

Fostering Knowledge on Disaster
DPNet
Nepal **eBulletin**

MAR - APR 2025



Summary

This quarterly report highlights DPNet Nepal's major initiatives and engagements from March to April 2025, focusing on strengthening sub-national disaster governance, anticipatory action, institutional coordination, and climate-responsive strategies.

From March 4 to 19, DPNet successfully organized the First Provincial General Assemblies in Sudurpashchim, Karnali, and Koshi provinces. These assemblies formalized provincial DRR structures, electing Sher Bahadur Basnet, Hira Singh Thapa, and Sita Sharma as respective provincial presidents. Chairperson Dr. Raju Thapa emphasized localized resilience-building, digital coordination, and the formation of Provincial Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction (PPDRR). Laptops were handed over to each committee to support operational functionality.

On March 5, DPNet, in coordination with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Law (MoIAL) Sudurpashchim and various partners, organized a Learning-Sharing Workshop on Anticipatory Action in Dhangadhi. The event convened 81 stakeholders and showcased anticipatory approaches used during the 2024 monsoon cloudburst. Participants recommended improved forecasting systems, early financing mechanisms, and integration of DRR and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) policies at the local level.

During the NGO Sectoral Group Meeting under NPDRR on March 12 in Kathmandu, DiMaNN was unanimously re-nominated as the sectoral coordinator. The meeting endorsed a joint roster for DRR responders and established a thematic working group to enhance coordination, knowledge exchange, and collective advocacy.

A significant dialogue on climate change impacts on the Raute community was held on March 16 in Surkhet, addressing threats to the nomadic community's traditional livelihoods due to wildfires, deforestation, and erratic rainfall. Key recommendations included the creation of a Raute Corridor, expansion of mobile health and education services, regulation of alcohol and tobacco access, and promotion of sustainable tourism. Stakeholders emphasized culturally sensitive and inclusive strategies for community protection.

On March 21, a DPNet delegation paid a courtesy call to Mr. Dinesh Bhatta, the newly appointed Chief Executive of NDRRMA. Key recommendations included expediting appointments to national platforms and initiating early preparations for Nepal's participation in the Global Platform for DRR (GPDRR).

On April 27, DPNet co-organized a high-level DRR Dialogue with the Home Minister, where Minister Ramesh Lekhak committed to institutionalizing monthly disaster consultations. Priorities included local preparedness, low-cost technology, enhanced early warning systems, and coordination with Google for earthquake alerts. NDRRMA pledged swift action to revise the monsoon preparedness plan and ensure timely implementation of recommendations.

Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction Workshop Held in Dhangadhi



Dhangadhi, March 4, 2025, the first provincial general assembly of the Disaster Preparedness Network (DPNet) Sudurpashchim successfully concluded in Dhangadhi. The event saw the participation of various organizations and individuals engaged in disaster risk reduction, preparedness, climate risk management, and adaptation. The assembly was chaired by Sher Bahadur Basnet, the Chairperson of DPNet's Sudurpashchim Provincial Ad Hoc Committee. The chief guest of the event was DPNet's National president, Dr. Raju Thapa, while former Secretary of the Government of Nepal and disaster management activist Kedar Neupane attended as the special guest. Other notable attendees included DPNet's General Secretary Suraj Gautam, Deputy General Secretary Harshaman Maharjan, former DPNet President Surya Bahadur Thapa, representative from DCA Dinesh Gurung. Participants were welcomed by Ashok Bikram Jairu, the Executive Director of NNSWA, while the closed session was conducted by Dhanapati Dhungel, the Public Relations and Communication Advisor of FAYA Nepal. In the closed session, DPNet General Secretary Suraj Gautam provided insights into the organizational structure and outlined the key tasks DPNet aims to undertake in the coming days. Similarly, DPNet President Dr. Raju Thapa elaborated on the role and responsibilities of DPNet, emphasizing the importance of strengthening the network's effectiveness.

During the assembly, a consensus was reached on selecting the new leadership team. DPNet General Secretary Harshaman Maharjan informed the participants about the consensus-based selection process,

which was unanimously approved. The newly elected leadership of DPNet Sudurpashchim Sher Bahadur Basnet, Executive Director of FAYA Nepal, as President. Dinesh Gurung, Coordinator of DCA, congratulated the newly elected committee and expressed his commitment to supporting DPNet Sudurpashchim's initiative to establish a disaster management resource center. He highlighted that this initiative would significantly contribute to enhancing disaster resilience in the region.

In his address, newly elected President Sher Bahadur Basnet emphasized the need for strong coordination among stakeholders to implement effective disaster risk management and reduction measures. He announced plans to develop the DPNet Sudurpashchim Provincial Committee into a learning and knowledge-sharing center for disaster management. He further assured that the newly formed committee would work collaboratively with all concerned agencies to make disaster preparedness and response more effective. At the conclusion of the assembly, DPNet's Central President, Dr. Raju Thapa, handed over a laptop to the newly elected provincial president, Sher Bahadur Basnet, as a contribution from the central office to facilitate the operations of the newly formed provincial committee.

First Provincial General Assembly of DPNet Sudurpashchim Successfully Concludes in Dhangadhi



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Learning-Sharing Workshop on Anticipatory Action Held in Sudurpashchim Province



Dhangadhi, March 5, 2025 – A successful knowledge-sharing workshop on anticipatory action was held in Sudurpashchim Province, gathering 81 key stakeholders, including government representatives, international and national NGOs, security forces and technical experts. The event, coordinated by DPNet and organized by the MoIAL of Sudurpashchim Province, was supported by GSMA funded Act First project implemented by Naxa Pvt. Ltd., DCA, IHRR, VIAMO, and NNSWA. The workshop aimed to strengthen anticipatory action in disaster risk management.

The workshop was chaired by Dr. Kamal Prasad Pokhrel, Chief Secretary of Sudurpashchim Province, with Honorable Minister of Internal Affairs and Law, Mr. Hira Sarki, serving as the Chief Guest. Special guests included Honorable Dharma Raj Pathak, Chairperson of the Social Development Committee, Sudurpashchim Province Assembly, and former Secretary and disaster activist, Kedar Neupane. Also in attendance were Mayor Kishor Kumar Limbu of Dodhara Chandani Municipality, representatives from Nepal Army, Nepal Police, Armed Police Force, and various development partners while the DPNet General Secretary, Er. Suraj Gautam served as the emcee for the program.

The program commenced with a welcome speech by Sher Bahadur Basnet, Chairperson of DPNet Sudurpashchim, followed by an introduction to the event's objectives by Surya Bahadur Thapa. A technical session featured a compelling video presentation showcasing the impact of incessant rainfall

in Sudurpashchim Province during the 2024 monsoon season. Despite historic rainfall exceeding 600 mm within 24 hours, there were zero casualties, demonstrating the effectiveness of early warning systems and anticipatory action.

Engineer Sanjay Shah, Head of the Mahakali Field Basin Office, Department of Hydrology and Meteorology (DHM), delivered a presentation on the activities of DHM, Impact based forecast (IBF), highlighting DHM's role in disseminating timely weather forecasts to vulnerable communities. DRR Focal Person Mr. Amrit BK, Mr. Manoj Prasad Bhatta, Mr. Hirdesh Dhami, from Dodhara Chandani, Bhimdatta, Parshuram respectively shared their proactive approaches adopted during the cloudburst 2024. Dodhara Chandani Municipality highlighted the importance of Impact based weather forecasting and also the role of DASTAA in risk understanding and risk communication.

Ms. Biddhya Bhandari from Naxa Pvt. Ltd. highlighted the importances of Household level risk reduction, distribution of Household Level Disaster Management Plan (HDRMP), role of DASTAA in visualizing the risk and how municipality is implementing data-based decision making in the region. DASTAA supported the municipality in identifying vulnerable household including Persons with Disability, Senior Citizens, Pregnant women and thus supported to take proactive decisions such as early evacuation, dissemination of risk messages (SMS and Interactive Voice Response (IVR).

Besides, DRR focal person from Tikapur Municipalities also shared local experiences on disaster preparedness and response. Mr. Dinesh Gurung, Program Manager at DCA Nepal then highlighted the three key issues for the anticipatory actions: a) Need of better forecasting and investment for the Early Warning System (EWS), b) identification of Early Action and Pre-agreed financing, and c) policy integration to build a more disaster resilient Nepal. He also emphasized on the need of collective localized DRR and CCA initiatives.

Dr. Raju Thapa from DPNet presented a ten-year data analysis on wildfire trends in Sudurpashchim Province, urging provincial and local governments to adopt proactive measures to mitigate increasing forest fire incidents. He stressed the need for both policy-driven interventions and community participation to prevent widespread damage caused by wildfires.

During the remarks session, Dr. Kamal Prasad Pokhrel reiterated that Sudurpashchim Province prioritizes preparedness and anticipatory action to address earthquakes, monsoon-induced disasters like floods and landslides, and emerging risks such as wildfires. He emphasized the collective responsibility of all stakeholders in building disaster resilience.

Former Secretary Kedar Neupane highlighted the importance of coordinated efforts among government agencies, security forces, and development partners to strengthen disaster response mechanisms. Honorable Dharma Raj Pathak stressed the vital role of early warning systems and the need for enhanced preparedness mechanisms at the local level to minimize disaster risks. He committed to initiate discussion on Social Development Parliamentary Committee in this issue.

In his closing speech, Honorable Minister Hira Sarki reaffirmed the government's commitment to integrating indigenous knowledge with modern science and technology to enhance early warning systems, disaster risk reduction, and anticipatory action in Sudurpashchim Province. He emphasized the importance of collaboration among local governments, security agencies, and humanitarian organizations in making the province more disaster-resilient.

DiMaNN Re-Nominated as Coordinator for NGO Sectoral Group of NPDRR



March 12, 2025, Kathmandu – The National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (NPDRR), in collaboration with DPNet Nepal, convened a meeting of the NGO Sectoral Group, emphasizing the continued importance of coordination among various stakeholders. During the meeting, the National Disaster Management Network of Nepal (DiMaNN) was unanimously re-nominated as the coordinator of the NGO Sectoral Group.

The NGO Sectoral Group is one of the nine key sectoral groups under NPDRR, alongside sectors representing government, semi-government, UN and donor agencies, international NGOs, media academia, disaster-affected communities, the private sector. In the meeting, Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa, Chairperson of DiMaNN, emphasized the objectives of the sectoral group and elaborated on the vital role NGOs play in Disaster Risk Reduction and Management in Nepal. Dr. Raju Thapa, Member Secretary of NPDRR, further highlighted NPDRR's significance, its current initiatives, and ongoing efforts to strengthen DRR mechanisms in the country.

The meeting brought together representatives from various civil society networks and NGOs. One major outcome was the formation of the Sectoral Committee of NGOs, led by Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa from DiMaNN, with other organizations elected as members. This voluntary group will enhance coordination, networking, knowledge exchange, information sharing, resource mobilization, and collective action in DRR initiatives across Nepal. Key decisions made during the meeting included establishing a combined roster to document and monitor NGO activities in response to earthquakes and floods, organizing issue-based discussions to tackle major DRR challenges, and holding regular sharing meetings to foster greater collaboration among stakeholders.

The newly formed NGO thematic group under NPDRR includes the following focal persons and organizations: Surya Bahadur Thapa (DiMaNN), Rajendra Sharma (NGO Federation), Shakti Gurung

(CDMS), Shreedhar Neupane (Janahit Nepal, Kavre), Sambhu Dulal (NFIWUAN), Thakur Bhandari (FECOFUN), Rajendra Aryal (FEDWASUN), Tek Raj Awasthi (NCE Nepal), Prakash Koirala (IDS Nepal), representatives from Happy Children and Ratyauli Yuwa Club (Badhanath Chaudhary), and Rupendra Basnet (Bal Kshetra Nepal).

First Provincial General Assembly of DPNet Koshi Province Committee Concludes in Biratnagar



The first provincial general assembly of the DPNet Karnali Province Committee successfully concluded in Surkhet on 16th March, 2025, bringing together DPNet member organizations working in disaster risk management and climate change adaptation. DPNet's Central President Dr. Raju Thapa, Immediate Past President (IPP) Surya Bahadur Thapa, and Deputy General Secretary Harsaman Maharjan also attended the program.

Dr. Raju Thapa delivered a presentation on the Provincial Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (PPDRR), highlighting its objectives and key provisions. He emphasized the need for a well-coordinated mechanism to strengthen disaster preparedness, response, and resilience in Karnali Province. Dr. Thapa requested DPNet Karnali to take steps in forming the PPDRR, stressing that provincial-level platforms are essential for decentralizing disaster risk management and implementing localized solutions. He discussed the importance of thematic groups within NPDRR and encouraged the engagement of diverse actors, including government agencies, civil society organizations, and the private sector. He called on participants to initiate discussions, mobilize resources, and develop strategies to implement effective disaster risk reduction measures at the provincial level.

The new DPNet Karnali Provincial Committee was announced during the assembly through a consensus-based selection process. The elected leadership team includes President Hira Singh Thapa,

Vice President Kisan Kumar Kshetriyal, Secretary Tikaram Acharya, Deputy Secretary Mahesh Bhattarai, Treasurer Dinesh Shrestha, and members Ramchandra Jyoti, Nim Bahadur Wali, and Bishnu Budha. Newly elected President Hira Singh Thapa highlighted the importance of collaborative efforts in strengthening disaster preparedness and response mechanisms in Karnali Province. He expressed his commitment to making DPNet Karnali a hub for knowledge sharing and capacity building in disaster management establishing resource center.

Dr. Thapa extended his best wishes to the newly formed committee and assured continuous support from the central office and he handed over laptop from central office to DPNet Karnali Province Committee. He reiterated the necessity of stronger coordination among stakeholders to enhance disaster resilience in the region. The assembly concluded with a renewed commitment from all stakeholders to work together towards a proactive and effective disaster preparedness network in Karnali Province. Participants acknowledged the growing risks posed by natural disasters in the province and pledged to strengthen disaster risk reduction efforts through a coordinated and inclusive approach.

Discussion Program on the Impact of Climate Change on the Raute Community Concluded



Surkhet, 16th March 2025 – A discussion program was organized by DPNet Karnali Province in coordination with Guras Rural Municipality, with support from AEIN and SOSEC Nepal, to address the growing challenges faced by Nepal’s last nomadic tribe, the Raute. This indigenous community, which has lived in the forests of mid- and far-western Nepal for generations, is now at risk due to climate change, environmental degradation, and modernization pressures. The program brought together key stakeholders, including Social Development Minister of Karnali Province, Ghanshyam Bhandari, and Advocate Dr. Raju Thapa, who presented research on the impacts of rising temperatures, shifting rainfall patterns, and wildfires on the Raute’s traditional way of life.

The discussion highlighted the Raute’s unique customs, such as their nomadic lifestyle, strict marriage traditions, resistance to modern medical practices, and belief that counting their population brings misfortune. While these cultural norms have long preserved their identity, they have also posed challenges for external interventions aimed at improving their health and education. The program also explored the increasing influence of modernization on the Raute, particularly among younger members, who have begun to accept money sometimes using it for alcohol and tobacco raising concerns about their long-term well-being.

Speakers emphasized that climate change is drastically affecting the Raute's access to food and medicinal plants, as deforestation, unpredictable weather patterns, and rising temperatures disrupt their traditional foraging practices. Participants discussed potential solutions, including the establishment of a Raute Corridor to protect their migratory routes, mobile education and health initiatives, and structured cultural tourism to support their livelihoods without compromising their identity. Additionally, there was a strong call for implementing early warning systems for natural disasters and improving forest management practices.

The event concluded with a collective agreement on the need for long-term, respectful engagement with the Raute, ensuring their survival while preserving their cultural heritage. Stakeholders stressed that rather than forcing integration, efforts should focus on empowering the Raute with knowledge and resources to adapt to a changing world while maintaining their autonomy.

Details of the program:

Background

Surkhet, 16th March 2025 – A discussion program was organized by DPNet Karnali Province in coordination with Guras Rural Municipality, with support from AEIN and SOSEC Nepal, to address the growing challenges faced by Nepal's last nomadic tribe, the Raute. The focus of this event was to examine the urgent challenges confronting Nepal's last nomadic tribe, the Raute community. For generations, the Raute have maintained a nomadic existence in the forests of mid- and far-western Nepal, drawing upon the abundant resources offered by their forested environment. However, these indigenous custodians of the woodland face a rapidly changing reality marked by climate change, environmental pressures, and expanding modernization. The event was chaired by Hira Singh Thapa, with Ghanshyam Bhandari, the Social Development Minister of Karnali Province, serving as the Chief Guest. At the core of the proceedings, Advocate Dr. Raju Thapa presented research findings on the insightful ways in which rising temperatures, shifting precipitation patterns, and degrading forest habitats are affecting the Raute.

A central theme of the program was the recognition that while the Raute have been resistant to adopting modern amenities, their own survival is growing tenuous in the face of external pressures. Historically, the Raute avoided settled areas in order to preserve their cultural identity, which includes distinct marital customs, spiritual beliefs, and taboos regarding population counts. As climate change intensifies, local officials, nongovernmental organizations, and Raute representatives gathered at this event to identify actionable strategies that could ensure the Raute's continued existence. Participants discussed the delicate balance between preserving the Raute's ancestral traditions and introducing essential changes, such as healthcare and minimal forms of education, to address the threats that the Raute now face.

Presentation on the Introduction to the Raute Community and the Impact of Climate Change

Legends, oral narratives, and folklore point to a prince named Tele Shahi who supposedly abandoned palace life after a dispute with his brothers, venturing into the forest in search of an autonomous existence. Over time, three sub-groups, Raskati, Kalyal, and Sobamsi are said to have followed Tele

Shahi. Although historians maintain various theories regarding their origins, the Raute themselves hold this account dear, recounting it from generation to generation. Their story highlights not only their desire for independence from palace intrigue but also a thoughtful unity with nature that they have carried through the centuries.

The Raute have traditionally inhabited forested areas without ever establishing permanent settlements. Their dependence on forest resources is absolute, encompassing food, construction materials for shelter, and medicinal needs. Local legends assert that the Raute's migration patterns changed during Tele Shahi's era, particularly regarding the custom of leaving a campsite permanently when a death occurs. Even now, the Raute relocate whenever they lose a community member, viewing the place of death as inauspicious for a fixed period of twelve years. This migratory tradition has enabled them to avoid overexploitation of a particular stretch of forest, while also limiting their contact with outsiders.

An aspect of Raute culture that has consistently intrigued observers is their aversion to machine-stitched clothing and their deep belief in the purity of natural water sources. Presenter in the event pointed out that the Raute generally deem piped or processed water to be contaminated. In their lifestyle, men and women share certain egalitarian norms that include the absence of restrictions for menstruating or pregnant women, a stance that contrasts with practices prevalent in some other Nepalese communities. Similarly, the Raute forbid counting their population, believing that enumeration invites disaster and declining numbers. Combined with their reluctance to use modern communications devices, this makes it challenging for external agencies to ascertain accurate demographic data about them.

The Raute also have stringent rules regarding marriage. Community members are only allowed to marry within their particular group, and any relationships beyond the Raute are strictly disallowed. Boys must be at least fifteen years old, while girls must have reached menarche before marriage can occur. After marriage, the newly wed couple often establishes a separate shelter within the Raute's forest settlement, distancing themselves from other married couples. Widows and widowers do not remarry, reinforcing the internal cohesion and distinctive norms that define the group's identity. These rules are part of an intricate cultural tapestry meant to protect the Raute's sense of heritage.

Observations on Modern Influences and Educational Initiatives

Speakers noted that the Raute, once adamant in rejecting modern artifacts, have begun interacting more often with outsiders. Some younger Raute accept money as a means to purchase goods, including alcohol and tobacco, which worries observers. Participants raised questions about whether reliance on money would undermine the Raute's traditional bartering system, in which they historically exchanged forest-made goods, such as carved wooden utensils, for staple items from nearby communities. While the older Raute often display reluctance toward adopting new practices, younger members sometimes show curiosity about external influences, creating a generational divide that the event's participants identified as a critical area for future study.

In recent years, certain initiatives have sought to teach Raute children basic literacy and hygiene. One example is the mobile school approach, where teachers, assisted by health workers, move with the Raute as they migrate to new forest locations. This flexible model seeks to accommodate the Raute's itinerant lifestyle while offering them essential educational exposure. However, organizing a

curriculum, delivering consistent lessons, and earning the trust of Raute families all remain major challenges. Cultural norms forbid the enumeration of children, and the Raute are not fully convinced of the merits of formal schooling. Consequently, teachers must learn how to bridge cultural and linguistic barriers without imposing an external system that the Raute might consider intrusive.

Several participants pointed to potential benefits in promoting Raute handicrafts through specialized markets or tourism channels. Given the intricate woodwork that Raute artisans produce without modern tools, some believe that the sale of these items could become a sustainable revenue source if carefully managed. Yet this approach carries risks. If mass demand leads to commodification, the Raute could face pressure to commercialize their cultural expressions, undermining the authenticity they have long guarded. Such trade-offs between financial gain and cultural preservation animated conversations at the event, underscoring the complexity of helping the Raute adapt to changes without losing what defines them.

Impact of Climate Change on Raute Livelihoods

A central presentation by Advocate Dr. Raju Thapa highlighted the dangers climate change poses to the Raute. Their reliance on forests for everything from nutrition to shelter places them at the frontline of environmental disruptions. Speakers emphasized that wildfires, often sparked by rising temperatures and prolonged dry periods, have become more frequent. This leads to the destruction of essential plants, such as wild roots and fruits that the Raute gather. The dwindling availability of herbal medicines used for common ailments also heightens health risks for a community that does not typically rely on modern medical facilities. Further complicating the situation is the outbreak of pests and insects that thrive in warmer conditions. Without modern pest control measures, the Raute can do little to protect their camps from damage.

Shifts in rainfall patterns exacerbate these problems. Extended droughts lead to water scarcity, an acute challenge for those who rely exclusively on unadulterated water sources in the forests. Heavy and unpredictable rainstorms, meanwhile, can wash away foraging spots or increase the risk of landslides in mountainous regions. The Raute's traditional coping mechanisms, such as migrating to nearby forests when resources in one area become exhausted, become less effective when ecosystems across broad geographic areas are under similar pressures. Climate impacts thus have a compounding effect, striking the Raute from multiple angles at once.

Another significant point raised was the diminishing variety of fauna that share the forests with the Raute. Reports indicate that monkeys, often seen near Raute camps, are in decline in some areas due to habitat loss and other anthropogenic factors. Although fewer monkeys might reduce competition for certain forest foods, it also signals broader ecological imbalance. A more degraded ecosystem may not be able to support the Raute's diet, nor will it maintain the same medicinal plants on which the Raute depend. Attendees suggested that a major task moving forward will be to ensure sustainable forest management practices that take into account the Raute's specific interactions with the environment.

Challenges Facing the Raute Community

Health problems stood out as a pressing issue, especially given the prevalence of alcohol and tobacco use among Raute members of all ages. Without formal oversight or a local healthcare infrastructure,

the Raute risk succumbing to diseases that could otherwise be prevented or managed through timely intervention. Many at the event noted that the Raute do not accept regular medical treatments, immunizations, or family planning services, leaving them especially vulnerable to infections and high birth-related risks. These vulnerabilities become more pronounced when combined with declining forest resources, making an already precarious life even more uncertain. However SOSEC has been doing best to provide them basic medical facility.

The Raute also face challenges arising from interactions with external groups. Some local residents worry that competition for forest products will intensify if the Raute pass through their locality. Others try to exploit the Raute's unfamiliarity with modern economic transactions, deceiving them into deals in which the Raute receive negligible compensation for their labor. Such situations foster mistrust and potential conflict, complicating efforts by authorities and NGOs to build constructive relationships that benefit both sides. While contact with outsiders can yield beneficial exchanges, such as the bartering of wooden utensils for grains, it is also fraught with opportunities for misunderstanding and exploitation.

Internal stresses exist as well, particularly concerning leadership roles in the community and the psychological toll of frequent relocations. The Raute's tradition of moving whenever a death occurs can be difficult to maintain in regions already under pressure from deforestation. Anecdotal observations point to decreasing Raute numbers. Whether this is due to health issues, increasing influence of external communities, or climate-induced challenges is difficult to establish given the Raute's prohibition against population counts. Nevertheless, many participants at the event expressed grave concern that without immediate and carefully planned intervention, the Raute's existence is in jeopardy.

Proposed Solutions: The Raute Corridor and Targeted Interventions

Participants discussed the concept of creating a Raute Corridor, a designated area or network of routes that would allow the Raute to continue their migratory patterns without obstruction. A corridor could demarcate regions within which they can forage, rest, and maintain their unique traditions. It would need to be managed collaboratively by local governments, forest authorities, and representatives from both the Raute and neighboring communities. The approach would emphasize minimal encroachment on Raute autonomy while providing a controlled environment that guards against land conflicts and environmental degradation. Speakers also suggested that crucial services like mobile health clinics could be integrated within corridor boundaries, allowing for discreet interventions such as disease prevention and emergency care.

In addressing the influence of climate change, event participants highlighted the need for better environmental data and forecasting. Early warning systems could alert the Raute about impending wildfires or flash floods, although applying such technology to a nomadic population poses its own challenges. Some recommended that younger Raute be encouraged to learn basic forest management skills, including controlling small fires or identifying pest infestations early. This knowledge-sharing would ideally involve both the elders, who have centuries of accumulated wisdom about the forests, and external environmental experts, thus blending traditional and modern expertise.

Another proposed intervention was controlled cultural tourism. Proponents argued that visitors interested in learning about the Raute could pay for carefully arranged experiences, generating funds that might strengthen educational programs or health initiatives. Opponents cautioned that tourism risks commodifying the Raute's way of life and eroding the group's privacy. A recurring sentiment was that any tourism-related activity must be approached with care, ensuring that the Raute themselves lead decisions on how their culture is presented and how any revenue is shared among them.

Questions and Answer Session

The discussion program included a question and answer segment during which attendees contributed additional insights. Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa, IPP of DPNet shared that Raute are the most valuable ornament of Nepal and we strengthen

One speaker, Dr. Hari Prasad Sharma from Janasewa Mancha, described how large fires reduce the availability of edible roots, such as Kadamul, while also diminishing essential herbal plants the Raute rely on. He suggested that providing stronger tents might help the Raute avoid certain environmental extremes. Another speaker, Krishna Raj Dhamala of PACE Nepal, noted that the Raute, once unresponsive to money, now ask for it, frequently in order to buy alcohol, which raises concerns about cultural erosion and rising substance use. He proposed that tourism might serve as a balancing act if developed responsibly.

Raj Bahadur Rokaya, from Jumla, reiterated the importance of constructing the Raute Corridor to safeguard both forest resources and the Raute's future. He questioned whether the Raute should be transformed into settled citizens or left to continue their migratory lives. The event's participants widely recognized the need to strike a compromise between tradition and the realities of a changing climate. Meanwhile, Lila Ram Subedi, representing Karnali Province, reflected on how much the Raute have evolved since the last half-century. He highlighted the urgent need to safeguard their cultural language and traditions, which risk fading as their population shrinks.

Ramesh Giri from the Ministry of Environment in Karnali Province highlighted that many of the Raute's chosen sites are not hazard-free. He pointed to coniferous forests susceptible to intense fires and hillsides prone to landslides, both exacerbated by extreme weather events. A comprehensive risk analysis would be needed, incorporating the Raute's historical knowledge about safe camping spots while also factoring in modern climate data. Elsewhere, Min Bahadur Oli of Salyan, with more than four decades of firsthand encounters with the Raute, advocated for campaigns to address alcoholism and tobacco use, thus improving the Raute's health standing before it becomes irreversibly dire.

Several other participants elaborated on the critical need for coordinated interventions across provincial boundaries. Funding shortfalls were mentioned, given that international aid resources can fluctuate, and the Raute's issues may not always top funding priorities. Anthropological perspectives also surfaced, such as the suggestion by Prof. Dharendra Man Thapa that studying Raute DNA might yield new information on how they have adapted over centuries to forest living and whether those genetic adaptations remain resilient in a changing climate. One of the few Raute participants present, Deepak Shahi, expressed gratitude on behalf of his community to organizations like SOSEC that have consistently aided them.

Closing Remarks and Conclusion

Chief Guest Ghanshyam Bhandari, Social Development Minister of Karnali Province, closed the formal discussions by posing difficult questions about whether modernization assists or destroys the Raute. He recalled that government stipends and allowances intended to support the Raute have sometimes discouraged them from continuing their handicrafts, hastening cultural decline. If substance abuse has increased because money is easier to obtain, everyone involved must acknowledge their part in encouraging this shift. Bhandari supported a ban on alcohol sales to the Raute and recommended that external bodies place greater emphasis on preserving the Raute's language, handicrafts, and intangible heritage. He urged participants to see the Raute not merely as objects of charity but as an invaluable cultural resource for the country.

Chairperson Hira Singh Thapa from SOSCI offered closing remarks of thanks, highlighting that many individuals, from government officials to independent volunteers, have quietly devoted time and resources to the Raute's welfare. He noted that Professor Dr. Bidhayanath Koirala joined the event specifically to explore collaborations aimed at furthering Raute education. Thapa provided an update on the Mobile Raute Project, staffed by teachers and health workers who follow the Raute to offer rudimentary literacy and medical aid. He proposed that local governments and the Ministry of Forests support reforestation in areas abandoned by the Raute, so that future migratory patterns remain viable. Thapa also touched on the necessity of maintaining a police presence near Raute encampments, explaining that such arrangements can protect the Raute from unwanted intrusions, including the sale of harmful substances. However, he insisted that policing must never infringe on Raute autonomy or subject them to harassment. Observing that the Raute's reticence to engage with outside society complicates all efforts, Thapa recognized that SOSEC's inclusive approach has made some headway. He closed with an appeal for the provision of adequate medicines, a pressing concern given climate-induced ailments and the Raute's reluctance to adopt regular health services.

Moving Forward: Recommendations and Future Prospects

Many attendees spoke of the urgent need for follow-up actions to ensure that the Raute community does not slip through the cracks of policy inattention. Several specific recommendations emerged. One was to pursue the Raute Corridor idea more formally, working in close partnership with local communities along potential routes to reduce conflict. Another was to promote small-scale tourism that respects Raute privacy and fosters their cultural expressions. Additionally, campaigns aimed at addressing excessive consumption of alcohol and tobacco among the Raute were seen as essential, though difficult to implement given the Raute's mobility and their past avoidance of external health advice.

Government agencies, such as the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Social Development, were urged to develop risk analyses that take into account climate projections and topographical data in the region. NGOs and civil society actors emphasized the necessity of forging deeper trust with the Raute so that interventions in healthcare or education were received as supportive rather than coercive. Participants also stressed the importance of ensuring that local governments establish a formal consensus on how to interact with the Raute, to avoid inconsistent approaches that might push them away.

Ultimately, the event concluded on a note of cautious optimism. There was universal agreement that doing nothing and allowing the Raute to perish is inconceivable. The discussions organized by DPNet Karnali Province, in coordination with Surkhet Rural Municipality, with support from AEIN and SOSEC Nepal, successfully brought together multiple stakeholders to share experiences, research, and insights. Though the obstacles are considerable, from climate extremes to the Raute's cultural norms, every speaker affirmed the need to preserve this remarkable community.

The path forward requires thoughtful, sustained engagement that respects Raute self-determination. Whether it involves establishing a corridor, refining mobile education initiatives, controlling the sale of harmful substances, or creating early warning systems for wildfires, the guiding principle must remain empathetic and inclusive. The Raute, who have traversed the jungles of Nepal for generations, are living archives of knowledge about the region's flora, fauna, and survival strategies. By working collaboratively, local and provincial governments, NGOs, development partners, and Raute leaders themselves can ensure that this treasured community does not simply survive, but also maintains the dignity and identity that have defined them for centuries

First Provincial General Assembly of DPNet Koshi Province Committee Concludes in Biratnagar



The first provincial general assembly of the DPNet Koshi Province Committee was held on 19 March 2025 in Biratnagar, bringing together DPNet member organizations engaged in disaster risk reduction and humanitarian work across the province. The program strengthens the province's collective efforts toward disaster preparedness and resilience building.

Dr. Raju Thapa, Chairperson of DPNet, attended the event as the Chief Guest, while Harsaman Maharjan, Vice General Secretary of DPNet, also joined the assembly as a guest from the central office in Kathmandu. Both emphasized the importance of provincial-level coordination in the effective implementation of disaster risk reduction initiatives and inclusive humanitarian response.

During the assembly, the new DPNet Koshi Province Committee was selected through a consensus-based process under the leadership of Sita Sharma. The elected team includes Durgananda Chaudhary as Vice Chair, Kumar Chudal as Secretary, Joseph Soren as Vice Secretary, Kamala Basnet as Treasurer, and Matrika Subedi and Raj Kumar Risal as Members. The assembly also announced plans to establish a provincial-level resource center to support training, research, and innovation in the disaster management sector. Additionally, the committee committed to facilitate for the multi-stakeholder platform on disaster risk reduction, named the Provincial Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (PPDRR), to strengthen collaboration and advocacy at the provincial level.

Speaking on behalf of the central office, Harsaman Maharjan acknowledged the efforts made by the Koshi Province team and encouraged the newly elected members to build strategic partnerships and explore funding opportunities to sustain and expand their impact in the field of disaster risk management.

The general assembly concluded with remarks from Chief Guest Dr. Raju Thapa. In his address, Dr. Thapa highlighted the growing need for locally-led mechanisms and inclusive structures to respond to the increasing risks posed by disasters and climate-induced hazards in Koshi Province. He encouraged the newly formed committee and member organizations to work collaboratively, foster innovation, and actively contribute to building community-level resilience. Dr. Thapa also reiterated DPNet's commitment to support provincial structures through knowledge-sharing, capacity building, and policy engagement, and handed over a laptop to the province to support online data management and coordination. The event ended with a renewed commitment from all participants to strengthen disaster governance, promote inclusive practices, and enhance provincial capacity for preparedness and response. Participants expressed optimism about the newly formed committee's leadership and its role in advancing DPNet's mission at the provincial level.

Sphere and CHS Orientation Held in Biratnagar to Promote Quality Humanitarian Response



An orientation session on the Sphere Standard and Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) was conducted on March 19, 2024, in Biratnagar. The program was organized by DPNet Koshi Province in coordination with LCWS, LWF Nepal, CARITAS Nepal, SN-JD, and JIDS. The event brought together key stakeholders from government, civil society, and humanitarian organizations working in the field of disaster preparedness and response in Koshi Province.

The objective of the session was to enhance the understanding of Sphere Standards and the Core Humanitarian Standard among local actors and to promote the practical application of these global guidelines in humanitarian response settings. The orientation was designed to be interactive, informative, and rooted in real-world examples from Nepal's disaster response experiences.

The session began by Dr. Raju Thapa assessing participants' prior knowledge of the Sphere Standards. It was found that a significant number of attendees had limited familiarity with the standards, indicating a strong need for such orientations at the provincial level. To address this, the facilitator engaged participants in a short quiz with practical multiple-choice questions. These included topics such as the recommended daily water intake per person during emergencies, minimum shelter space required per individual, and the standard calorie intake in humanitarian settings. The quiz helped spark curiosity and discussion among participants and set the tone for an engaging session.

Following this, the facilitator introduced the Sphere Standards in detail, explaining their origin and purpose. The Sphere Project was launched in 1997 by humanitarian NGOs and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to improve the quality and accountability of humanitarian assistance. The session covered the structure of the Sphere Handbook, which includes both foundational and technical chapters. The foundational chapters comprising the Humanitarian Charter, Protection Principles, and

Core Humanitarian Standard provide the ethical and rights-based foundation for humanitarian action. The technical chapters offer minimum standards across key sectors such as Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion (WASH), Food Security and Nutrition, Shelter and Settlement, and Health.

Special attention was given to the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS), which outlines nine commitments for quality and accountable humanitarian action. The facilitator informed participants that the CHS was recently revised in 2024 to reflect evolving challenges and strengthen its relevance. To help participants internalize these commitments, a fun and engaging teacher-student game was conducted. In this activity, participants competed to recall and explain all nine CHS commitments. Winners of the game were awarded copy of the Sphere Handbook, encouraging continued learning and application of the standards.

Dr. Raju Thapa facilitated the session, combining his technical expertise with interactive teaching methods. Through the use of real-life case studies, games, and group discussions, he was able to simplify complex standards and make them accessible and relevant to the participants' local context. The session concluded with reflections from participants who expressed appreciation for the knowledge gained and a strong interest in applying the Sphere Standards and CHS in their respective roles to improve the quality and accountability of humanitarian response in Koshi Province.

DPNet Team Congratulates Dinesh Bhatta on Appointment as Executive Chief of NDRRMA



The DPNet team extended warm congratulations and best wishes to Dinesh Bhatta on his appointment as the Chief Executive of the NDRRMA. The DPNet team, including Immediate Past President (IPP) Surya Bahadur Thapa, General Secretary Suraj Gautam, executive committee members, advisors, and technical advisors, visited the NDRRMA office on March 21, 2025, to formally convey their regards. On behalf of the team, DPNet Chairperson Dr. Raju Thapa presented a bouquet and khada to Mr. Bhatta, followed by the entire team offering khadas as a gesture of admiration and good wishes. In his brief remarks, Dr. Thapa congratulated Mr. Bhatta and expressed the team's confidence in his leadership, wishing him a successful and impactful tenure ahead.

While the visit was primarily a congratulatory one, Dr. Thapa suggested organizing a dedicated meeting with the broader DPNet team in the near future to provide in-depth suggestions and recommendations that could support Mr. Bhatta's leadership in advancing disaster risk reduction and management in Nepal. During an informal discussion, the DPNet team shared a few preliminary suggestions, emphasizing the importance of taking timely and strategic steps. One of the key suggestions was the immediate facilitation for the provisions related to Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council on the appointment of three expert members. Additionally, the team highlighted the urgent need to fulfill the mandate of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, which requires five expert members, including at least two women, to ensure inclusive representation and functionality.

The team also encouraged Mr. Bhatta to begin preparations for Nepal's participation in the upcoming Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. Suggestions included initiating the GPDRR basket fund, starting discussions on developing a national position paper, and drafting the official statement to represent Nepal at the global forum. Furthermore, DPNet recommended that NDRRMA convene

regular multi-stakeholder consultations involving UN agencies, donors, INGOs, NGOs, academia, media, the private sector, and disaster-affected communities at least once every two months. Such inclusive dialogues, the team emphasized, would enhance collective understanding and cooperation in disaster governance.

In response, Mr. Bhatta expressed his sincere gratitude for the warm wishes and thoughtful suggestions. He appreciated DPNet's commitment and acknowledged the importance of collaborative engagement. He affirmed his positive attitude toward working with all stakeholders and expressed hope that DPNet would serve as his right hand in achieving effective disaster risk management throughout his tenure.

Nepal's Disaster Management Takes a Step Forward with New Monthly Dialogue Commitment



Kathmandu, 27 April 2025 – The NDRRMA hosted a half-day “DRR Dialogue with the Home Minister” in collaboration with DPNet-Nepal, supported by AWO International and Aktion Deutschland Hilft. The event brought together 61 representatives from government institution, security forces, UN agencies, NGOs, academia, private sector, and the media to discuss strengthening disaster management in Nepal.

Opening the event, Suraj Gautam, General Secretary of DPNet-Nepal, reflected on the lessons from the 2015 Gorkha earthquake and listed recent climate-induced disasters like last September's floods, the Dodhara-Chandani cloudburst, and the Thame glacial-lake outburst. He emphasized that these events exposed serious gaps in early warning systems, disaster risk financing, and coordination among agencies. He pointed out that these weaknesses could be fixed if the right institutions worked together, and he encouraged everyone present to focus on practical solutions.

Following Mr. Gautam, Shakti Gurung, Vice-Chair of DPNet-Nepal, warmly welcomed all the participants on behalf of the civil society sector. She thanked AWO & ADH for supporting the event, making it possible to gather in person in Kathmandu rather than online. Shakti emphasized that disaster risk management efforts in Nepal often end up being scattered conversations without concrete actions. She urged participants to focus on providing clear, solution-oriented recommendations that could be implemented before the upcoming monsoon season.

Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa, Immediate Past Chair of DPNet-Nepal and the main architect of the dialogue series, then outlined the purpose of the program. He explained that while NGOs, academia, and technical experts are doing important work, they often operate separately, and the Ministry of

Home Affairs, which leads disaster response, usually receives delayed or fragmented information. He highlighted that the goal of the dialogue was to directly connect ground-level realities and expert advice with the Home Minister so that quick and timely decisions could be made. He also strongly recommended that the dialogue become a regular event held every month.

Setting the stage for open discussion, Dr. Raju Thapa, Chair of DPNet-Nepal and Member Secretary of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, invited participants to share suggestions focused mainly on pre-monsoon preparedness. He encouraged everyone to propose actions that could be implemented immediately, preferably without needing new laws or large budgets. His clear message was: focus on solutions, not just problems.

During the open floor discussion, participants raised a wide range of important issues. Some spoke about the rising risks from pre-monsoon hazards like heatwaves, thunderstorms, and lightning. Others stressed the urgent need for better forest fire management and stronger early warning systems. There were also calls to use indigenous knowledge, such as traditional drainage and slope management techniques, which have proven effective in some rural areas. Speakers also highlighted the importance of completing the guidelines that define disaster roles and responsibilities across federal, provincial, and local levels, and ensuring local governments are empowered and well-supported.

When the Hon Home Minister Ramesh Lekhak took the floor, he praised the quality and seriousness of the recommendations shared during the dialogue. He stated that he was highly impressed by the range of ideas and solutions presented. The Home Minister announced that this dialogue series will now be held every month to maintain momentum and ensure regular feedback. He instructed NDRRMA to carefully document all the recommendations discussed and report back on the progress made during the next dialogue session. Importantly, he made it clear that NDRRMA's performance would be evaluated based on how quickly and effectively these recommendations are addressed.

The Home Minister also encouraged better use of low-cost technologies like early warning systems and suggested including direct phone alerts along with SMS to make sure warnings reach the people on time. He expressed support for using innovations such as location coding systems to speed up disaster rescue efforts. Furthermore, he emphasized the need to strengthen local governments, calling them the "first responders" during any disaster. He mentioned that while the federal government should focus on making policies and strategies, local and provincial governments must be empowered to act quickly during emergencies.

In response, Mr. Dinesh Bhatta, Chief Executive of NDRRMA, welcomed the Home Minister's guidance and committed to taking swift action. He promised that the upcoming Monsoon Preparedness Plan would be concise and practical, helping local governments take early actions. He also mentioned that discussions were underway with technology providers like Google to enhance earthquake early warning systems in Nepal. Dinesh shared that steps were already being taken to hand over humanitarian staging areas to provincial governments and that more warehouses would be established at the local level to improve emergency response.

The event concluded with a strong sense of determination. Participants agreed that first dialogue was not just another meeting but a real opportunity to build a stronger, more coordinated disaster management system in Nepal. The commitment from the Home Minister to hold monthly follow-ups, backed by clear actions from NDRRMA, gave hope that many of the problems highlighted would now begin to see real progress.