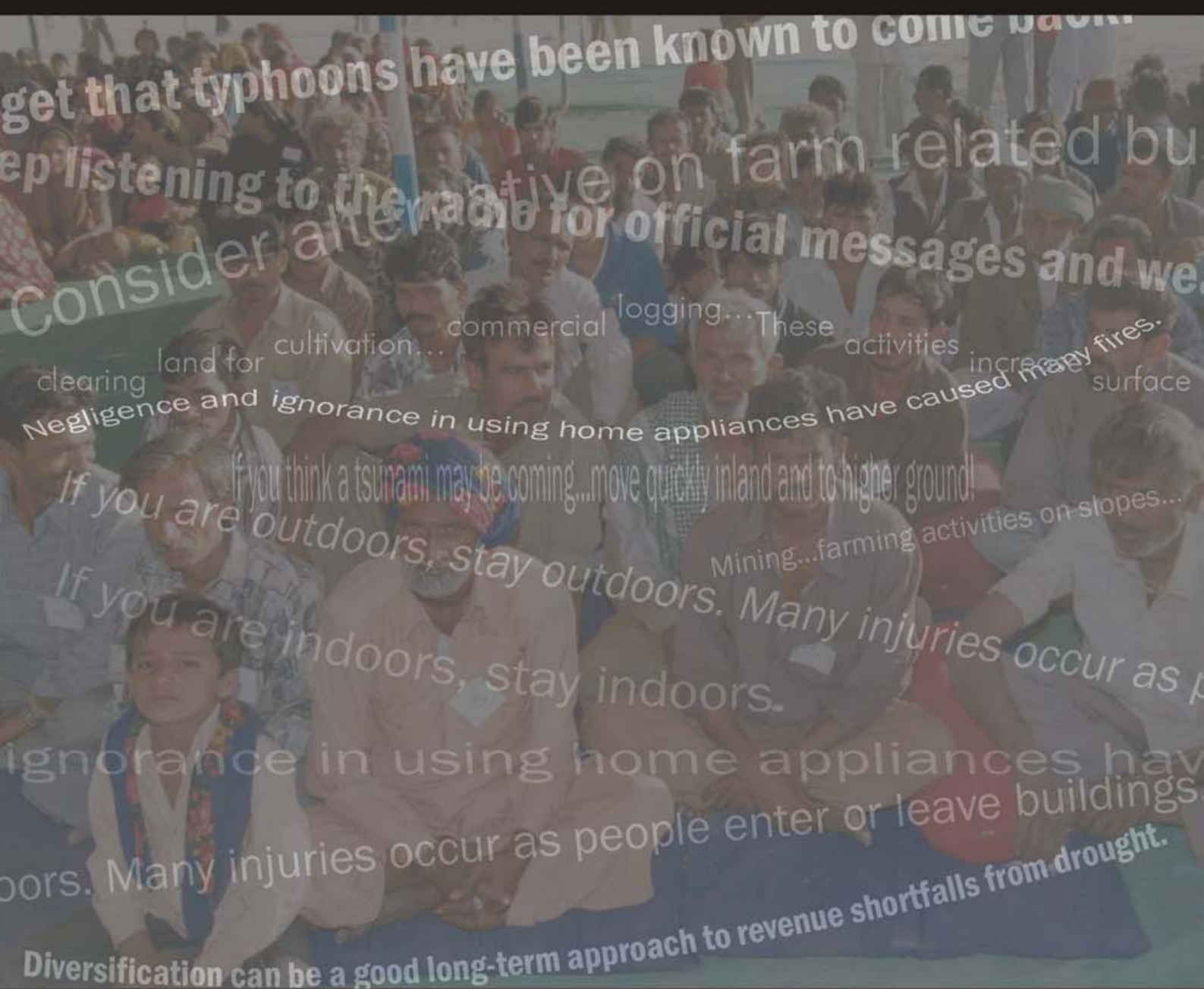


# Learn to Manage Your Own Risk:

## Tips from Asian Disaster Reduction Training



From an Effort to Turn Local Tsunami Recovery into Regional Disaster Risk Reduction for the Poor



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**VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES AT THE CENTER OF RESULTS**

**B**road-based social and economic participation is essential to the success of any international Community Economic Development project.

In the field of disaster risk management, in particular, genuine community participation, especially of vulnerable groups, is critical to building resilience. AIDMI has developed a Community-based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) curriculum centered on participation that it has used to train over 6000 leaders of communities, civil society and government throughout South Asia.

This issue of *southasiadisasters.net* builds on the July Special Edition on resilience as the outcome of successful CBDRM. The August issue focuses on how AIDMI and its partners have implemented their training strategy—CBDRM—throughout South Asia. Communities from Tamil Nadu to Bangladesh to Kathmandu have achieved resilience—the aim of disaster risk management—by involving all social groups in the process. A key theme is the importance of evaluating results, in order to continuously improve the disaster management toolkit.

Both AIDMI's emphasis on course improvement through evaluation of impact and its participatory training methods are central to the learning approach of the School of Community Economic Development at Southern New Hampshire University where several professionals involved in the tsunami recovery have received their graduate training. This publication explores ways to deliver training more effectively by assessing short-term outputs, medium-term outcomes, and long-term impact.

The first article analyses AIDMI's March 2007 evaluation of its two types of training: its local training programmes; and its national courses targeted at government, civil society and donor representatives.

One key finding is that community leaders are acting as microinsurance peer educators, as a result of local and national capacity building. Consequently, they have raised awareness of disaster insurance among the affected populations in India. They are increasingly taking out new policies—such as *Afat Vimo*—to protect themselves against disasters and accidents.

The Tsunami Evaluation Coalition helps to further refine the training package. Validating CBDRM principles, TEC recommends that NGOs train local leaders in techniques to enable disaster-affected people to express themselves to make their own choices regarding the rebuilding process. Furthermore, TEC advocates for local government and NGOs to widen their focus beyond aid to disaster victims to change underlying patterns of social exclusion and inequality.

This issue also features an article on the importance of advocacy as a mechanism for integrating CBDRM into government policy. Examples from the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) illustrate how advocacy has raised the priority that local and national governments give to disaster safety. In Dagupan City in the Philippines, community advocacy has pushed city government to reduce vulnerability to flooding and earthquakes through the creation of an annual "Dagupan City Disaster Preparedness Day." Every year, recognition of this day weaves disaster management more finely into the cultural fabric of the community.

The issue ties together the two central themes of community participation and achievement of "Resilient communities as a result of successful CBDRM Implementation," the title of the last article. Only authentic participation of the most vulnerable groups creates true community resilience against disasters. ■

**Catherine Rielly, PhD**, International Academic Program Chair, School of Community Economic Development, Southern New Hampshire University, USA.

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# CBDRM as a Disaster Reduction Approach is on a Tipping Point

Having worked in promoting this practice for more than a decade—I am pleased to note the richness and variety of experiences described in this AIDMI publication. The Community based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) approach has indeed gone a long way from the period of skepticism that greeted early adopters among NGOs in the mid-1990s and the dominance of the agenda of science and technology in the previous IDNDR setting.

*Or has it? Where is CBDRM in the political agenda of disaster risk reduction? Do we have a common vision of where we are going with the CBDRM practice?*

I recall that CBDRM practice was started when the dominant paradigm was provision of emergency relief assistance where affected communities were labeled as helpless "victims". In some countries, CBDRM was also introduced where structural mitigation measures dominated the stakeholders' agenda, with community participation taken as a token step—to show that people were consulted in the construction of flood control and other non—structural measures etc.

Readers will find a variety of experiences in this paper. This gives an impression of increasing importance of CBDRM practice in overall efforts in disaster risk reduction. In this edition, we see various applications: in microfinance, sustainable livelihood, contingency planning, advocacy, post-disaster

recovery and enhancing accountability and transparency. Credit is due to AIDMI and the civil societies who have produced these meaningful results. The edition clearly presents a good case for continuing support to CBDRM.

Those who have a strong stake in how CBDRM practice would continue—such as the international community and government officials—should take note that despite good practices in CBDRM, this approach continues to compete for scarce resources with other areas on the disaster risk management agenda, locally and internationally. Due to scarce resources allocated to the broader and proactive disaster risk management, it is inevitable that the politics of resource allocation would play into the future of CBDRM. Public figures and practitioners of CBDRM must continue to advocate sustaining CBDRM efforts through legislation, funding, training, partnership, information sharing and other enabling mechanisms.

Our experience in Asia shows that when CBDRM was first systematically introduced (albeit this has been an ancient and ongoing practice of vulnerable communities), it was demand-driven. At the same time, donor focus was in favor of training UN and government officials in emergency response, search and rescue, and urban planning. One should ask, "What is the current and future commitment of resource holders to CBDRM?"

The contributors of this publication indicate an increase in funding CBDRM. Surely, this is welcome in the recognition that—in spite of indigenous coping mechanisms—poor communities lack the resources and can be overwhelmed with the magnitude and intensities of major disasters. With increased opportunities offered by funding agencies, practitioners should examine the vision of CBDRM. *Do we promote self-reliance or further dependency from outside help? What principles we have learned that will guide us in the future?*

It should also not escape notice that there is an increase of disaster management training institutes at all levels national, regional, and international. Also increasing, as one article here indicates, is the demand for training of more practitioners who will use standardised guidelines for CBDRM. In many tsunami-affected countries, there is an increase of NGOs involved in this practice. One government official describes this as "proliferation of CBDRM", with a rather unpleasant tone. In my experience, the increase of these institutes is dramatic if not phenomenal. Inevitably, there is an increase in competition; the politics of resources and the dynamics of working with communities. This will again influence which approach will be dominant in the next few years. *Where do we go from here?* ■

**Sanny R. Jegillos,**

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# Communities at the Base of Disaster Risk Management

How can disasters be best managed? What kind of means do the government, communities and individuals have to reduce disaster risks and to develop effective response and prevention?

In the past two decades, practitioners in the areas of development and disaster management have increased efforts to involve the communities in their activities. This "bottom-up" approach is considered to be more effective in producing long-term results and sustainability in their efforts. Likewise, it is important to involve the members of the community in planning and managing disaster risks.

In the 1980s, the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), jointly with organisations in South Asia, like All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI) or Duryog Nivaran, designed a course model and conducted sessions for community-based disaster risk management (CBDRM) with the aim to put local communities in the centre of disaster risk management efforts and involve them actively.

## What does CBDRM mean?

The abbreviation CBDRM stands for Community-based Disaster Risk Management and describes a process in which at-risk communities are actively engaged in the identification, analysis, treatment, monitoring and evaluation of disaster risks in order to reduce their vulnerabilities and enhance their capacities. Ideally, this means that people are at the heart of decision-making and implementation of disaster risk management activities.



All photographs in this issue: AIDMI

*Remember when this was a road?*

The involvement of the most vulnerable social groups—those often excluded from public efforts—in the process is very important and necessary for successful implementation. In this perspective, governments and non-governmental organisations play a supportive role through:

- a. providing information,
- b. organising and strengthening community groups,
- c. giving financial and technical assistance, and
- d. building linkages and supporting complementarity between groups.

## Key concepts about CBDRM

Key concepts of CBDRM speak of a disaster when a hazard impact a "vulnerable" community and cause damage, casualties and disruption. Vulnerability is a set of prevailing or consequential conditions, which adversely affect the community's ability to prevent, mitigate, prepare for and respond to hazardous events. Wisner et al. (2004)<sup>1</sup> consider three

elements in the disaster context and schematise their relations in the following pseudo-equation:  $R = H \times V$ , meaning Risk = Hazard  $\times$  Vulnerability.

This political economic approach understands disasters as influenced by the human-nature relation, by the environment as well as by the socio-political structure of society. This approach recognises that disasters are not only naturally caused but also influenced by human's actions, politics and historical-structural processes.

To be able to respond to a disaster efficiently, communities and households need capacities which enable them to cope with, be prepared for, and quickly recover from disaster.

In a formula, one can say:

$$\frac{\text{Hazard} \times \text{Vulnerability}}{\text{Capacity}}$$

1 See Wisner, B.; Blaikie, P.; et al. 2004: "At risk. Natural hazards, people's vulnerability and disasters." London: Blackwell

**Results and Impacts of the LCBCs on the Regional Risk Transfer Initiative:**

Area of Analysis	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
RRTI LCBC	Community leaders who live in disaster prone areas are aware of the disaster insurance. Community leaders and field staff act as peer educator in their own communities	Insurance is considered important among the poor of the communities. Increase in the number of people who take out insurance policies like <i>Afat Vimo</i> . A knowledge based on disaster insurance is created.	Communities are able to protect their livelihoods after disasters in a sustainable manner.
Beneficiary Reach	Direct Beneficiaries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AIDMI field staff, volunteers, Community leaders</li> <li>AIDMI: research findings, publications</li> </ul>	Direct beneficiaries: Disaster affected population across Gujarat and other states, national disaster aid agencies, possibly insurance companies	Broader society
Time frame	0-1 year after the completion of the training programme	0-3 years after the achievement of outputs	More than 3 years. Trainings are expected to contribute to the impact, but the achievement of the impact will go beyond the time frame of the project and will depend on other factors.

Source: A Review of AIDMI's training activities with a special focus on Local Capacity Building Cycles on Disaster Risk Transfer. AIDMI. April 2007.

Therefore, Disaster Risk Reduction includes all measures which reduce disaster-related risks to the loss of life, property or assets by reducing the vulnerability (or hazard) of the elements at risk and increasing the coping capacities.

In community-based disaster risk reduction, the emphasis is on involving the community in all steps of the process from prevention of to recovery from a disaster.

This approach considers the local people and the necessity to increase their coping mechanisms of every day life as well as to reduce their contextual vulnerability to disasters.

**Why is a Community-based approach for disaster risk management essential?**

The importance of community-based approaches has been recognised in promoting a culture of safety through supporting the removal of local vulnerabilities and building capacities. The practice of this



*Fish is one of the most important components of livelihood security among the communities of Tamil Nadu.*

approach includes the organisational mandates of the concerned organisations, socio-cultural context of the communities, levels of economic development of communities, political structures in a country and multiplicity in funding cycles of donor organisations. Another key trend in the recent years has been the efforts by NGOs, UN and other international organisations to mobilise government support for CBDRM in policy, planning and programming.

Concerning outcomes, after the CBDRM implementation, communities should be identified by having<sup>2</sup>:

- 1) Community-based organisation (CBO)
- 2) Community disaster risk reduction fund
- 3) Community Hazard, Vulnerability, Capacity map (HVCM)
- 4) Community disaster risk management plan
- 5) CBO training system
- 6) Community drills system
- 7) Community learning system
- 8) Community early warning system.

To make CBDRM successful, it is important that the practitioners have a clear concept and strategy and keep the methodology simple. It is also important to get support from local and national governments by convincing them about the importance of involving the community and giving them leadership roles in disaster response and preparedness. To sustain the CBDRM implementation, the local facilitators and local government officials need to be involved in trainings to ensure their sense of belonging to the programme. Financial aspects must be open and transparent. ■

<sup>2</sup> Source: Critical Guidelines: Community-based disaster risk management. Asian Disaster Preparedness Center ADPC, 2006, Bangkok, Thailand.

## The Local and National Capacity Building Trainings of All India Disaster Mitigation Institute

**Community Capacity Building Cycles** prepare community leaders to build their safer future. Focus is given to leaders of communities in disaster-prone or "vulnerable" areas. Local knowledge and local individual capabilities are central to the capacity building activities. AIDMI's trainings utilise a balance of community-based application approaches and scientific/academic concepts. Participatory and innovative learning methods are used.

So far, 237 cycles on 34 subjects have reached out 6132 leaders from self-help groups, urban slum volunteers, school teachers, panchayati raj institutions, community-based organisations, and other communities in many



*Life-saving skills can be shared through training events.*

cities and towns in the Indian states of Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Kashmir.

**The National Course Series** brings recent local and regional experience to key actors in the field of risk management. Disaster managers and individuals with field experience who design, implement, and evaluate humanitarian action efforts are invited to this series, as are members of national governments, donors and civil society representatives involved in disaster mitigation and preparedness. Each course is addressed to meet specific needs and contents are reviewed by practitioners and experts. Post-course services are provided on a demand basis.



*Social worker devise preparedness plans for a municipality in a national level training.*

### **Following 34 subjects have been covered in Local Capacity Building Cycles of AIDMI:**

- Community Based Disaster Relief and Response
- Community Based Disaster Risk Management
- Community Based Disaster Risk Mitigation
- Community Initiative: Risk Transfer through Insurance
- Disaster and Mental Health
- Disaster Mitigation with Children
- Disaster Preparedness for Schools
- Emergency Food Security: Action and Research
- Emergency Medical Disaster Response (First Aid)
- GIS Software Training
- Gujarat Flood Response: Need and Damage Assessment
- HIV and Humanitarian Response: Mitigation matters
- Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standard in Disaster Response
- Incident Command System
- Leadership in Peace Building
- Moving out from Poverty: Risk Reduction
- Moving out of Hazard and GIS
- Multi-hazard Disaster Preparedness for School
- Participatory Appraisal of Recovery
- Participatory Rural Risk Appraisal Tools
- Risk Transfer through Financial Services
- Risk Transfer through Micro Credit
- Role and Importance of Community Resource Centre
- Safer Building Construction
- Scientific Awareness for School Safety
- Tool Testing and Tool Development Workshop on Women led Multi-hazard Disaster Mitigation
- Understanding Disaster Risk Reduction: Hyogo Framework
- Urban Food Insecurity
- Urban Town Planning and Poor
- Urban Water Audit and Resource Assessment with Sphere Standards
- Women led Disaster Mitigation and Preparedness
- Women led Disaster Relief and Response
- Women led Emergency Medical Response
- Women led Multi-hazard Disaster Mitigation

The national courses have covered topics as Disaster Risk Reduction and Transfer in Tsunami Recovery; Community Based Disaster Risk Mitigation, Management and Preparedness; Slum Recovery Monitoring; Livelihood Relief after Earthquake; and Urban Vulnerability Assessment for Mainstreaming Mitigation.

#### **Review of AIDMI's Local Capacity Building Cycles (LCBCs) and National Courses**

In March 2007, AIDMI evaluated its local and national training efforts. The aim was to review the series with special focus on ten local trainings on disaster insurance and to propose applicable recommendations to enhance the effectiveness and impact of these trainings.

LCBCs are the most numerous trainings related to disaster risk reduction, conducted at the grassroots level

in India. Regarding the micro-insurance scheme of AIDMI, *Afat Vimo*, awareness has significantly risen as well as the number of insurance policy holders. This can be attributed to the success of the training programmes that are part of the Regional Risk Transfer Initiative (RRTI).

The evaluation showed that the LCBCs and national courses are popular among participants because AIDMI integrates learning about the major human securities water, food, shelter and livelihood. Furthermore, AIDMI updates the course content regularly to add important current topics and adapt it to the local context. The LCBCs strive to raise awareness about disaster risk reduction in the communities. The developed process map for planning and implementing helps AIDMI refine the process and evaluations are done regularly. ■

## **TEC and Implications for Community Based Disaster Planning**

In 2006, the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC) began to evaluate the impact of the tsunami response as well as how humanitarian action may be more effective in future efforts. The findings show that the primary areas to focus improvement are on ownership and accountability, capacity, quality and funding. Concerning the implication for community based disaster planning (CBDP), TEC recommendations highlight involvement, cooperation and communication as well as local empowerment.

Local NGOs and community-based organisations should first be made aware of their importance in disaster reduction efforts and receive trainings. To empower affected people to articulate their claims, NGOs should train community-based organisations and local leaders in techniques to encourage disaster affected people to express themselves and to make their own choices regarding the rebuilding process.

The national government should train local officials as well as other



*AIDMI team gathered to discuss AIDMI's compliance with the most important TEC recommendations.*

political bodies to involve women in decision-making processes and to interact with women on an equal basis. NGOs and the government should train local leaders to cooperate and coordinate with the national government and to learn how to articulate particular issues - and to whom. The position and rights of marginalised groups especially should be stressed and their empowerment seen as a fundamental principle. Even the marginalised groups have a right of full access to

information regarding disasters and their possibilities to overcome it.

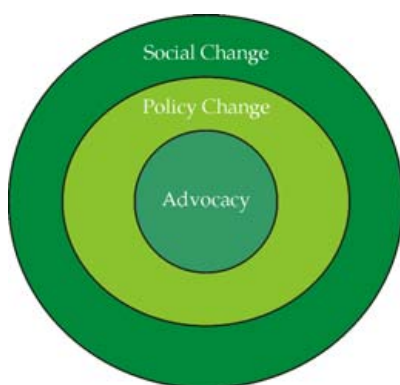
Training of local governments and local NGOs should focus not only on giving aid to disaster victims but also on changing underlying patterns of exclusion and inequality. Training of the local government and local NGOs should include the use of cash subsidies to empower affected people and to encourage them to rebuild their welfare needs based on their own priorities. ■

# Through Advocacy to Policy and Social Change

Advocacy for/with a group is a means of empowering people by supporting them to assert their views and claim their entitlements and, where necessary, representing and negotiating on their behalf. It is a process to change policy to meet the needs of the advocates. CBDRM advocacy typically revolves around communities who are disadvantaged and seek to become part of the planning and programming processes of risk reduction that may affect from the point of view of local communities and groups. Because of focussed advocacy efforts, one can influence both policy and social change.

During an advocacy initiative the following steps may be adopted:

- 1) identify policy issues
- 2) select an advocacy objective
- 3) research audiences
- 4) develop and deliver advocacy messages
- 5) understand the decision-making process
- 6) build alliances



Source: Guidebook advocacy. Integrating CBDRM into government policy and programming, ADPC, 2006, Bangkok, Thailand: p.10.

- 7) make effective presentations
- 8) fund raising for advocacy
- 9) evaluate and improve the advocacy

## Why advocate an integration of CBDRM in government planning?

Regarding disaster risk reduction, CBDRM integration into government planning will improve the efficiency of disaster risk reduction programmes and enable more people to plan for themselves and access to local funding. As it is a long-term approach, CBDRM advocacy is a commitment against poverty because it can reduce disaster risks before they happen and community members are motivated, mobilised and empowered at the local level.

## Dagupan City, Philippines: Cooperation between local Authority and Communities<sup>3</sup>

Dagupan is a city on the island of Luzon in the Philippines. Seven rivers flow through the growing city. Flooding is a common problem because rivers presently have a high sediment load and do not drain easily into the sea. Furthermore, an earthquake in July 1990 caused widespread damage and had a direct impact on the flooding situation.

The city government had recognised the importance of addressing the issue of flooding and was active in the different phases of disaster management. Even the emphasis was mostly on emergency preparedness and disaster response. In the recent years, the government shifted to a preventive focus by addressing issues of vulnerability. The city was selected to become the Philippines' demon-

stration city for the Programme for Hydro-Meteorological Disaster Mitigation in Secondary Cities in Asia, named PROMISE.

The programme promotes the adoption of specific disaster mitigation measures at the city and community level. The city recognised that it is needed to be active even where there are no emergencies and that the community must be aware of disaster risk management. To achieve this, the communities of the eight pilot *barangays* were involved in the process from the beginning. They tried to promote the spirit of cooperation between them, the city government and civic organisations.

The *barangays* organised a disaster risk management workshop as well as an early warning and evacuation workshop. All workshops were addressed to residents of each pilot *barangay* and for city officials, so that the community members have been involved in the process of disaster risk management and planning and strongly linked to the local authorities. The technical Working Group coordinated with the legislators of the city council and developed a Resolution that each year would have a Dagupan City Disaster Preparedness Day. Through this day, disaster safety becomes a part of the city's culture and helps raising awareness.

The example of the Dagupan City shows how the communities may be involved in the activities of the local government. It also shows how the advocacy process is beginning to influence policy and social change. ■

3 Safer Cities 16, AUDMP. Case studies on mitigating disasters in Asia and the Pacific. Asian Disaster Preparedness Center adpc and Governance Philippines, Programme for Hydro-meteorological Disaster Mitigation in Secondary Cities in Asia. April 2007.



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# Microfinance Helping the Members of a Community to Develop Business<sup>4</sup>

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Small Businesses (CCISB) was established in 2004. It is a community based organisation that provides services to its members. The two most important activities CCISB offers are the Revolving Fund and *Afat Vimo* - disaster insurance.

The Revolving Fund is a microcredit loan given to small-scale businesspersons. The loans support economic recovery from large- and small-scale disasters as well as business development. To access the Revolving Fund, the CCISB members approaches one of the chambers' volunteers and ask to become a beneficiary of the Revolving Fund. The team then assesses the member to find out if she is a good candidate for the Revolving Fund, and discuss with the other members who have more knowledge about the candidate. If they decide that this person is a good candidate, they write an application together with the CCISB member and send the application to Ahmedabad, as well as papers to the bank to start the bank process. After the application has been approved in Ahmedabad, the draft is sent back to Bhuj where the loan is given to the member. This is done with in front of two witnesses.

Recipients of these loans are poor and operate below the mainstream financial radar. They often lack collateral, steady employment and a verifiable credit history, making it impossible for them to access traditional credit from banks. Most of the microcredit schemes charge interest rates, but there are schemes—such as CCISB's Revolving Fund—that find other ways to cover the



*Zarinaben Kasam takes a loan to support expansion of her small business. Higher and diversified income increases her family's resilience to hazards such as the droughts that are common in Kutch.*

interest rate, and therefore do not charge this interest.

Microinsurance is a relatively new activity within the area of microfinance and gives poor clients an opportunity to get insurance to protect them against disasters and accidents. The *Afat Vimo* scheme is a low premium insurance policy that covers policyholders for losses incurred in the case of 19 hazards, among them earthquake, cyclone, fire, floods and various other disasters are included. For this coverage, the policyholders have to pay an annual premium ranging from Rs. 200 to Rs. 235 (~US\$5.00). For this, they get coverage of upto Rs. 95000 (~US\$2375). These microfinance activities enable poor people to engage in self-empowering projects that allow them to generate an income, hopefully begin to build wealth, eventually exit poverty and create development.

In April 2007, a review of the CCISB was carried out by All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI). The goal of this review was to provide input to CCISB on how to upscale and improve the impact of the Revolving Fund, and provide input regarding their own organisation. In total, 30 people were interviewed, 25 of them were members of CCISB who also were recipients of the Revolving Fund, and five others were CCISB volunteers, team members and treasurer. The impact of the fund is positive. All those interviewed stated that their monthly income had increased after participation in the Revolving Fund. For some, monthly income was doubled; the majority of them had also started saving on a regular basis. Furthermore, there was a clear positive impact for the beneficiaries' well being and social skills as many said that they had learned how to discuss and express themselves in a better way. ■

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4 This article is taken from: Disaster Recovery of Small Businesses through CCISB. AIDMI. 2007.

# Learning about Disaster Risks as a Means to Community Empowerment

For communities, it is important to get information, formation and structures to strengthen their capacities to face disaster risks. Courses on CBDRM are an important tool to help bring the management of disasters to the communities.

## About CBDRM Courses and Workshops

There are several courses about CBDRM offered by diverse organisations in South Asia. One of them is designed by the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), which was established in 1986 and is a regional, inter-governmental, non-profit organisation and resource centre based in Bangkok. AIDMI, Gujarat, is a community based action research, action planning and action advocacy organisation, offers a diversity of CBDRM courses at local, national and regional level. In this article, a general idea of CBDRM training content and lessons to be learned in these courses will be given.

## Content and lessons to be learned in CBDRM courses

CBDRM courses target community leaders and practitioners and consist of several modules. These are usually updated from time to time. The courses have duration from two to ten days. Most of them include theoretical frameworks and information, group exercises, and practical exercises or fieldwork. Much of the learning takes place through reflection, and interactive. A trend to increase participation by students is resulting in more self-instruction methods, resulting in a variety of training/workshop hybrids.

To begin, the courses give information about the current context of CBDRM, the situation in the Asian

Pacific Region and define terms like "vulnerability", "capacity", "risk" and "disaster".

Following this, the CBDRM framework is explained as well as the community based disaster risk management process.

The main part of the courses are concerned to community risk assessments and the participants develop hazard, vulnerability and capacity assessments under supervision of course facilitators. This helps participants become familiar with these tools. Furthermore, participatory rapid appraisal tools are explained and practiced through exercises.

During AIDMI's workshops concerning risk assessment, the participants are split into three groups and asked to reflect on their situation, regarding hazards, vulnerability and capacity. After they

have noted their results, they present it to the other groups so that every participant gets to know which hazards they identified in their community, how vulnerability can be reduced and how capacities can be increased.

Another important session deals with community risk reduction planning. At the end of this course, participants should be able to explain the importance of participatory community risk reduction planning and be able to identify the main parts of the community based risk reduction plan.

To end the course, the emphasis is on CBDRM implementation. Specific examples are given on mitigation measures, community trainings, strengthening livelihood, emergency preparedness, early warning systems and improvement of public awareness. ■

Type of Disaster	Encouraging factors / Power of disaster	Preventing actions	Speed up Relief	Time between knowing and happening disaster	How many times the disaster is happening	Normal Disaster time Period	How long Disaster Effect lasts
FLOODS	Lot of life loss, food, Shelter, dress loss happened Tele Communication cut out Transport facilities Utterance Problem, Education land life problem	Build house in higher place Drainage Before rain Clean and deep the Ponds and Wells.	Food and Water giving, affected people make live in good place. Medical help giving.	2 days	Yearly Once	September October November	1 Week
Cyclone	lot of life loss, food, shelter, dress loss happened Tele Communication cut out, Transport facilities Problem Cultivation Land education normal life problems	Living Warning about cyclone shifting People to safe place Not allowing fishermen go to sea.	Food and Water giving, affected Peoples make live in good Place first and giving etc	5 days	Yearly Twice	September October November	1 Week

Understanding and anticipating hazards and your response to them helps you make good choices about prevention and emergency action.

# The Importance of Livelihood Security to Strengthen Communities

Livelihood security is one of the key areas of strengthening local capacities and community-led disaster management. The livelihoods approach is a way of thinking about the objectives, scope and priorities for development. A specific livelihoods framework and objectives have been developed to assist with implementation. In essence, it is a way of putting people at the centre of development, thereby increasing the effectiveness of development assistance.



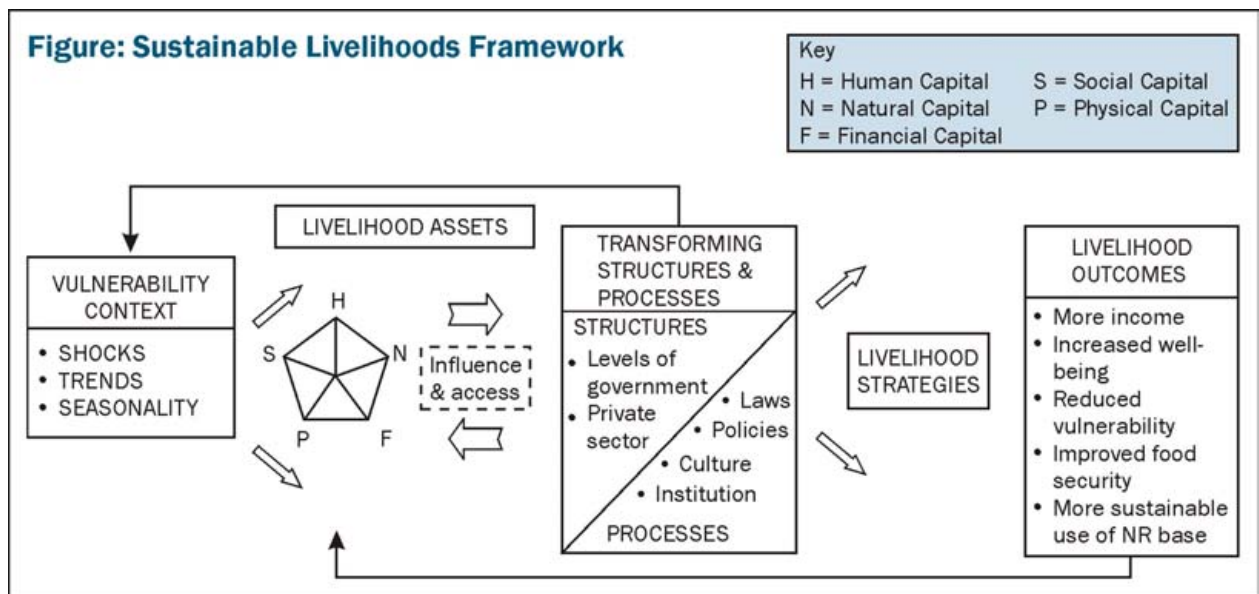
Mrs. Termozhi gets vegetables from the village leader as part of a livelihood support programme in Tamil Nadu. She will sell this stock and use some of her income to purchase subsequent stock.

The framework<sup>5</sup>, which is presented in schematic form below, has been developed to help understand and analyse the livelihoods of the poor. It is also useful in assessing the effectiveness of existing efforts to reduce poverty. Like all frameworks, it is a simplification; the full diversity and richness of livelihoods can be understood only by qualitative and participatory analysis at a local level.

The framework shows the relation between the vulnerability context, livelihood assets of people and households, structures and processes; and shows that the livelihood outcomes—resulting from livelihood

strategies, influenced by the mentioned factors—have an impact on livelihood assets.

To improve the situation of the poor, the most direct influence can be made



Adapted from Chambers, R. and G. Conway (1992) *Sustainable rural livelihoods: Practical concepts for the 21st century*. IDS Discussion Paper 296. Brighton: IDS.

Source: DFID, Department for International Development, Great Britain: *Sustainable livelihoods guidance sheets*, 1997.

<sup>5</sup> Source: DFID, Department for International Development, Great Britain: *Sustainable livelihoods guidance sheets*, 1997.

by strengthening livelihood assets. To achieve this, the vulnerability context as well as structures and processes have to be transformed. Regarding the vulnerability context, disaster risks have to be mitigated and reduced through prevention measures and preparedness. To transform structures and processes, institutions, organisations and policies must be willing to consider the needs of the poor and to implement structures in their favour.

The livelihood assets are the part in the framework that is directly influenced by the vulnerability context as well as structures and processes. Human capital represents the skills, knowledge, ability to labour and good health that together enable people to pursue different livelihood strategies and achieve their livelihood objectives. Of all the five livelihood building blocks, social capital is the most intimately connected to Transforming Structures and Processes. Social capital can be understood as networks and connectedness that increase people's trust and ability to work together and expand their access to wider institutions, such as political or civic bodies.

Furthermore, it can be a membership of more formalised groups that often entails adherence to mutually agreed or commonly accepted rules, norms and sanctions as well as relationships of trust, reciprocity and exchanges that facilitate co-operation, reduce transaction costs and may provide the basis for informal safety nets amongst the poor. Natural capital is the term used for the natural resource stocks from which resource flows and services (e.g. nutrient cycling, erosion protection) useful for livelihoods are derived. There is a wide variation in the resources that make up natural capital, from intangible public goods such as the atmosphere and biodiversity to divisible assets used directly for production (trees, land, etc.).

Within the sustainable livelihoods framework, the relationship between natural capital and the Vulnerability Context is particularly close. Many of the shocks that devastate the livelihoods of the poor are themselves natural processes that destroy natural capital (e.g. fires that destroy forests, floods and earthquakes that destroy agricultural land) and seasonality is largely due to changes in the value or productivity of natural capital over the year. Physical capital comprises the basic infrastructure and producer goods needed to support livelihoods.

The following components of infrastructure are usually essential for sustainable livelihoods: affordable transport; secure shelter and buildings; adequate water supply and sanitation; clean, affordable energy; and access to information (communications). Financial capital denotes the financial resources that people use to achieve their livelihood objectives. There are two main sources of financial capital: available stocks as savings and the regular inflows of money like pensions or remittances.

To understand the livelihood context in a broader way, the four overlapping existing perspectives should be considered: social, economic, institu-

tional and environmental perspective. To make an effective, overall contribution to the operationalisation of sustainable livelihood (SL) and poverty elimination, livelihoods analysis should be conducted with partners and be informed by a few core ideas.

- Effort should be devoted to identifying and understanding the livelihood circumstances of marginalised and excluded groups.
- There is a need for disaggregation - into men, women, different age groups, etc. It is not sufficient to take the household as the sole unit of analysis.
- The SL approach seeks to build upon people's strengths and resourcefulness; we should avoid thinking only about need.

When put to use in the disaster context, the framework should be adapted to fit the specific local situation. This is especially helpful in supporting recovery that helps community members to assess needs, analyse options, and plan efforts to restore livelihoods. If done correctly, activities towards livelihood security can be implemented with the inputs of communities and be set up in a sustainable manner. ■



Mrs. Kavita has chosen to earn her way by collecting and selling fire wood.

# Safer Livelihood Practices in Tamil Nadu after the 2004 Tsunami

The Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004 destroyed a wide range of shelters and livelihood items of those who lived near the sea. The communities were hit hard, but they were not hopeless. They built on their capacity to respond and even fight back better. An excellent example is seen in the urban city of Chennai; here, due to tsunami waves, many urban citizens lost their fishing businesses.

The Centre of Indian Trade Union (CITU) works for the welfare of the labourers. They decided to improve the situation of workers and to give them an alternative livelihood income. Under a project sponsored by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) they identified and trained women members by the experts to work and manufacture dish cleaning powders, detergents, acid, and toilet cleaning liquids.

Forty-seven women united and worked in the project of CITU as a federation at a small chemical unit. This federation was supported with raw material and a "safe livelihoods kit" by AIDMI. The focus of the intervention is to practice safe action and create a safe atmosphere at work; safety in the workplace could lead these women to sustained economic recovery. The community has now a better understanding of the usage of safety kits while working. Safety has increased and there is lower danger of injury. Thus, better economic recovery for women members is achieved. Members have enough work, a potential market, a marketing strategy, and existing capacities to work in a safe way.



*Gloves are used as safety measures while toilet cleaning liquid is being packed in bottles. It will earn them livelihood.*

The Safety kit was designed by the community and the key trainer. This was essential to ensure the members safety and to raise their awareness. Furthermore, the women members are now part of a group insurance scheme and are covered for life and non-life insurance.

Some key lessons of this initiative are listed below:

1. Some communities affected by disasters are eager to participate in the process of livelihood recovery.
2. Income from this initiative is helpful in coping with household situations in a much better way. Some have managed to repay large loans taken from money-lenders and to pay fees for higher education to their children.
3. Women members are self-reliant and managing the household economy. Those who are widows or separated were in great difficulty and are now better off.

4. Women members have improved social skills compared to those who are not part of the project.
5. Mitigation measures i.e. safety kits, fire extinguishers, and microinsurance are added benefits for the members to ensure their safety and lower disaster risk at the work site.
6. Members explore market possibilities on their own, including going to the field for marketing and selling of the products. This helps gain perspective and develop strategies.

As many projects in tsunami recovery have focused on relief, this initiative shows how community members can be supported to rebuild their livelihood in a way that give them more than just recovery. The women also learned a lot about safety standards, marketing their products and becoming self-reliant with a small business. ■

# National Disaster Preparedness should Integrate Communities' Initiatives: Example of Bangladesh<sup>6</sup>

Bangladesh is located in the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna system, the second largest river system in the world. All three rivers flow through Bangladesh, carrying 1,250 billion cubic metres of water. This makes the country very vulnerable to floods, cyclones, riverbank erosion, landslides, storms as well as tsunamis. As Bangladesh is lying in the Himalaya region, an active tectonic zone, it is also often hit by earthquakes. Further natural hazards are droughts and salinity. The World Bank's Global Risk Analysis (World Bank 2005) placed Bangladesh in a list of 60 countries which face two or more hazards per year. The UNDP disaster vulnerability index (2004) placed Bangladesh among the most vulnerable to disasters and notes that they have the highest disaster mortality rate in the world.

The legal responsibility to protect vulnerable people lies on the government. However, in Bangladesh, limited resources and lack of regional cooperation are factors limiting government performance in disaster reduction. Although a disaster-prone country, Bangladesh did not have a formal disaster preparedness plan either at national nor district levels until recently. *Recommendations on Options for Flood Risk and Damage Reduction*, a national water management plan, and an integrated coastal zone management plan exist but are not yet implemented.

So the communities collectively, and their members individually, develop their own coping mechanisms to address disasters and have drawn up their own preparedness plans

## Duryog Nivaran - a network for effective disaster preparedness



Duryog Nivaran is a network of around 50 individual institutional members working in South Asia to promote disaster preparedness and risk reduction initiatives. They emphasise measures that are based on vulnerability analysis and community participation. The network initially focussed on five themes: understanding vulnerability; understanding social linkages; promoting accountability; promoting regional cooperation; and promoting traditional knowledge and capacities.

From its inception in 1996, the network members have contributed to its success by

- Publications - SADR, Compendium;
- Trainings - CBDM training course introduced to South Asia in 1999;
- Research - focussing on vulnerability;
- Field trials on community-

based approach and sharing knowledge;

- Policy advocacy - SAARC policy dialogue;
- Representation in international forums - Kobe WCDR, ISDR Global Platform in Geneva;
- Providing a forum for discussion and debate on disaster management issues in the region, especially through electronic means and the internet;
- Participating in various knowledge sharing ventures; and
- Engaging the media.

The network depends largely on e-mail groups and the WWW for communications and keeping its regional members informed and active. As the network spread its activities in all countries of South Asia, it is a main source of information and knowledge sharing in the field of disaster mitigation on all levels. ■

according to their abilities and resources. Many good disaster reduction approaches tried by local organisations have not been merged into a common national approach, e.g. school safety and community-based preparedness by NGOs. There is a gap between the departments of disaster management at the national level and the initiatives done by communities at local level. To provide a national disaster management plan that is useful for all communities, the communities' ideas and initiatives have to be integrated and the exchange of information between the

national and local level has to be improved. To face the heavy burden of natural hazards, Bangladesh has to go on with its efforts in the field of disaster management. As typical in a disaster-prone country, members of vulnerable communities make their own preparations to face and cope with ensuing disasters. To support and strengthen the community in disaster preparedness, it is essential that the national government includes their coping mechanisms and institutes disaster management plans that support these. ■

<sup>6</sup> Source: Disaster preparedness for natural hazards. Current status in Bangladesh. International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD). Kathmandu, Nepal, June 2007.

# Resilient Communities Resulting from Successful CBDRM Implementation

What are the characteristics of a resilient community? How can the impacts of CBDRM be measured? The answers to these two questions are not simple and easy to find, but this article attempts to do so.

Resilience can be described as the capacity of a system, community or society potentially exposed to hazards to adapt, by resisting or changing in order to reach and maintain acceptable level of functioning and structure. This is determined by the degree to which the social system is capable of organising itself to increase its capacity for learning from past disasters for better future protection and to improve risk reduction measures<sup>7</sup>. Therefore, resilience has to do with being informed about risks and aware of the situation in the community as well as being prepared to respond to a disaster effectively. This means that all members of a community are involved in disaster risk reduction programmes and that some institutional arrangements exist.



Women in rural Rajasthan next to their kitchen and water storage. Sharing resources and responsibilities across nuclear families makes each individual more likely to absorb health and natural hazards.

## Characteristics of a Resilient Community

Phase	Capacities of a resilient community	Result
Pre-Disaster	The ability to absorb the shocks of hazard impact, so that they do not become disasters	Reducing the probability of failure
Post-Disaster: Immediate Relief	The capacity to bounce back during and after a disaster	Reducing the consequences of a failure
Post-Disaster: Long-term Recovery	The opportunity for change and adaptation following a disaster	Reducing the time needed for recovery as well as patterns of vulnerability

Adapted from: *Critical Guidelines: Community-based disaster risk management*. Asian Disaster Preparedness Center ADPC, 2006, Bangkok, Thailand.

For the measurement of the resilience of a community, ADPC suggests following indicators:

- A community organisation;
- A DRR and DP plan;
- A community early warning system;
- Trained manpower: risk assessment, search and rescue, medical first aid, relief distribution, masons for safer house construction, fire fighting;
- Physical connectivity with local authorities, NGOs, etc.;

- Knowledge of risks and risk reduction actions;
- A community disaster reduction fund to implement risk reduction activities;
- Safer house to withstand local hazards; and
- Safe sources of livelihoods.

The aim of the CBDRM approach is achieved when the community, involving all social groups in the process of disaster risk management, maintains resilience before, during and after disasters.

Maintaining an appropriate level of resilience is an ongoing process, requiring links between governments, NGOs and community members establishing institutional structures. In addition to implementation of disaster risk management, the activities need to adapt to changing contexts with the help of evaluation. If this is achieved, the community itself is at the base of managing their disaster risk. ■

<sup>7</sup> Definition adapted from UN/ISDR 2004.

# Basic Knowledge about Hazards will Help you Know What to do

If you are indoors, stay indoors. If you are outdoors, stay outdoors. Most injuries occur while entering or leaving the building.



Mining...farming activities on slopes...clearing land for cultivation...commercial logging...These activities increase surface run-off of rainwater and expose the soil to erosion.



Negligence and ignorance in using home appliances have caused many fires.



Consider alternative on farm related businesses...Diversification can be a good long-term approach to revenue shortfalls from drought.

Source: *Mediakit adpc: Community-based disaster risk management and the media. ADPC 2006, Bangkok, Thailand.*

Keep listening to the radio for official messages and weather forecasts...don't forget that typhoons have been known to come back.



If you think a tsunami may be coming...move quickly inland and to a higher ground!



Do you wish to receive this publication regularly? Write to Pushkar Gupte ([dmi@icenet.co.in](mailto:dmi@icenet.co.in)). The publication will be sent to you by E-mail.

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