



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION | OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

PRESS RELEASE

ASEAN Safe Schools Initiative boosts partnerships to ensure safety of schools, learners

MAKATI CITY, March 14, 2018 – To promote strategic partnerships and strengthen collaboration among the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam) in advancing safe schools in the region, leaders, experts, and specialists on education and disaster risk reduction and management gathered for the ASEAN Regional Training Workshop on Comprehensive Safe Schools Initiative at One Pacific Place Makati from February 28 to March 1.

Spearheaded by the ASEAN Safe Schools Initiative (ASSI) Consortium, Asia Pacific Coalition on School Safety, and the ASEAN Secretariat, in cooperation with the Department of Education (DepEd), and humanitarian organizations such as Plan International, Save the Children, and World Vision, the training workshop provided technical knowledge and information on innovative approaches, tools, processes, and resources relevant to different school safety components.

DepEd Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Service (DRRMS) Director Ronilda Co underscored the importance of the initiative especially in ensuring that children learn in a safe and motivating environment.

“We must accept that this is our new normal, and that this is a reality that we have to deal with together. This is what makes this project – a venue for knowledge sharing, problem solving, and engagement among ASEAN experts and practitioners – so relevant and timely,” Director Co shared.

The DRRMS Director further emphasized that that there is more to a safe school than its physical structures: “Safety constitutes not only the absence of physical harm, threats, and hazards, but the presence of an enabling environment.”

“Ensuring the safety and security of our schools and learners is more than an engineering task; it is a shared responsibility,” she added.

Topics discussed in the three-day workshop were: 1. Overview of the Comprehensive School Safety (CSS) Framework; 2. CSS Pillar 1 in Southeast Asia: Policy and Practices Overview; 3. Ethical Responsibilities, Hazards and Risks; 4. CSS Pillar 1 Targets and Indicators Status Update; 5. CSS Pillar 1 in Southeast Asia: Building on Best Practices; 6. Vulnerabilities and Risks; 7. Existing School Facilities: Assessing Risks; 8. Non-structural Safety Threats and How to Reduce Them/ School Maintenance; 9. New Construction: A Community-Based Approach; 10. Towards Safe School Construction: Applying the Community-Based Approach to Stages of Construction; and 11. Structural Safety Education.

One of the highpoints of the event was the presentation of the Philippine delegation on good practices and lessons learned in DRRMS programming.

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