

**Training Initiatives on Total Disaster Risk Management :
Experiences of UNDP-Nepal
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Overview

Considering the immediate and long-term benefits of human resource development in disaster reduction in Nepal, UNDP, supported by UN OCHA Asian Disaster Response Unit, organized a national training workshop on Total Disaster Risk Management in Kathmandu, Nepal, on 11-14 May 2003. This training workshop endeavored to orient select disaster management professionals with the TDRM Approach towards the development of a local disaster risk management plan. It ought to allow the sharing of local knowledge and experience, assessing current capacities and practices, and identifying relevant issues and concerns for strategic planning.

For its development objective, the training programme aimed at enhancing the local capacity and proficiency in the TDRM Approach, with focus on critical factors, including policy and plan development, disaster assessment, and information systems for disaster risk reduction. The training workshop participants were selected professionals from government and non governmental agencies in Nepal, who were willing to assume leadership challenges, to commit themselves to implementing the TDRM Approach locally, and to share their experiences with other sectors and communities.

Specifically, the expected outputs of the training programme were the following (1) a set of reference materials on the topic presentations, including TDRM, GIS, and disaster assessment, and the executive summary of the proceedings of the training sessions; (2) at least 22 local disaster management practitioners and professionals shall have participated and their understanding, knowledge and skills on TDRM enhanced; and (3) the establishment of a collaborative network of advocates and practitioners of the TDRM Approach.

Training programme design

The training programme combined two component training activities: topic presentations and working group discussions.

Topic Presentations. These were intended to review the concepts of disaster and risk and the essentials of the Total Disaster Risk Management Approach. This training component also presented the national and international situations, the backdrop against which TDRM is being pursued, including the prevailing practices, standards, systems and technology for disaster risk management. Moreover, this training component facilitated the sharing of experiences and conveyed to the participants the importance of a holistic and integrated approach to the disaster problem.

- *Understanding Disaster and Risk: Basic Concepts, Terminologies and Definitions*
- *Essentials of Disaster Management: An Introduction*
- *Disaster Management in Nepal: An Overview of Local Disasters and Existing Disaster Management Practices*
- *The Enormity of the Disaster Problem: Global and Regional Perspectives*
- *Towards Total Disaster Risk Management: An Introduction to the Concept and Approach*

- *Advantages and Benefits of Pursuing the TDRM Approach in Nepal*
- *Disaster Assessments: Importance of Accurate Information and Efficient and Effective Communication in Reducing Disaster Risks*
- *Geographic Information System: Overview of Information Technology for Disaster Risk Management*
- *Applying Geographic Information System (GIS) in Total Disaster Risk Management*
- *Modes of Information Gathering and Analysis for GIS: Examples and Case Demonstrations*
- *Essentials of Disaster Risk Management Planning*

Working Group Discussions. The WGDs were designed to elicit local perspectives, knowledge and information on certain issues and concerns, and to facilitate the development of a strategic planning process towards the formulation of a local disaster risk management plan. There were seven WGDs:

- *WGD I: Assessing the Strengths and Weaknesses of Existing Disaster Management Policies, Programs and Systems*
- *WGD II: Strategies for Enhancing the Strengths and Overcoming the Weaknesses of Disaster Management at the National and Local Levels*
- *WGD III: Local Application of the TDRM Implementation Strategies*
- *WGD IV: Strategies for Ensuring Efficient and Effective Communication of Disaster Risk Information to Concerned Sectors and the General Public*
- *WGD V: Hazard Mapping and Vulnerability Assessment for Disaster Risk Management Planning*
- *WGD VI: Determining Priorities for Disaster Risk Planning*

Training process and methodology

Designed to pave the way for the formulation of a Disaster Risk Management Plan, the entire training workshop adopted the following development process: 1). Conceptual Review, 2.) Situational Assessment, 3) Approach and Strategy Development, and 4) Planning: Identification of Relevant Issues, Concerns and Possible Courses of Action.

The training methodology combined different effective teaching and learning techniques, including lectures and topic presentations on concepts, approaches and best practices, and group discussions.

Participants' impression of the training programme

Three participants volunteered to express their impressions on the outcome of the training workshop:

Mr. Jeevan Shrestha of DWIDP expressed his appreciation for the training workshop and considered the exercise important and helpful in their present efforts to reduce disasters and prevent the loss of lives in Nepal. He cited the need for improving coordination among government agencies and the private organizations. He cited also the importance of the planning process, which he recommended for adoption by the respective agencies and organizations of the participants.

Mr. Hari Neupane, president of NRCS Chitwan, described the training workshop as very

interesting, where he had learned new concepts, new methods, and new techniques. He stated that the training would help make the participants more productive in their respective activities on disaster management. He expressed appreciation for the initiative and efforts of UNDP and looked forward to the pilot project on TDRM at the community level.

Prof. Jiba Pokhrel, dean of the Institute of Engineering, stated that the discussions in the training workshop were fruitful and many important themes were covered. He explained the critical role of engineering academicians and students in TDRM, particularly in hazard mapping and risk analysis in the field. He further explained the feasibility of enabling the students to conduct these activities in their respective hometowns, and to promote effectively TDRM and disaster risk management planning, since they enjoy the respect of their community. He said it was heartening to have been shared the concept of integration and the wisdom of the holistic approach in TDRM. He conveyed that the training exercise has been a memorable and exuberating experience and a unique opportunity to work as a team. He thanked his group members and the resource persons for the shared knowledge and experience.