

Community Based Training and Awareness Programme for Natural Disaster Management - Flood and cyclone

Place: Jagatsingpur and Kendrapara Districts of Orissa
Duration: January 27th – February 10th, 2002

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Introduction

Community Based Training (CBT) and workshop programme involves in the backdrop of vulnerability of communities socially as well as physically to natural disasters, the recurring cycle of floods and cyclones, in Jagatsingpur and Kendrapara districts of Orissa. Majority of the people in the targeted districts are in the categories of marginal and small farmers, small holders, artisans, traders, fisher folk, and landless men & women who normally constitute the aggregation of the poor, the weak, the unemployed and the underemployed. Since agriculture constitutes the predominant and critical mode of activity, the nature of employment and income generation is more or less linked to the performance of the agricultural sector. However, the frequent cycle of flood and cyclone reduces the scope of generating income for a sustainable livelihood, and also heightened their social and physical risk of vulnerabilities.

There is recurring cycle of floods and cyclones in the targeted districts of Jagatsingpur and Kendrapara, as experienced from the super cyclones in October-November 1999 and the floods of July 2001. The recent high scale of floods and cyclones are only case in points of their intensities and devastations. Such disasters occur periodically with varying intensities rendering the communities totally unprepared to meet such contingencies. Associated with the natural disasters are poverty and disproportionate increase in the number of unemployed, semi employed and underemployed among the rural people vis-à-vis the existing productive resource base of the society. Employment is a critical economic & social issue for these people, more so in the context of a mono-rural economy predominantly based on agriculture, who for economic and social security migrate heavily to the urban, commercial and industrial centres. The cycle of natural disasters affected the very productive base of the communities in the targeted areas.

Secondly, the intensity and coverage of the natural disasters made the communities vulnerable, both socially as well as physically. Social and physical

displacement increases the vulnerabilities of the communities to a sustainable livelihood. The vulnerable rural people who are most vulnerable to such types of natural disasters do not have adequate infrastructure or institutional backup to provide continuous training and also to increase their awareness level. They are also not adequately prepared to develop and engage themselves in any alternative contingencies, in the eventuality of a natural disaster.

Thirdly, the training and the awareness processes be so as to consider the targeted people as clients and not as mere beneficiary of any disaster management programme.

Objective

The programme was conducted with the following objective:

- Disaster preparedness of the communities through capability formation and capacity building of the human resource potential to develop the required knowledge, skills and awareness to meet various contingencies within a minimum possible response time (before, during and after natural disasters).
- Community awareness and preparedness about disaster warning system based on weather forecasting system of the Meteorological Deptt as well as of the traditional knowledge system.

Target Groups

The main target groups of the programme were communities on the seacoast and riverbanks, farmers, artisans, traders, small holders, herders, fishermen, landless men & women, and gatherers. They are the most vulnerable communities in the event of any natural disaster. Normally these communities constitute the aggregation of the poor, the unemployed and underemployed, the weak and the vulnerable. The programmes immediate objective was to address their preparedness, before, during and after disaster. Representative samples of 300 participants representing the broader spectrum of all the communities were selected for participation in the CBT programme. The targeted communities were selected for the CBT programme with the assumption that they would disseminate the message of disaster preparedness to other people in their localities and surroundings. The feedback results would be assessed while conducting the scheduled other CBT programmes.

Methodology

The programme methodology focused on:

- Building the human resource potential through knowledge, skills and awareness for disaster management;
- Exposure and demonstration;
- Planning by participants themselves;
- Actual hands-on training for disaster preparedness (before, during and after disaster) and mitigation through latest development in the weather forecasting system and the traditional knowledge system.
- Digestion period for absorbing information and for participants to try out what they have learned; and
- Project experience-sharing workshop.

The methodology was based on the assumption that the communities learn best through activity at their own pace with materials that seem relevant to their lives and experiences on the recurring phenomenon of floods and cyclone. Therefore, it was imperative that training courses need to contain plenty of hands-on activities.

Programme Content and Coverage:

The programme contents and coverage focused on:

- The frequency, scale and intensity of natural disasters, floods and cyclones.
- The level of community knowledge and awareness about natural disaster management and mitigation system.
- The type and scope of existing information and communication networks about disaster warning and forecasting system.
- The mechanisms/systems to manage basic needs, food, clothing and shelter during and after disasters.
- The management of food, medicine and shelter for disaster preparedness and mitigation.
- The socio-economic, literacy and other demographic profiles of the community & its members.
- The level of awareness about harnessing existing resources (facilities, finance, material & manpower), if any.
- The geographic composition of the area and other variables.
- The agricultural products, vegetation types and patterns of cultivation.
- The pattern of rainfall and variation.
- The water storage, supply and channel system.

- The topography of the region.

Pilot Training and Awareness Programmes

Detailed Action Plan for the Conduct of Community Based Training (CBT) and Workshop Programme:

The programme was conducted as per the following schedule to achieve the identified objectives:

Sl. No	Programme	Date	Place	No of Participants
1.	Workshop	27 th Jan. 2002	Kendrapara	50
2.	CBT Programme	2-3 Feb. 2002	Kendrapara	100
3.	Workshop	6 th Feb. 2002	Jagatsinghpur	50
4.	CBT Programme	9-10 Feb. 2002	Jagatsinghpur	100

(a) CBT Programme and Workshop, Kendrapara

Shri Sisir Chandra Grahacharya, Spl U.N. Representative for Kendrapara District on Disaster Rehabilitation Programme, inaugurated the Workshop at Kendrapara. He presented his views on disaster preparedness and mitigation to the participants. Mr Madhusmit Pati, Secretary Natures Club and District Coordinator for Flood & Cyclone Programme for the Kendrapara District inaugurated the CBT Programme at Kendrapara. He highlighted his experience from the super cyclone that ravaged the district in October 1999. There was poster exhibition, audio-visual display, distribution of literature and banners on disaster preparedness and mitigation.

(b) CBT Programme and Workshop, Jagatsinghpur

Shri Manmohan Samal, Hon'ble Member of Parliament, inaugurated Workshop at Jagatsinghpur. He presented his views on disaster preparedness and mitigation to the participants. Shri D. Samantray, local MLA, inaugurated the CBT Awareness programme at Jagatsinghpur. He highlighted the urgent need for disaster preparedness to meet any eventualities in the event of natural disaster.

There was poster exhibition, audio-visual display, distribution of literature and banners on disaster preparedness and mitigation.

Programme Highlights About Disaster Management:

(A). Pre-Disaster

- (i) Check your house is in good condition, particularly the roof and trim tree branches well clear of your house
- (ii) In case of a storm tide warning, know you're nearest safe high ground and the best access route, and Prepare Emergency Survival Kit and First Aid Kit and keep them handy.
- (iii) Make trees more wind resistant by removing diseased and damaged limbs, and then strategically remove branches so that wind can blow through.
- (iv) Clear property of loose sheet iron and other potential missiles, Clean and check roof, guttering and down pipes..
- (v) Keep a radio to receive message, and list of emergency telephone numbers of police, fire, ambulance, and territorial state emergency services, gas, electricity and water related services.
- (vi) Arrange an out of town friend or relative for a single contact point.
- (vii) Have masking tape (for glass), plastic sheeting and large garbage bags (for emergency rain protection).
- (viii) Prepare to bring inside any lawn furniture, outdoor decorations or ornaments, trashcans, hanging plants, and anything else that can be picked up by the wind.
- (ix) Prepare to cover all windows of home. If shutters have not been installed, use pre-cut plywood.
- (x) Keep your vehicle in working order with adequate fuel.
- (xi) Check batteries and stock up non-perishable food, first aid supplies, drinking water, and medication
- (xii) Be alert to changing weather conditions.
- (xiii) Avoid unnecessary travel
- (xiv) Checking of emergency kit and put spare clothing and shoes in plastic bags.
- (xv) Shelter and secure pets and animals
- (xvi) Prepare an evacuation kit (consisting of emergency kit plus warm utility clothing personal essentials and valuables) and carry in plastic bags for useful and valuable items. Shelter vehicles or cover with tarpaulin/blankets.
- (xvii) Wear strong clothing protect against cuts from debris. Wear strong footwear (not thongs) for protection.

(B). During Disaster

- (i) Listen to your radio for updates; and avoid using the telephone during the storm (because of lightening danger).
- (ii) Disconnect all electrical appliances.
- (iii) Stay inside, shelter in the strongest part of the house-perhaps bathroom, internal toilet, or passageway.
- (iv) If house starts to break up, protect yourself with mattress, rugs or blankets. Anchor yourself to strong fixture (such as water pipes or get under a strong table or bed)
- (v) Be aware that the calm is deceptive; the storm is not over. The worst part of the storm happens once the winds blow from the opposite direction. Trees, shrubs, buildings, and other objects damaged by the first winds can be broken destroyed by the second winds.
- (vi) Avoid travelling in a storm. If you must, then carry emergency survival Kit; keep your vehicle's fuel tank full for emergency use; let someone know your destination, your route, and when you expect to arrive; and if you get struck along the way, help can be sent along your predetermined route.
- (vii) If driving, stop-clear of trees, power lines and streams.
- (viii) If outdoors find emergency shelter (not under a tree).

- (ix) Stay away from floodwaters. If you come upon a flooded road, turn around and go another way. If you are caught on a flooded road and waters are rising rapidly around you, get out of the car and climb to higher ground.
- (x) If you must go outside, several layers of lightweight clothing will keep you warmer than a single heavy coat. Gloves (or mittens) and a hat will prevent loss of body heat. Cover your mouth to protect your lungs.

(C). After Disaster

- (i) Check your house for damage
- (ii) Use flashlights in the dark; do not use candles
- (iii) Check your domestic animals and pets
- (iv) Beware of fallen power lines, damaged building and sight seeing, stay home and help others.
- (v) If you need emergency assistance, consult your Emergency Assistance section
- (vi) If you don't need help, check your neighbors
- (vii) Don't go outside until advised officially that the cyclone has passed
- (viii) If you had to evacuate, don't go home until advised. Use route recommended and stay calm
- (ix) Listen to your radio for official warnings/advice.
- (x) Don't Ignore Warnings!
- (xi) Don't drink from the open wells and ponds. Drink only safe water from tube wells or after treatment

- (xii) Clean debris in and around your house and animal shed to avoid contamination
- (xiii) Clean the wells, ponds and other water sources in your locality on a priority basis.
- (xiv) Mutual self-help and neighborliness.