



Community-based Disaster Risk Management Course

Session 1 - Community-level Vulnerability Assessment and Disaster Preparedness

The presentation discusses vulnerability assessment (VA), a most critical exercise in disaster preparedness. VA provides the basis for disaster preparedness at the community level by identifying important community concerns such as livelihood and consumption, housing and social infrastructure, and gender and intra-household relations. Though different methods of carrying out VA have evolved, it is critical that they adapt to local conditions, and include all the relevant socioeconomic indicators of well being. In addition, systems of early warning, family and community preparedness, and volunteer-based response can be developed for specific hazards. However, the community preparedness presupposes a certain level of social organization and an institutional framework.

Session 2 - Access to Resources for Community-based Mitigation

The presentation focuses on resources that communities need to reduce their vulnerability and adopt mitigation measures. Access to resources can be secured through financial mechanisms and incentives, as well as economic programs. These include credit, savings, and insurance which are provided by banks and microfinance institutions, and public support by the government in the form of social funds, social security schemes, and relief and rehabilitation works. An appropriate mitigation strategy be based on a balance between market-based instruments and public-funded programs. An ideal community-based mitigation program has no standard prescription; it takes into account the vulnerability of a community and the feasibility of different mitigation strategies and instruments.

Session 3 – Planning and Implementing a Disaster Management Program at Community-level

The presentation discusses the basic approach to designing and implementing community-based disaster management programs. It reviews the process and the tools of participatory risk assessment, methods of analyzing hazards, hazard exposure and community vulnerabilities. It then derives the main ingredients of a community response plan and mitigation program from the assessment and an analysis of available resources. The presentation emphasizes the importance of networks, and training and education programs, which provide people with more information and a better understanding of risks and risk reduction mechanisms. The session underlines that education and training programs need to be cross-sectoral, to address environmental and natural resource management simultaneously with discussing shelter and livelihood concerns. While there can be an informal orientation program for a larger number of community members, formal instruction should be provided to the people who volunteer their services for disaster preparedness and response. A certain level of standardization must be introduced through curriculum and course material, trainers' competence, and levels of certification. At the same time, such an education process also needs to draw upon grassroots experience, traditional knowledge and local practices.

Case Study 1 - [Cambodian Community Based Flood Mitigation and Preparedness Project](#)

This paper describes the design, launch and implementation of the Cambodian Community-based Flood Mitigation and Preparedness Project as part of the broader Asian Disaster Mitigation Program. The paper looks at the establishment of a sustainable, replicable non-government mechanism for disaster mitigation and preparedness with a focus on flooding. The program was piloted in three highly flood-prone provinces of Cambodia— Kompong Cham, Prey Veng and Kandal. The paper outlines the issues faced by communities in the demonstration phase, the disaster preparedness techniques introduced, and the lessons learnt from the implementation of

the program in one of the world's worst flood-prone areas.

Case Study 2 - Self-Insurance Funds in Mexico

The objective of self-insurance funds is to provide farmers with access to high quality agricultural insurance service, without generating profit either for the fund itself or for its members as individuals. With insurance, the farmers also have access to formal credit, which is relatively rare in developing countries. The case study describes in detail the design, functioning and the benefits of the self-insurance system, which already has more than 20 years of experience in Mexico. Self-insurance funds are based on the common perception of risk by a group of individuals and the solidarity between them in the case of loss. As the study emphasizes, self-insurance funds are created with the farmers' own initiative, encouraged and supported by the government but not used or controlled for political purposes.

Case Study 3 – Community-Based Mitigation and Early Warning System: the Dumangas, Iloilo Case

This case study reports on a pilot project in Philippines. The local government of a mid-size municipality initiated a program of Community-Based Mitigation and Early Warning System. The program objective was to limit the human, physical and social damages from floods and droughts by involving the members of the community in preventive measures. The paper describes the benefits of the program to the local communities, the actors and stakeholders involved in design and implementation of the initiative, and draws lessons learnt from the project success.

Readings