week on Clean Water and Sanitation held annually etc.

3. Implementation

a) At the central level (MOET)

- The Students Affairs Department is assigned by MOET as a focal point in natural disasters preparedness and response. Other units of MOET are cooperating agencies and assigned with specific responsibilities.
- MOET has set up the following Committees to implement preventive actions for natural disasters and climate change:
 - Committee on Typhoon and Flood Prevention.
 - Steering Committee on Rescue and Relief.
 - Steering Committee on Climate Change Prevention.
 - Drafting Committee for Natural Disasters Prevention Education Program of the Education sector for the period of 2011 – 2015.
 - In the near future, the Steering Committee on Natural Disasters Prevention will be set up.

All the above-mentioned Committees are headed by a Vice Minister of MOET.

b) At municipal/provincial level (Department of Education and Training)

There is a Commanding Committee on Typhoon and Flood Prevention under the management of the Municipal/Provincial People's Committee. Department of Education and Training is a member of this Commanding Committee, which is headed by a leader of the municipal/provincial People's Committee.

c) At district level (Division of Education and Training)

There is a Commanding Committee on Typhoon and Flood Prevention under the management of District People's Committee. Division of Education and Training is a member of this Commanding Committee, which is headed by a leader of the District People's Committee.

d) At ward/commune level (schools)

There is a Commanding Committee on Typhoon and Flood Prevention under the management of Ward/Commune People's Committee. Local schools are member of this Commanding Committee, which is headed by a leader of the Ward/Commune People's Committee.

4. Recommendations

- There should be a common instruction from international organizations and donors on natural disasters prevention at school for all regional countries.
 - Expertise and technical support on natural disasters prevention at school in emergency situation should be extended to all countries including Vietnam.
 - Enhancing capacity building activities on community mobilization for natural disasters prevention at school and education in emergencies for Southeast Asian countries.
 - Developing a Common Plan of Action on natural disasters prevention at school for Southeast Asian countries.
 - Enhancing learning and experience exchange activities among regional countries regarding natural disasters prevention at school.
- Integrate DRR into education sector (official and non official curriculum)