

**Abstract**  
**“Promoting Disaster Education for our Children”**

Koji Suzuki  
Executive Director  
Asian Disaster Reduction Center

The earthquake of magnitude 9.0 on Richter scale occurred off the Sumatra Island on 26<sup>th</sup> December 2004 caused heavy damage in countries facing the Indian Ocean triggering a massive tsunami. The serious tsunami disaster is attributed to the absence of a tsunami early warning system in the Indian Ocean and the lack of knowledge about tsunami among the general public.

According to the tsunami perception survey targeting at local residents, school children, teachers and government officials, conducted by Asian Disaster Reduction Center in Sri Lanka, Maldives and Indonesia, major local residents answered that integrating of the tsunami disaster education into school curriculum as a most effective way to utilize lessons for preventing/mitigating a tragedy from recurring.

It has been widely recognized that school education is one of the key elements in long term disaster risk reduction strategies. School children can play an important role in actual life situations in the future if disaster risk reduction is integrated as part of the school curriculum. In addition, tying up with the informal education in their homes and non-formal education in communities, children can be developed as the most aspired people in societies.

In all societies, children represent hope for the future. Because of their direct link to youths, schools are universally regarded as institutions of learning, for instilling cultural values and passing knowledge and experience to younger generations systematically. In this context, promoting disaster education for school children connecting harmoniously with communities is one of the vital needs to build disaster resilient thus safer societies.