

Stage 5: Maintain

What to consider before you begin checklist

Safety

How will school safety be maintained through years of operation?

School staff may want to make substantial changes to the safer school, years and even decades after construction. Some changes such as adding classrooms, removing walls or adding doors and windows, may affect the safety of the building. User manuals and maintenance plans can help clarify which changes require the approval of qualified engineers and what ongoing maintenance is needed to preserve the safety of the school.

What special events, curriculum and committees can highlight the site as an example of safer school construction?

A safe school should remain a permanent teaching tool for safe construction and disaster risk reduction in the community.

Building abilities

What support does the community need to carry out routine maintenance?

Staff in charge of routine school maintenance may not have been part of school construction. They will need to be trained in the hazard-resistant features of the school so they understand how best to maintain them. Maintenance schedules can help with routine activities.

What ongoing support does the community need to lessen hazards such as securing loose objects?

In earthquake zones, school staff and students should secure non-structural hazards such as heavy furniture, flammable materials, and important equipment that could fall, break or injure people during earthquakes. In flood zones, evacuation plans should include securing loose items, covering windows, bracing doors and putting education material that could be damaged by floodwater up higher.

Sustainability

How will all people involved reflect on, share, and build on good practice and lessons learnt?

Agencies implementing community-based school construction should make a public commitment to safer school construction. This requires regular evaluation and donor education. Lessons learnt should be shared and internal capacity should be built.

What agreements and funding are in place for school maintenance, use, and alteration?

A safe school can easily become an unsafe one through lack of maintenance or dangerous alterations. While maintenance is a routine aspect of operations, without sufficient and regular funding, it will be postponed and the school will slip into disrepair. At completion, stakeholders should draft maintenance and user manuals. They should also establish roles, responsibilities and funding for routine maintenance and safe building alteration.