TOOLKIT

for
International Awareness Day for Avoidable Deaths (IAD4AD) Campaigners

2026

Avoidable Deaths Network

DISASTER DEATHS ARE AVOIDABLE

VOLUNTARY COMMITMENTS

SENDAI FRAMEWORK
FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION 2015-2030

About Avoidable Deaths Network (ADN): ADN is a global-local membership network dedicated to reducing disaster deaths that are avoidable in low- and middle-income countries. ADN is a member of the Sendai Framework's Voluntary Commitment Platform and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Leading Edge Programme Networks and Partnerships Group.

About International Awareness Day for Avoidable Deaths (IAD4AD): The global campaign IAD4AD was launched by ADN on March 13, 2023, in Osaka, Japan in collaboration with the city of Izumiotsu. The campaign launch was headlined by Ms. Mami Mizutori, former Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction. The campaign serves as a platform for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers to enhance disaster preparedness and response, ultimately reducing fatalities through improved governance and timely interventions.

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This toolkit comprises two matrices designed to capture the circumstances surrounding avoidable disaster deaths; examples of visibility, awareness, and promotion tools aligned with the three International Awareness Day for Avoidable Deaths (IAD4AD) Objectives; and 10 illustrative case journeys, along with brief information on the concept of avoidable disaster deaths.

The variables in the matrices are used to document the circumstances. Campaigners are encouraged to use these case journeys for Objective 2 of the Global Campaign: IAD4AD when they are organising awareness-raising activities.

The campaigners are also encouraged to read our *Booklet on 24 Avoidable Deaths*.

11 Variables to Capture Circumstances Surrounding Avoidable Disaster Deaths

1. Mechanism (direct vs. indirect deaths)	2. Location of deaths (indoor vs. outdoor)	3. Location of deaths (home or hospital or enroute
4. Activity at the time of death	5. The timing of death (day vs. night)	6. Whether the deceased person was aware of the disaster (lack of judgement)
7. Whether s/he attempted to take safety measures	8. Gender of the deceased (male/female/other)	9. Age (0-19 years, 20-51 years, and >51 years)
10. Vulnerability of the deceased person (disability, children etc)	11. Cause of death	

Source: Adapted by Ray-Bennett (2025) from Paul, (2021); Jonkman and Kelman (2005); Ray-Bennett *et al.*, (2024).

You can use these variables to develop your case journeys. They will help you capture the specific causes and circumstances surrounding indirect disaster deaths and missing persons. These case journeys can then be used for **Objective 2** of the global campaign.

Campaigners are encouraged to use the case journeys for **Objective 2 of the Global Campaign: IAD4AD** when organising their awareness-raising activities.

25 Variables to Capture Cause and Circumstances Surrounding Drowning Deaths

Category	Variable
Background information	- Mourning period - Place of data collection - Province - Setting (rural/ urban)
Socio-demographic details	- Age - Gender - Ethnicity - Civil status - Educational level - Occupation - Socio-economic quintile
Other data	- Place of incident - Time of incident - Source of water - Distance to water source - Cause of death - Details of accompanying person - Swimming ability - Received medical care - Medical history - Survival status - Risk factors - Vulnerability of deceased - Details of responder - Open ended questions/ narratives

Source: Ray-Bennett *et al.* (2025)

You can use some of these variables to develop your case journeys. They will help you capture the specific causes and circumstances surrounding indirect disaster deaths and missing persons. These case journeys can then be used for **Objective 2** of the global campaign.

Campaigners are encouraged to use the case journeys for **Objective 2 of the Global Campaign: IAD4AD** when organising their awareness-raising activities.

Examples of Visibility, Awareness and Promotion Tools

The Global Campaign has three Objectives.

1. To raise the visibility of disaster deaths, especially indirect deaths and missing persons.
2. To raise awareness of the specific causes and circumstances that lead to disaster deaths, thereby encouraging targeted interventions.
3. To promote the slogan 'Disaster Deaths Are Avoidable'.

You may choose which objective you would like to focus on for the Global Campaign. For each Objective, we have identified a set of tools to support your activities. For each Objective we have also identified a short questionnaire that you may use to assess the impact of your activities.

Visibility Tool

Objective 1: To raise the visibility of disaster deaths, especially indirect deaths and missing persons.

Examples of visibility tool may include although not limited to: spoken words poetry, short documentary, anthology, murals, poster, wall painting, missing persons tree, sea side gallery, hashtag challenges, digital campaign, information education and communication (BCC) poster/ leaflet, behaviour change communication (BCC) poster/ leaflet; etegami for disaster victims; student rallies for public attention in a public space; planting trees.

Awareness Tool

Objective 2: To raise awareness of the specific causes and circumstances that lead to indirect disaster deaths, thereby encouraging targeted interventions.

Examples of awareness raising tool may include although not limited to: storyboard wall, scenario of avoidable deaths (preventable/ amenable/ risk-governance) with discussion; one page case journeys of a lost life or missing person with discussion; capturing stories of the cause and circumstances of avoidable deaths; evidence tree; expert lecture; demonstration of fire safety, first aid and CPR drills to save a life; planting trees to mark the lives lost or for missing persons; listening to and learning from the stories of disaster survivors; roundtable discussion with local authorities for avoidable deaths; launching avoidable deaths hub or units or case stations; local avoidable deaths magazine produced and managed by at-risk/ high risk communities).

Promotion Tool

Objective 3: To promote the slogan 'Disaster Deaths Are Avoidable'

Examples of high-impact, public-facing tools may include although not limited to:

Visibility tools: giant banners with bright colours, giant banners and placards in rallies with the slogan; hashtag + social media frames; branded banner featuring the campaign slogan and the host's official logo; customised banner displaying the slogan; customised; designed cups, mugs, and small mementos featuring the slogan; street murals, street wall painting, slogan T-shirts, badges and stickers displaying the slogan; postcards; flash mobs or street theatre with a short performance ending with everyone raising boards reading: "DISASTER DEATHS ARE AVOIDABLE"; light candles in memory of avoidable deaths along with the display of the slogan;

Awareness raising tools: Pathways to death demonstrations using story cards showing (barrier (broken bridge); delay (no ambulance); consequence (avoidable death) - End with the message: "This didn't have to happen - disaster deaths are avoidable"; Infographics; School & Community Competitions (poster, slogan writing, street play) all centred on the slogan; Hashtag campaign (#DisasterDeathsAreAvoidable #AvoidableDeaths #IAD4AD); short reels or TikTok videos centred on the slogan; Finish the Sentence Challenge "Disaster Deaths Are Avoidable because …". "Disaster Deaths Are Avoidable when…)

Avoidable Disaster Deaths and Illustrative Case Journeys

According to the **Avoidable Disaster Deaths (ADD)** framework, disaster deaths can be broadly classified into three categories (although these distinctions are not always clear in real life):

1. Preventable avoidable deaths
2. Amenable avoidable deaths
3. Disaster risk governance–related avoidable deaths (Ray-Bennett, 2025, p. 3).

As Ray-Bennett (2025, pp. 49–50) explains, "Amenable and preventable deaths are caused by a lack of timely and preventive measures, while disaster risk governance deaths occur due to weak disaster risk governance measures".

For individuals interested in developing their own case studies, please refer to the following matrices:

1. Matrix of Causes and Circumstances of Avoidable Disaster Death (Ray-Bennett, 2025)
2. Matrix of Causes and Circumstances Surrounding Drowning Death (Ray-Bennett et al., 2025)

A few examples of avoidable disaster deaths are presented below. These examples are excerpts from the research monograph: Ray-Bennett (2025).

Disaster Risk Governance-Related Avoidable Deaths

Case 1:

"A 21-year-old migrant worker from Ratnagiri was working in Nalasopara in Maharastra to fend for her family (Suryawanshi, 2020). During the lockdown, she and her family walked on foot for almost 230 km in scorching heat to reach their home. Unfortunately, she collapsed and died on the road due to extreme heat and exhaustion" (Suryawanshi 2020; in Ray-Bennett 2025, p.107).

Case 2:

"A 32-year-old man in West Bengal's Howrah district died hours after he was beaten by police for stepping out of his house to buy milk during the nationwide lockdown (The Wire Staff, 2020). According to his family, the man died of the injuries sustained during the police's assault on him. The victim was rushed to a local hospital, where he was declared dead. The police have denied the claim that the man died due to the lathi-charge (baton-

charge) and instead blamed a cardiac arrest, saying the deceased was already suffering from heart ailments" (The Wire Staff 2020; in Ray-Bennett 2025, p.107).

Case 3:

"A 17-year-old migrant girl from Madhya Pradesh ended her life after she and her four siblings were left starving for two days during the lockdown. One Police Inspector said an inquiry revealed that this migrant family from Madhya Pradesh had no food for the last two days. The neighbours gave them food, but the girl was ashamed of her plight and was humiliated to beg every day. According to the Police Constable, when her father was away in search of work, the deceased asked her siblings to go out. She hung herself in their tiny room" (Nation, 2020a; in Ray-Bennett 2025, p.108).

Preventable Avoidable Deaths

Case 4:

"A young, meritorious student of class X took her life by setting herself ablaze, according to her parents (Sambad English Bureau 2020a; in Ray-Bennett 2025, p.110). The girl could not attend the online classes during the lockdown, which made her very gloomy. The autopsy would be conducted later at the State-run Medical College hospital and would be handed to the family to conduct the last rites. The girl's father was a casual labourer and on account of the lockdown, had no work. Hence, he lacked money to repair their TV or buy a smartphone for the online classes" (Sambad English Bureau 2020a; in Ray-Bennett 2025, p.110).

Case 5:

"An 82-year-old woman was found dead inside a toilet in the same hospital where she was admitted according to the senior police inspector and her relatives (Sambad English Bureau 2020b; in Ray-Bennett 2025, p.110). The woman had tested Covid-19 positive on May 27 and had been admitted to another hospital before she was shifted to the current hospital. Her relatives informed the police that she was missing on June 2. In a video message, the deceased grandson appealed to the Chief Minister to probe into the incident and punish those found negligent or guilty" (Sambad English Bureau 2020b; in Ray-Bennett 2025, p.110).

Case 6:

"According to a district superintendent of police in Andhra Pradesh, at least ten alleged alcohol addicts (three of whom were beggars and two were rickshaw pullers) died after consuming sanitiser as an alternative to liquor (PTI 2020; in Ray-Bennett 2025, p.110). All the deceased were alcohol addicts, and its non-availability due to the extended COVID-19 lockdown forced them to go for the alcohol-based sanitiser, according to the District Superintendent of Police. According to these police personnel, they are investigating whether the sanitiser had any other toxic content. To assess this, they have sent the stocks for chemical analysis" (PTI 2020; in Ray-Bennett 2025, p.111).

Amenable Avoidable Deaths

Case 7:

"The body of a newborn baby was recovered from the bag of his parents at a transit centre for migrant workers in Odisha. The baby's parents worked at a brick kiln in Uttar Pradesh. After the lockdown was enforced, the couple registered to return to their village by train. The baby was born in a hospital in Uttar Pradesh a day before their departure. The couple boarded the train the next day with their newly-born baby boy. Late at night, they noticed that the baby had stopped crying and found he had probably died of suffocation in the overcrowded train. Apprehending that other passengers might force them out of the train for carrying the dead baby, the couple put the deceased in one of their bags. After reaching their destination the couple were shifted to a transit centre. In the evening, the body was found by someone at the centre and police were informed. Police seized the body and interrogated the couple. After the postmortem, the couple were sent to their village along with the body. Further investigation will follow once the postmortem report is handed over to the police" (Odisha 2020; in Ray-Bennett 2025, p.108).

Case 8:

"In the Ganjam district of Odisha, a critically ill man died despite the arrival of the 108 ambulance (PNN, 2020). His family members watched him die helplessly after a 108-ambulance refused to carry the person to the hospital, suspecting him of suffering from COVID-19. According to the deceased son: "The 108 ambulance employees said the 104 ambulances will arrive at our house and carry my father to the hospital. But the 104-ambulance reached here late, and in the meantime, my father was dead." After the media highlighted the issue, The Ganjam District Collector issued an order stating that all 108/104 ambulances will be used for shifting suspected COVID-19 cases to the appropriate health facility during emergencies in adhering to IPC guidelines of COVID-19" (PNN 2020; in Ray-Bennett 2025, p.108).

Case 9:

"A 30-year-old pregnant woman requiring urgent medical attention in the eighth month of her pregnancy died in Ghaziabad (Nation, 2020e). The deceased and her husband travelled from one hospital to another for 13 h. Eight hospitals, including the government ones, had allegedly turned them away. The deceased brother-in-law said: "We want justice [...]. A penalty on hospitals is not justice. [...]. A patient should get admitted to a hospital and get treatment. [...] Life and death are in the hands of the Almighty, but at least they can try. [...] Nobody should die because of lack of treatment or health care" (Nation 2020e; in Ray-Bennett 2025, p.110).

Case 10:

"A 35-year-old man was bathing in a village pond when a snake approached and bit him. After being bitten, he immediately got out of the pond and rode his motorbike towards the nearest health facility, approximately 10 km from his home. About five minutes away from

the hospital, he collapsed on the road. Bystanders rushed to help and found him unconscious, with froth coming from his mouth. By the time he was taken to the hospital, he was pronounced dead. He had been bitten by a venomous snake. He is survived by his wife and their two-year-old child." (source: the deceased colleague told this story to the author)

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