

Workshop on Child Friendly Spaces on 14th November 2018

The state of Assam is vulnerable to variety of natural hazards including flood, earthquake, landslides, storms, fire, insurgency and conflicts, accidents etc. which are being confronted with during various timeframes and at times in conjunction with one another. Apart from recurrent disaster losses, the increasing uncertainties brought in by climate change creates enormous pressure upon the state to thrive on indicators of sustainable development.

Children have long been recognized to be doubly vulnerable during disasters and emergencies. The critical social sectors meant to ensure the rights of children to survival, development, protection and participation become defunct during and after disasters affecting children's life in multiple ways.

In view of above, Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) in collaboration with UNICEF organized a one day workshop on “**Developing State level guidelines for Child Friendly Spaces in Emergencies**” under National School Safety Policy on *14th November 2018* commemorating the important occasion of *Children's Day*.

The basic objectives of the workshop include:

1. To orient the participants about the basic guideline on CFS notified by Government of Assam
2. To understand the needs and concerns of children affected by floods and other disasters in the state
3. To understand the existing services provided by various departments of the government for children affected by disasters and explore opportunities for an integrated model
4. To understand existing practices related to child friendly spaces by IAG members/civil society in the state
5. To discuss the structure and outline of the guideline and the proposed role sharing and coordination modalities
6. To discuss and delimit the various sectoral activities/services that can be delivered through a child friendly space

The workshop envisaged building on a consultation mode of facilitation bringing multiple stakeholders to a structured course of discussion shaping the way for the guideline to evolve in a practical, feasible and acceptable manner. Broadly, it was a mix of technical, plenary, open and group discussion sessions touching upon areas of service such as Health in Emergencies, WASH in Emergencies, Nutrition in Emergencies, Education in Emergencies and Child Protection in Emergencies with regard to disaster affected/displaced children. The participants were District Project Officers (Community Participation & Disaster Management) from all districts of Assam, representatives from core government departments, NGO/IAG members and external experts.

The Inaugural session was presided over by the following dignitaries –

1. Shri Rajesh Prasad (IAS), Principal Secretary, Revenue and DM Department & CEO, ASDMA, GoA
2. Smti. Aruna Rajoria, IAS, Mission Director, SSA & RMSA
3. Shri Pritom Saikia, IAS, Commissioner & Secretary, Secondary & Elementary Education, GoA
4. Shri Mihir Bhatt, Director, All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI), Ashram Road, Ahmadabad, Gujarat
5. Smti. Chhaya Kunwar, Education Specialist, UNICEF, Assam
6. Various Secretaries, Directors and Other officials of Govt. of Assam, Officials from UNICEF & ASDMA.

The workshop was successful in giving directions for building the draft guideline on Child Friendly Spaces for Assam and setting up stage for multi-stakeholder co-operation mechanism during disasters for providing children specific schemes.