



eBulletin

JULY-AUG 2023



Summary

DPNet, in collaboration with USAID's Tayar Nepal and other stakeholders, has undertaken various initiatives and collaborations between July and August 2023 to strengthen disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) across Nepal. These efforts encompassed discussions, committee formations, and program implementations aimed at enhancing resilience, policy effectiveness, and community engagement in disaster management.

On July 17, 2023, DPNet and USAID's Tayar Nepal organized a Market System Resilience Policy Dialogue. This event brought together government agencies, the private sector, and development partners to discuss the importance of diversity, flexibility, and adaptability in market systems for DRRM, integrating private sector efforts into disaster management. A virtual session was held on July 31 to address the spread of Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD) among cattle, discussing its impact on agriculture and dairy production. Government measures, including vaccine distribution, were highlighted, along with the need for effective management and relief efforts for affected farmers. On August 4, 2023, a Policy Dialogue for Disaster Risk Transfer and Financing explored proactive measures for disaster preparedness, emphasizing the role of insurance in disaster risk management and discussing strategies for comprehensive policies.

Another dialogue on August 7 focused on Multi-Level Disaster Risk Governance, stressing clear role delineation, accountability, and coordination among government tiers, alongside integration into development planning. DPNet established provincial committees in Lumbini Province (August 11) and Karnali Province (August 13) to enhance collaboration and strengthen DRRM efforts at the provincial level. Events in these provinces reviewed DRRM implementation progress, discussed challenges, and offered recommendations for improving disaster governance.

On August 18, a discussion explored Standards for Effective Agricultural Disaster Response (SEADS), emphasizing alignment with crop practices and preservation of indigenous seed systems amidst socio-economic and climatic changes. Concluding the series, a Policy Dialogue on Disaster Risk Reduction Policies on August 24 evaluated and enhanced DRR policies, addressing implementation gaps, role duplication, and advocating for streamlined approaches and inclusivity.

Throughout these initiatives, DPNet has demonstrated a commitment to fostering resilient communities, enhancing policy effectiveness, and promoting collaborative efforts in disaster risk reduction and management across Nepal. The e-bulletin highlights DPNet's proactive stance in addressing challenges and building capacities to mitigate disaster impacts.

Discussion Program on Market System Resilience



DPNet Nepal, in collaboration with USAID’s Tayar Nepal, conducted a Policy Dialogue for Market System Resilience on July 17, 2023. The event aimed to catalyze collaboration, coordination, and partnerships to improve the resilience of market systems in Nepal. The program witnessed representatives from the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA), Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies (MoICS), World Food Programme (WFP), Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI), government agencies, development partner, private sector, DRR experts, security sector.

Dr. Raju Thapa, Acting Chair of DPNet-Nepal and Program Chair, highlighted the vital role of Market System Resilience (MSR) in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). He emphasized the integration of the Private

Sector into DRRM efforts and outlined the key components of MSR: diversity, flexibility, and adaptability. Dr. Thapa supported his points with real-world examples, including the Bangladesh Flood and the growth of the e-commerce sector during the COVID-19 pandemic. He also discussed how energy crises can lead to energy diversification, strengthening overall market system resilience. During the presentation session, Dr. Sridhar Thapa, WFP shared his presentation titled Market System Resilience: WFP he emphasized the comprehensive understanding of markets, encompassing physical establishments and online platforms. He stressed the significance of supply and consumer value chains, as well as market transparency, in ensuring stability. Dr. Thapa highlighted the vulnerability of market systems to various shocks and identified challenges

faced by Nepal's market performance and resilience, such as issues with road networks, informal markets, data gaps, and government policies. He emphasized the importance of analyzing India's influence on Nepal's market power and conducting district-level market performance assessments.

Mr. Deepak Aryal, Mercy Corps Nepal presented on MSR from the perspectives of Disaster Risk Management and the interconnectedness of markets with social, cultural, and environmental contexts. He discussed the challenges faced in their practice, including limited risk fragility checks, low financial literacy, discrimination, limited outreach, and weak market linkages. Mr. Aryal presented case studies, highlighting the effectiveness of the nexus approach in integrating disaster risk reduction and market system development. He also mentioned successful interventions in the sugarcane and dairy production sectors.

Mr. Cecial Adhikari, Mercy Corps Nepal focused on a case-based intervention called BHAKARI, which aimed to address emergency food needs in vulnerable households along the Karnali River. During his presentation on [Market System Resilience: Experience from Mercy Corps](#) he highlighted the use of a cash transfer approach, short-term cash and voucher assessments, and longer-term resilience initiatives. The program involved partnerships with 150 merchants and employed market

analysis tools to ensure sustainability and resilience.

Concluding the Presentation Session, Dr. Thapa, the Program Chair, briefly mentioned the government's efforts to strengthen the nexus between DRR and MSR, although he didn't provide specific details about their initiatives. He acknowledged the significant impact of crisis events on the market and emphasized the importance of identifying resilience in such situations. However, the specific methods for identifying resilience were not discussed.

Dr. Thapa highlighted the interconnectedness between community resilience, DRR, and MSR, emphasizing the vital role of community resilience in enhancing both DRR and MSR. However, no specific strategies or mechanisms for achieving this interlinkage were mentioned during the session. Dr. Thapa then opened the floor for further discussion, allowing participants to share their perspectives and insights on the topic.

Open Floor Discussion:

Mr. Pramod Lamichhane, FCAN highlighted payment issues affecting the supply chain and its impact on contractors, labor, and the market.

Mr. Rudra Adhikari, NRCS emphasized considering a DRR perspective, policy institutionalization, enhancing work capacity, and the importance of the Cash Working Group.

Mr. Bishnu Timilsina, DiMaNN/FPCRN stressed practical interventions, quality checks, effective monitoring, regulatory mechanisms, and market governance for consumer rights during emergencies.

Mr. Jagannath Kurmi, NPDRR-Disaster Affected Community highlighted negative impacts of product duplication and overpricing, emphasizing the need to address root issues for a stable market system.

Mr. Sridhar Khanal discussed the government's role in MSR and the importance of defining post-disaster goods delivery to strengthen resilience.

Mr. Dipak Pd. Dahal, FNCCI discussed challenges like mask shortages and sanitizer production issues, commending medicine quality checks, and expressing concerns about future shortages.

Mr. Murari Pokharel, NHRC underscored the importance of evaluating and monitoring policies for MSR. He emphasized the roles of humanitarian agencies and duty bearers, and the government's supervision in assessing capacity gaps. He emphasized the adopting a rights-based approach as crucial aspect for achieving resilient market systems.

Ms. Krishna Karkee, USAID's Tayar Nepal emphasized the importance of addressing

policy gaps in the market system for enhanced MSR. She focused on the roles of consumers and sellers and emphasized the need for policy analysis and evaluation. By reviewing existing policies and implementing targeted interventions, the resilience of the market system can be improved, addressing specific challenges and ensuring better implementation and effectiveness.

Ms. Shanti Mahat, NDRRMA emphasized a strong market cycle, resilient production, and the development of government insurance policies for Market System Resilience.

Mr. Somnath Gautam, MoICS emphasized the significance of the market system in DRR, mainstreaming DRR principles, and collaboration between government and private entities for regulation.

Mr. Dambar Bahadur BK, Nepal Police highlighted the need for policy emphasis and prioritizing security in the supply chain to strengthen the market system's resilience.

In his concluding remarks Program Chair Dr. Thapa emphasized that the event proved to be sensitizing in MSR. It indicated the need for fostering collaboration among the private sector, government, and stakeholders. Furthermore, the program concluded with signing the commitment paper to work together in market system resilience.

Online Interaction Session on “Lumpy Skin Disease Epidemic in Nepal”



On July 31, 2023, DPNet Nepal, organized a virtual interaction session on "Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD) Epidemic in Nepal" via an online platform. The session aimed to raise awareness about the rapid spread of LSD, its causes, impacts, and the necessary preventive measures. It also provided a platform for experts and stakeholders to discuss whether LSD should be classified as a disaster and to explore strategies for assessing and preventing its future occurrence.

The program commenced with a warm welcome to all the participants by Dr. Raju Thapa, the Acting Chair of DPNet Nepal. Dr. Thapa expressed his concerns about the widespread infection of LSD in cattle, leading to heavy losses for farmers, including the loss of animals, reduced dairy production, and its consequent impact on agriculture. He urged for proper budget allocation for relief efforts, and proper mobilization of existing livestock services and emphasized the importance of early preparedness to tackle future epidemics like lumpy skin disease. Dr. Thapa also advocated for providing relief packages to

affected farmers to mitigate their economic losses.

During the session, Dr. Nabaraj Shrestha, Veterinary Officer at the Central Veterinary Laboratory, provided an overview of the current state of Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD) in Nepal and explored potential strategies for preventing and managing such epidemics. Dr. Shrestha defined LSD as a contagious virus that spreads among cattle, leading to symptoms such as high fever, loss of appetite, reduced milk output, and enlarged lymph nodes. The disease was first reported in Sundarharaicha Municipality of Morang district in July 2020.

Since its initial detection, LSD has taken a toll on Nepal's livestock sector, with over 1.1 million cattle estimated to have contracted the disease, resulting in losses exceeding Rs. 30 billion. Dr. Shrestha emphasized that no specific medications are currently available to treat infected animals, underlining the critical role of preventive measures like vaccination in controlling the disease.

Dr. Shrestha also informed that the government has taken some steps to combat the epidemic. Specifically, they have imported 737,000 doses of the vaccine and distributed them to all seven provinces. As of now, 172,128 cattle have received the vaccine, but approximately 290,602 animals are still actively infected. However, there is some hope as the Department

of Livestock Service claims that the rate of infection is gradually decreasing.

The event also featured an open floor discussion where various stakeholders shared their perspectives:

Mr. Mahadev Panth, Joint Secretary and Head of the Disaster and Conflict Management Division at the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA), emphasized the need for a curative approach to address the issue at the grassroots level. He proposed allocating separate budgets and making vaccines available locally to control the disease effectively. He also encouraged disaster management committees and organizations to play an active role in spreading knowledge and awareness about LSD.

Mr. Kedar Neupane, Former Secretary of the Government of Nepal, expressed his concerns about the lack of available medications and suggested special arrangements and effective management to address the widespread epidemic.

Mr. Bhim Karki highlighted the significance of prioritizing pandemics like LSD and allocating budgets accordingly to tackle such situations promptly.

Mr. Pradip Koirala, Joint Secretary of the Government of Nepal, raised questions regarding the adequacy of existing laws to address animal health concerns at the

grassroots level and emphasized the need for problem assessment to seek possible solutions.

Mr. Tulsi Prasad Dahal, Under Secretary at MoHA, sought clarity on whether LSD falls under animal flu and if it poses any risks to human health through the consumption of infected animal products.

Ms. Amika Rajthala, President of Disaster Journalism Network inquired about monitoring efforts related to the consumption of milk and meat products from infected animals. Mr. Sitaram Shrestha, Executive Director at SSICDC Gorkha, shared community-level experiences gathered by NGOs working in disaster management and urged for increased awareness among local communities about vaccine availability and affordability.

Dr. Nabaraj Shrestha addressed the open discussion, emphasizing that both the lack of relevant laws and inadequate implementation contribute to the challenges in controlling the disease. He stressed the importance of establishing strong reporting channels between local and central levels to assess issues effectively. Dr. Shrestha also reassured participants that LSD is not communicable to humans but warned against consuming products derived from diseased animals due to potential nutritional and food quality issues. He provided information about the vaccine prices and dosing requirements and referred participants to the Department of Livestock

Service Website's FAQ section for further information.

Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa, Chair of DPNet, made an eager plea for an urgent relief package to support the affected farmers and strongly advocated for timely rescue operations and vaccination of cattle. In his appeal to the concerned authorities, Mr. Thapa emphasized the critical need to mobilize veterinarians

effectively, ensure an adequate supply of vaccines, and arrange necessary human resources to promptly provide immunization services.

In his closing remarks, Dr. Raju Thapa assured the participants that DPNet is ready to continue working on this issue if required and thanked everyone for their active participation in the program.

Policy Dialogue for Disaster Risk Transfer and Financing



On August 04, 2023, DPNet, in partnership with USAID/Tayar, organized a Policy Dialogue for Disaster Risk Transfer and Financing. The event, chaired by Dr. Raju Thapa, Acting Chairperson of DPNet, was attended by representatives from government

agencies, semi-government agencies, UN agencies, private sector, and DRR experts.

Dr. Raju Thapa, Acting Chair of DPNet Nepal and Program Chair commenced the program by addressing an issue arising from the unusual interpretation of jargon, underscoring the need

for clear understanding. He directed attention toward the differences between policies and the challenges in their execution. He emphasized the complexities faced in claiming insurance payouts, particularly for farmers, leading to diminished trust. Recent reports from Baglung revealed the government's substantial contribution to livestock insurance premiums, yet only 13 people benefited. Dr. Thapa encouraged all active participation in the discussion.

Mr. Kedar Neupane, Former Secretary of the Government of Nepal explained that Nepal has encountered various disasters, excluding oceanic and volcanic ones. However, our focus remains on post-disaster rescue and relief, rather than risk transfer, insurance, and funding. He cited the 2017 flood, where uneven aid distribution due to poor post-disaster management highlighted the value of disaster insurance as a better preparedness option. Discussing COVID insurance, Mr. Neupane underscored the challenges in proper implementation during epidemics, stressing the need for clear guidelines and preparation beforehand with the aim to enhance disaster financing, especially among challenges like disaster and epidemic.

During the presentation, **Mr. Nirmal Adhikari, Deputy Director of the National Insurance Authority (NIA)** delivered a presentation on [Disaster Risk Management in Nepal and NIA's Initiatives and Strategies](#) comprehensive overview of Nepal's insurance-centric strategy

for DRR, emphasizing its potential to brace the nation against natural calamities to address critical challenges. He underscored NIA's crucial role in shaping policies and priorities aimed at strengthening DRRM through insurance-based approaches clarifying various funds; the Prime Minister Central DRRM Fund and Provincial, District, and Local DRRM Funds, which primarily focus on relief and recovery endeavors. He explained the distinction between the National Insurance Board (NIB) and NIA, with the latter functioning as the regulatory authority abiding by international insurance models. He elaborated NIA's functions within the framework of the Insurance Act, including a supervising committee chaired by a government-designated official, responsible for advising on policies and guidelines. Mr. Adhikari highlighted index-based insurance models tied to weather forecasts and impact predictions, such as flood directories, satellite-based agricultural insurance, and parametric insurance. Pilots of these models were noted, particularly in Jumla for apple farming and Karnali for flood coverage. He acknowledged challenges including limited public awareness, logistical complexities, and disparities in insurance coverage. NIA advocates for multi-level collaboration among the three tiers of government, emphasizing disaster resilience as a collective responsibility. Harnessing provincial, district, and local DRM funds for risk transfer, integrating mandatory insurance programs into construction projects, and

prioritizing insurance literacy campaigns were discussed as a way forward.

Mr. Bikram Rana, Project Manager Practical Action Index-Based Flood Insurance (IBFI) project, shared his experiences with Disaster Risk Financing, specifically the Climate & Disaster Risk Insurance (CDRI) Management Mechanism at Karnali River and Khutiya Khola, including the associated challenges and opportunities. Drawing attention to Nepal's established disaster risk financing strategy for 2020, Mr. Rana delicately emphasized the critical role of risk layering in shaping climate and disaster risk insurance. Mr. Rana insight that government compensation leans more towards subsidies rather than direct premium payments. Taking the example at Karnali, Mr. Rana states that the Department of Hydrology and Meteorology's (DHM) indicated threshold level in Karnali served as an entry point for program participation. Further, the positive outcome of 2022 emerged as the project gained approval from the National Insurance Authority (NIA), continuing in the enrollment of 935 farmers who experienced insurance payouts tied to increasing water levels. In 2023, the program also expanded to Khutiya and the program has presently engaged 4278 farmers in Karnali. The presentation also explored challenges faced, including underutilized subsidies in agriculture insurance, inclusivity of marginalized communities, the integration of insurance programs with broader development and disaster activities, and the need to harness flood resilience measurement for communities.

Mr. Rana acknowledged the challenge of extending insurance on a broader scale while maintaining an economically feasible cost structure.

Following the presentations, an open discussion underscored the importance of using disaster funds for insurance and risk reduction to safeguard vulnerable communities. The need for an awareness campaign to promote insurance literacy, particularly in rural areas, was emphasized. The participants deliberated on strategies to attract insurers to rural regions and enhance coverage for vulnerable populations, aiming to reduce access disparities. The discussion recognized the significance of collaboration between government tiers to support insurance policies, including the allocation of grants for Index-Based Flood Insurance. The participants stressed the necessity of strengthening insurance regulation and supervision to ensure transparency and fairness. During the dialogue, the simplification of insurance schemes related to agriculture and disasters emerged as a key area of discussion to increase accessibility and user-friendliness. Ultimately, all participants through a common commitment paper agreed to work towards implementing comprehensive disaster risk transfer and financing policies that encompass every stage of the disaster cycle, including preparedness, response, and mitigation, going beyond mere recovery and relief efforts.

During the closing session, Dr. Raju Thapa, Acting Chair of DPNet Nepal and Program Chair recognized the significance of collaboration between multi-stakeholders for implementing comprehensive disaster risk transfer and financing policies and making the

process much simpler so that more people can get benefited from the scheme. He also emphasized exploring alternative risk transfer methods alongside traditional insurance. He expressed a vote of thanks to all participants for their valuable presence.

Policy Dialogue on Multi-Level Disaster Risk Governance



On August 07, 2023, DPNet, in partnership with USAID/Tayar, organized a Policy Dialogue On Multi-Level Disaster Risk Governance. The event, chaired by Dr. Raju Thapa, Acting Chairperson of DPNet, was attended by representatives from government agencies including Mr. Rudra Singh Tamang, Joint Secretary of NDRRMA, Mr. Rishi Raj Acharya, MOFAGA, Mr. Tulsi Prasad Dahal, MoHA, and other personalities from IOM, NARMIN, NRCS, NIA, FNCCI, SOSEC, Blue Diamond Society, MOICS, FSCN, BPWN,

UNICEF, NIWF, IGFF, NARMIN, and ADCCN.

Dr. Raju Thapa, Acting Chair of DPNet and Program Chair, started by warmly welcoming all the esteemed guests and participants. He stressed the importance of turning the existing laws and policies for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) into practical actions. Referring to the period after the 2015 earthquake, he mentioned that we have a flood of policies but a drought of implementation. He then explained the goals of the program and invited everyone to contribute meaningfully. Despite the creation

of numerous policies and laws, the actual application of these measures has fallen short. Since it's 2023, the midterm review period of the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, he highlighted the need to closely examine where these efforts have faced challenges. Dr. Thapa encouraged all active participation in the discussion.

Mr. Kedar Neupane, Former Secretary of the Government of Nepal discussed the ongoing situation since 1990 B.S. Referring to Dabik Prakop Ain he pointed out the past belief that disasters were due to sins. Drawing lessons from the Gorkha Earthquake and COVID-19, a range of disaster-related topics were explored. He noted that governance hasn't significantly improved since 1990 BS, with policies existing but their execution remaining weak. He stressed that both natural and human-made disasters occur frequently, underlining the need to prioritize preparedness alongside rescue efforts. Mr. Neupane provided an example of the increasing frequency of bridge damage, emphasizing the importance of incorporating disaster risk governance in development. He also highlighted the necessity to revisit DRG issues and ensure clarity in roles for all levels and organizations.

Mr. Dinanath Bhandari, in his presentation [Federalizing DRRM Governance in Nepal: Delineation of Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities](#) addressed key governance concerns. In the years around 2018-2020 BS, local and provincial level

discussions were limited, rooted in traditional committee patterns. Mr. Bhandari explains that although policies now divide roles, delegation remains incomplete due to overlapping functions and technical capacity gaps. Mr. Bhandari discussed harmonizing constitution article 253 and LGO 2017, underscoring a need for power and technical capacity. He explored international examples from Bangladesh and India, revealing governance strengths and weaknesses. He explains that clear role assignments and accountability are crucial in Nepal and factors like data management and past data availability, capacity gaps, overlaps, and lack of common understanding must be addressed. He emphasized grassroots cooperation, adaptable roles, and local-level empowerment for the betterment of DRRM Governance in Nepal.

Mr. Tulsi Prasad Dahal, Under Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs presented on [Coordinating Roles of Three Tires of Government for Disaster Risk Reduction and Management \(विपद् जोखिम व्यवस्थापनका लागि संघ, प्रदेश र स्थानीय तह बिचको सहकार्य र समन्वय\)](#) Mr. Dahal highlighted the past experience of a tornado in Madhesh Province as a unique disaster, causing confusion over the responsible agency's response. He explains that MoHA is addressing such challenges by drafting a policy guideline. The guideline aims to clarify roles and responsibilities for disaster management in accordance with the Constitution, DRRM Act, and relevant provincial and local acts. It was developed in

response to the tornado incident and seeks to enhance coordination, avoid duplication, and ensure effective disaster response. Objectives of the guideline include promoting coordination and minimizing casualties, damage, and losses. Categorizing hazards is crucial, emphasizing impact-based forecasting. The guideline outlines four categories: Normal Scale, Medium Scale, Large Scale, and Mega Scale, with defined roles for each government level. He explains that, referring to legal provisions local governments have primary DRRM responsibility, while the other two levels of government handle residual risks and exceed capacities. The BIPAD PORTAL contains valuable data, although with limited awareness. Mr. Dahal highlighted India's provincial government's independence in disaster management and evacuation. He stressed clear role demarcation among ministries and agencies and the importance of provincial government roles. Mr. Dahal shared his experience of widespread reliance on MoHA and NDRRMA for all disaster types. Ultimately, the policy guideline aims to enhance collaboration and define roles for effective DRRM across government levels.

Mr. Rishi Raj Acharya, Under Secretary at the Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration (MOFAGA), presented on the topic [Strengthening Federalism and DRRM Policy Provision in Nepal \(संघीयताको सवलीकरणमा विपद् जोखिम व्यवस्थापन सम्बन्धी नीतिगत व्यवस्था\)](#). Initiating his presentation, Mr. Acharya highlighted the significance of

inter-ministerial and inter-agency coordination, emphasizing the importance of mutual cooperation between different levels of government and agencies for successful federalism implementation. He commended the local governments for their commendable role in managing the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic in Nepal. Mr. Acharya focused on policy provisions related to DRRM in Nepal, highlighting key documents and legislations such as the Constitution of Nepal, the DRRM Act of 2074, the DRRM Regulation of 2076, the Local Government Operation Act of 2076, the DRRM National Policy of 2075, the DRRM National Strategic Plan of Action (2018-2030), SDGs, the 15th National Plan, and the Environment Protection Act of 2076. He shared MOFAGA's long-term plan, which comprises four pillars including Federalism Implementation and Facilitation, Human Resource Management for Public Service, Facilitation in Local Infrastructure and Development, and Service Delivery and Good Governance. He emphasized MOFAGA's support for localization efforts through policy support and the development of various model documents, including the Model DRRM Act, strategy, Standard Operating Procedure for Local Emergency Operations Centers (LEOCs), Local Disaster and Climate Resilient Plans (LDCRP), Risk Sensitive Land Use Plans (RSLUP), Urban DRR Toolkit, Local Government Institutional Self-Assessment Framework (LISA), and Municipal Disaster Risk Governance Assessment Tool including

the need to strengthen the capacities of local levels, establish clear guidelines for DRRM fund mobilization, enforce building codes and safe construction practices, and promote effective land use planning. Mr. Acharya identified the opportunity for improved outcomes through better coordination and collaboration among the three levels of government and emphasized the importance of strengthening the data system and harmonization efforts.

The expert dialogue covered several key aspects of disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM). The importance of enhancing infrastructure and response systems, particularly road and airline connectivity, during disasters, was highlighted. Mr. Bhojraj Ghimire stressed cluster-specific response, considering the geographical intensity and sectorial assessments. Integrating disaster risk reduction (DRR) with climate change adaptation (CCA) for essential needs like food and aiding damaged houses emerged as a priority according to Ms. Namita Paudel. Enhanced coordination among government agencies, especially MoHA's pivotal role, and a whole-of-government approach for effective pre, during, and post-disaster roles were emphasized. Collaboration among government

levels and the role of insurance in disaster management were discussed by Mr. Nirmal Adhikari. Inclusivity in awareness programs, demographic considerations, and the importance of local-level challenges were addressed by Ms. Saru Joshi and Ms. Pratigya Neupane, respectively. Strong coordination in mega-disasters, such as maintaining supply chains, was highlighted by Mr. Sujan Neupane, while Mr. Prem Awasthi stressed the need for better governance and emergency response systems.

Mr. Tirtha Raj Joshi, Deputy Chief of Party at USAID-TAYAR Nepal, expressed gratitude to all participants and presenters, acknowledging the value of the policy dialogue. He found the discussions fruitful and welcomed the guidance and suggestions shared by everyone involved.

Dr. Raju Thapa emphasized the need for better collaboration and coordination among different levels of government, along with a clear delineation of roles. He stressed for enhancing insurance systems, promoting inclusivity, and considering the evolving demographic situation were highlighted as important steps. He advocated to strengthen infrastructure and response systems, along with proactive efforts for emergency management.

Formation of DPNet Lumbini Province Committee



On August 11, 2023, DPNet Province Level Committee formation meeting was organized by DPNet Nepal at Bhalubang, Dang of Lumbini Province. The meeting was attended by DPNet members of Lumbini Province including Bheri Environmental Excellence Group (BEE Group), Dalit Social Development Center, Indreni Rural Development Center Nepal, Centre for Development and Disaster Management (CDM Nepal), Rural Community Health and Development Center, Nepal, Social Service Environment and Cultural Preservation Group, National Rural and Community Development Center Nepal and Community Development Forum along with Dr. Raju Thapa, Acting Chair, Mr. Harshaman Maharjan, Deputy General Secretary and Mr. Sher Bahadur Karki, Member of DPNet Central Committee.

Dr. Raju Thapa explained the organizational structures along with the activities of DPNet to all participants. He further explained the role of DPNet as the secretariat of the National Platform for DRR at the federal level. He advised all the members of Lumbini Province to enhance their collaboration and cooperation to strengthen disaster risk reduction and management at Lumbini Province.

After a fruitful discussion and commitment of members to work together, DPNet Lumbini Province Committee was formed with the 'Centre for Development and Disaster Management (CDM Nepal)' as coordinator.

Dr. Raju Thapa extended congratulations to the newly appointed coordinator and all participants, emphasizing their dedication to collaborating closely with the provincial committee to effectively enhance disaster risk reduction efforts across Lumbini province.

Formation of DPNet Karnali Province Committee

On August 13, 2023, DPNet Province Level Committee formation meeting was organized by DPNet Nepal at Birendranagar, Surkhet of Karnali Province. The meeting was attended by DPNet members of Karnali Province including Social Awareness Center SAC, Surkhet, SOSEC Nepal, Dailekh, Sharada, RukumPaschim, Surya Social Service Society (4S), Jumla, Development Society Nepal, Salyan, Rukumeli Social Development Center (RSDC), Rukum Paschim, Panchtara Yuwa Samrakshak Manch (PTYSM), Jajarkot, Village Development and Save the Environment Forum (VDSEF) Nepal, Kalikot along with Dr. Raju Thapa, Acting Chair, Mr. Harshaman Maharjan, Deputy General Secretary and Mr. Sher Bahadur Karki, Member of DPNet Central Committee.

Dr. Raju Thapa explained the organizational structures along with the activities of DPNet to all participants. He further explained the role of DPNet as the secretariat of the National Platform for DRR at the federal level. Dr. Thapa further underscored the importance of



fostering collaboration and cooperation among Karnali Province members to fortify disaster risk reduction and management within the province.

After a fruitful discussion and commitment of members to work together, DPNet Karnali Province Committee was formed with the ‘SOSEC Nepal’ as coordinator.

Dr. Raju Thapa extended congratulations to the newly appointed coordinator and all participants, emphasizing their dedication to collaborating closely with the provincial committee to effectively enhance disaster risk reduction efforts across Karnali province.

Provincial DRR Policy Implementation and Learning Program at Lumbini Province

Dang, August 11, 2023 - Disaster Preparedness Network (DPNet-Nepal), with financial and technical support from USAID's Tayar Nepal, organized a significant event aimed at enhancing Disaster Risk Governance, inclusion, and accountability in Lumbini

Province, Nepal. The gathering brought together key government officials, security forces, NGOs, and representatives from various sectors to address contextual issues, review progress in DRRM implementation, and offer

recommendations for more effective disaster management.



The opening ceremony of the provincial event commenced with Mr. Sher Bahadur Karki welcoming all attendees. The event was chaired by Dr. Raju Thapa, Acting Chairperson of DPNet, and featured dignitaries such as Mr. Lalbabu Kawari, Secretary of Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA), Lumbini Province, and Mr. Narulal Chaudary, Mayor of Ghorahi Sub Metropolitan City, among others. In the opening remarks, Dr. Thapa emphasized the collaborative nature of disaster management efforts at all government levels, in line with Nepal's constitutional provisions. He underscored the importance of reviewing progress against set targets, echoing the global mid-term review of the Sendai Framework for DRR.

Key insights were shared during the technical session, with Mr. Kedar Neupane, Former Secretary of the Government of Nepal, highlighting the need for inclusive disaster management strategies. He stressed the significance of pre-disaster planning and reducing hazards through effective mapping. Mr. Neupane also advocated for disaster-

resilient infrastructure and collaborative mechanisms among security forces and stakeholders.

Dr. Raju Thapa, Program chair started his presentation by discussing Nepal's earthquake history, notably the devastating Gorkha Earthquake of 2015. He highlighted Nepal's vulnerabilities to disasters. Referring to the Gorkha Earthquake of 2015 that devastated 31 districts, he emphasized the ripple effects on education due to over 19,000 classrooms being destroyed. Dr. Thapa underscored how disasters impact society on various levels, urging stronger disaster risk reduction (DRR) policies. He discussed future earthquake predictions, also highlighting the damage caused by floods and landslides.

Dr. Thapa addressed Nepal's diverse land structure and underprepared modernization, citing induced hazard risks. Dr. Thapa delved into Lumbini Province's risk scenario, discussing preparedness efforts and past lessons. He raised concerns about policy implementation at the federal level and funding accountability. He highlighted the interconnectedness of disaster impacts on various societal systems and emphasized the importance of enhanced DRR policies at the provincial level. The presentation included risk scenarios, future predictions, and the importance of localized preparedness. The presentation concluded by focusing on NPDRR's roles in coordination and posing thought-provoking questions to engage

participants underscoring the need for robust DRR policies and implementation at provincial levels to mitigate disaster impacts and foster a resilient society.

Mr. Khimananda Gyawali, Under Secretary of MOHA, Lumbini Province, outlined provincial goals for disaster risk reduction, emphasizing climate change adaptation and poverty reduction. He discussed specific strategies, including forest and construction regulations, to enhance preparedness and response capabilities.

Mr. Narulal Chaudary, Mayor of Ghorahi Sub-Metropolitan City, highlighted collaborative disaster risk reduction efforts across government levels. He underlined the shared commitment to policy formulation, implementation, and cooperation with security forces.

Mr. Chaudary voiced concerns about their preparedness gaps despite collective efforts. He advocated for implementing the National Building Code (NBC) to bolster structure resilience and called for streamlined and practical NBC implementation. He proudly shared Ghorahi's stance, only permitting construction to meet NBC standards. Recognizing resource constraints, Chaudary emphasized the common objective of reducing loss of life and enhancing disaster management. His insights emphasized Ghorahi's dedication to disaster resilience and adherence to rigorous standards.

Mr. Lalbabu Kawari, Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs in Lumbini Province, emphasized the paramount importance of comprehensive disaster preparedness and post-disaster planning. He revealed the province's shift towards proactive preparedness efforts and the allocation of disaster funds for pre-disaster planning, underlining the need for legal provisions.

Mr. Kawari highlighted the province's role in policy shaping and equipment support despite not being the primary responder. He expressed eagerness to collaborate with stakeholders, particularly the private sector, underlining the strategic action plan's emphasis on stakeholder involvement. Recognizing existing stockpiles of essentials in Butwal and the Armed Police Force's resources, Kawari acknowledged their limitations in addressing large-scale disasters. He stressed multi-stakeholder collaboration, citing the necessity for sustainable post-disaster shelter options beyond using schools. He extended gratitude to attendees for their contributions to the event, reinforcing the commitment to disaster preparedness and collaboration for effective risk reduction and management while concluding his discussion.

Mr. Puran Chandra Bhatta, Battalion Commander of the Armed Police Force and local municipalities shared insights on disaster response, underlining the importance of local-level preparedness and collaboration. Private sector engagement and addressing challenges posed by wildlife were also discussed.

Dr. Thapa gave a closing remark restating the importance of provincial and local-level disaster management. Dr. Thapa emphasized well-defined responsibilities, innovative approaches, and technology dissemination. He stressed the integration of disaster risk reduction into development plans and regular policy reviews.

Key recommendations emerged from the event, including inclusive disaster management,

disaster-resilient infrastructure development, collaboration, local government empowerment, policy review, resource stockpiling, and private sector engagement.

This event marked a significant step towards strengthening disaster risk reduction efforts in Lumbini Province, fostering collaboration among stakeholders and emphasizing the need for proactive and holistic disaster management strategies.

Provincial DRR Policy Implementation and Learning Program at Karnali Province



Karnali Province, August 13, 2023 - Disaster Preparedness Network (DPNet-Nepal), with financial and technical support from USAID's Tayar Nepal, organized a significant event aimed at enhancing Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) governance, inclusion, and accountability in Karnali Province, Nepal. The gathering brought

together key government officials, security forces, NGOs, and representatives from various sectors to address contextual issues, review progress in DRRM implementation, and offer recommendations for more effective disaster management.

The opening ceremony of the provincial event commenced with Mr. Sher Bahadur Karki

welcoming all attendees and providing an overview of the program's objectives and outline. Dr. Raju Thapa, Acting Chair of DPNet Nepal presided over the event, while Hon. Krishna Bahadur G.C., Minister of Internal Affairs and Law, Karnali Province served as the chief guest. Mr. Ananda Saru, Acting Chief Secretary, Office of the Chief Minister and Council of Ministers, Karnali Province, and Mr. Narayan Prasad Sapkota, CDO, District Administration Office, Surkhet, served as special guests for the program. The program was attended by government representatives, security forces, and various stakeholders working in Karnali Province.

Mr. Sher Bahadur Karki, the EMCEE of the program, extended a warm welcome to all the distinguished guests and participants. He proceeded to elaborate on the disastrous scenarios faced by the Karnali province, encompassing the inundation of Surkhet, road blockages in hilly areas, obstructions along the Karnali Highway, occurrences of high avalanches, and frequent landslides. He emphasized the fact that the program was designed to serve as a platform for learning and sharing, aiming to benefit everyone involved.

Mr. Kedar Neupane, Former Secretary of the Government of Nepal, extended warm greetings and thanked the event organizers, and proceeded to highlight geographical complexities and hazard identification issues, emphasizing the need for proper engineering to prevent future disasters. Mr. Neupane

underlined the ongoing developmental steps, particularly in Jumla and Mugu, stressing hazard mapping for disaster mitigation. He discussed his experience during the Jagarkot Diarrhea outbreak, advocating adaptive measures like cash-for-work initiatives. Addressing agriculture challenges, he promoted innovative approaches due to wildlife interference and the need for farmer rehabilitation. Mr. Neupane praised Karnali's Group Accident Insurance Program and inquired about the Godam Ghar project. He urged indigenous technology adoption and centralized relief efforts, highlighting critical infrastructure management, such as the Bheri Bridge.

Dr. Raju Thapa, Program Chair shared a presentation that shed light on historical disasters, including the 2015 Gorkha Earthquake, and stressed the need for robust DRR policies and implementation. He detailed the 2015 Gorkha Earthquake's profound impact, leaving 14 districts extremely vulnerable and causing widespread building destruction and educational disruption. Strengthening disaster risk reduction (DRR) policies at the provincial level for effective preparedness was emphasized. The presentation offered earthquake predictions based on historical data, focusing on Karnali Province's risk. Concerns were raised about policy implementation and accountability, with questions surrounding the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority's

(NDRRMA) fund distribution and infrastructure planning.

Challenges stemming from Nepal's diverse terrain and inadequate preparedness strategies were discussed. Dr. Thapa also highlighted NPDRR's coordination role at various levels and concluded with thought-provoking questions. The presentation underscored the urgency of robust DRR policies and practices in Nepal, recognizing the interconnectedness of disasters and the need for comprehensive preparedness efforts.

Mr. Rajesh Shoni, USAID's Tayar Nepal elaborated on the involvement of USAID/Tayar Nepal for comprehensive disaster risk reduction in multiple municipalities, collaborating with MoHA and MoFAGA. With an emphasis on Dullu and Birendranagar in Karnali Province, the program develops disaster preparedness plans, emergency centers, and strategic actions. Collaborations with Shikhar Insurance and eSewa provide disaster insurance for 1,200 households. Birendranagar aims to be a resilience model, while a similar provincial-level disaster risk reduction platform is planned. The program aligns local and provincial efforts, promoting strong policies for disaster readiness, response, and recovery.

Mr. Narayan Sapkota, Chief District Officer of Surkhet, thanked DPNet for its role in disaster risk reduction (DRR) and highlighted the importance of cooperation among

stakeholders. With experience in local and federal roles, he emphasized shared responsibilities in DRR, focusing on effectiveness during crises. He discussed the pivotal role of the CDO in district-level disaster management, collaborating with security forces and swiftly responding to crises. The coordination between District Emergency Operation Center (DEOC) and Local Emergency Operation Center (LEOC) was underscored for effective rescue efforts. Mr. Sapkota stressed consistent interactions through District Disaster Management Committee meetings, fostering collective preparedness. Ongoing DRR activities and the community's trust in efficient emergency handling were outlined as key priorities.

Mr. Ananda Saru, Acting Chief Secretary at the Office of the Chief Minister and Council of Ministers in Karnali Province, Special Guest of the Program discussed essential elements of effective disaster risk reduction (DRR), emphasizing coordination and budget allocation in Karnali Province's initiatives. He cautioned against duplicating administrative structures across the three government levels, as this could hinder service delivery. He suggested improved coordination or reduced structures to enhance efficiency. Mr. Saru also stressed the importance of program recommendations and expressed optimism for successful implementation.

Hon. Krishna Bahadur GC, Minister, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Law, Karnali

Province, Chief Guest of the Program emphasized the distinct roles of the three tiers of government, urging a shift from power-centric approaches to focused duty fulfillment. He stressed seamless coordination across governance levels, prioritizing efficient crisis management over rigid protocol. Highlighting Karnali Province's commitment to disaster mitigation, he outlined policies and initiatives for pre-disaster preparation and post-disaster recovery.

Hon. GC cautioned against development exacerbating vulnerabilities, citing a landslide incident's downstream impact. He advocated communication and collaboration between neighboring local governments for robust cross-boundary disaster response. Acknowledging strides in preparedness, he praised DPNet's contribution. Hon. GC expected support from development partners for DRR initiatives, reaffirming the province's dedication to resilience and disaster readiness.

The program also recognized the contributions of institutions like the Armed Police Force and Nepal Police in disaster response and community training. Recommendations emerged, emphasizing the need for strengthened policies, intergovernmental coordination, capacity building, indigenous knowledge integration, enhanced Early Warning Systems, community resilience, and development projects aligned with DRR.

Dr. Thapa gave a concluding remark by highlighting the collective commitment to disaster resilience, with stakeholders pledging to collaborate, share resources, and build a more disaster-prepared Karnali Province. The event encapsulated a holistic approach to disaster risk reduction, emphasizing collaboration, learning, and proactive preparation for future challenges.

Discussion Program on SEADS Standard



August 18, 2023- DPNet Nepal organized a significant discussion session on SEADS

(Standards for Effective Agricultural Disaster Response) standards in collaboration with SEADS expert from the USA, Dr. Suresh Babu.

Dr. Raju Thapa, Acting Chair of DPNet Nepal chaired the program, which was attended by distinguished guests with a long history of working in agriculture, crops, and farmer related field such as Mr. Nabaraj Basnet, Chair at National Federation of Farmers Group (NFGN), Mr. Chhabi Paudel, Advisor at NFGN, Mr. Niranjana Pudasaini, Senior Program Officer at LI-BIRD, other notable members from Nepal Redcross Society, World Bank, Institute for Integrated Development Studies (IIDS).

The technical session started with a presentation on “DPNet Effort to Localize Sphere Standard” by Dr. Raju Thapa. Dr. Thapa commenced the program with a brief introduction to the SEADS Standard for crops along with the program goals, objectives, and the expected outcomes of the interaction with the SEADS experts. He emphasized the fact that the Sphere standards are a set of principles and minimum humanitarian standards in four technical areas of humanitarian response: Water supply, sanitation, and hygiene promotion (WASH) Food security, and nutrition. He shared with the floor the fact that DPNet serves as the secretariat of NPDRR following a holistic approach involving all segments of society, operating through 9 thematic groups. DPNet holds the position of being the focal point for Sphere Geneva in Nepal and is responsible for localizing and institutionalizing Sphere standards. Therefore, DPNet has made remarkable efforts to reach all Local Governments of Nepal on Sphere

Standard through 753 DRR Localization trainings.

Dr. Thapa shared that to ensure the localization of Sphere and its other eight companion standards, DPNet has been conducting various programs and already translated companion standards related to inclusion, market recovery, economic analysis, and education standards in Nepali. In regard to this, the SEADS standard, on crop-related livelihoods to mitigate food and agriculture-related risks during emergencies.

In his presentation, *Mr. Niranjana Pudasaini, Senior Program Officer at LI-BIRD*, introduced the organization and its local initiatives, focusing on agriculture within the context of disasters with seeds at the core. He highlighted the 5 core principles of SEADS Standards and underscored Nepal's heavy reliance on traditional crop landraces while emphasizing that over 75% of farm households obtain seeds from informal sources, and the formal seed system contributes less than 22% to national demand. Mr. Pudasaini emphasized the deteriorating local seed system due to socio-economic changes and linked it to the increasing trend of disaster events since 2000. Recurring hazards include fire, landslides, thunderbolts, heavy rainfall, floods, and windstorms, which became more pronounced in 2015. He highlighted the challenges faced by smallholder farmers during disasters, emphasizing issues related to seed quality, availability, affordability, and resilience efforts. Mr. Pudasaini outlined LI-BIRD's

initiatives, including quick relief, earthquake recovery, and flood resilience projects, and highlighted the role of Community Seed Banks (CSBs) in enhancing local seed systems and overall resilience, emphasizing their five core functions.

Dr. Suresh Babu, a Senior Research Fellow and Head of Capacity Building at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), delivered a presentation titled “Socializing Crop Emergency Guidelines and Interventions for Climate-Smart Agriculture”. His presentation aimed to discuss the integration of guidelines for crop emergencies and interventions in the context of climate-smart agriculture. The broad objectives included contributing to result-based management through provincial capacity investment, addressing emergencies, building resilience, and promoting long-term development. The importance of involving various stakeholders, such as governments, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector, in disaster management and resilience-building was emphasized, especially given the impact of crises on reduced food production and livelihoods. Dr. Babu focused on the use of SEADS and Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards (LEGS) manuals, as well as Humanitarian Standards, to design programmatic actions at the national and provincial levels. The approach involved strengthening policy and institutional systems, conducting needs assessments, mapping evidence, and applying guidelines through case

studies and consultations. This was achieved through the implementation of a seeds manual, engaging multiple stakeholders, and promoting crop-based innovations. An illustrative example he gave was the ‘El Nino’ drought of 1992, which underscored the need for adaptive strategies to mitigate crop losses caused by extreme events such as disasters. Dr. Babu highlighted the importance of integrating climate-resilient practices in emergency interventions in the localization process with an understanding of the nature of disaster, and what has already been in practice in the provincial level as a preparedness and response to achieve long-term development and climate-smart agriculture. He concluded the presentation with a call to revisit existing guidelines, promote multi-sectoral actions at various administrative levels, and emphasize the use of SEADS for planning, scaling up, and fostering climate-resilient agriculture.

Mr. Jib Nath Sharma from Care Nepal emphasized the need for aligning crop practices with SEADS standards Nepal faces contradictions with prevailing customs, including increasing seed replacement, establishing local seed banks, legal conflicts over rights, and the need to address reusing leftover grains for seeds.

Mr. Chhabi Paudel, Advisor, NFGN stressed the fact that managing Nepal's diverse ecosystems in disaster scenarios is complex. Escalating climatic disasters in areas like Jumla and Mustang emphasized the need for

responsive strategies. To blend SEADS standards with traditional contingency farming, preserving indigenous practices becomes vital, requiring a careful balance between modern standards and local wisdom.

Mr. Nabaraj Basnet, Chair at NFGN explained the provision of Food Sovereignty in the constitution as the right of people to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. So, he emphasized the protection of indigenous technology and local crops while maintaining the crop standard. Mr. Basnet was glad to be sensitized about SPHERE and other companion standards. He stressed the capacity development and awareness among farmers for using such standards in practice.

Mr. Sher Bahadur Karki of the Nepal Red Cross Society emphasized the extinction of local seeds. He highlighted the serious issue that the capturing of land has necessitated an increase in production, which in turn has led to the heightened use of hybrid seeds. As a result, he suggested that intervention in this matter is necessary.

Mr. Panchakaji Shrestha, Vice Chair at NFGN, highlighted the necessity for awareness concerning seeds and the importance of preserving them using indigenous methods. He emphasized the need for greater emphasis on preserving seeds in an indigenous manner.

Ms. Anita Basnet explained that there had been a decrease in soil quality, and the absence of a seed bank had posed a challenge in preserving seeds at the community level. She expressed readiness for collaboration from the farmers' side.

Mr. Ram Gurung, Technical advisor at DPNet Nepal questioned the feasibility of simplifying the SEADS Standard's conceptual framework to ensure community members can effectively understand the manual guidelines. This simplification aims for successful localization and implementation. Mr. Gurung emphasized that the SEADS standards were initially developed with a global perspective, which might not perfectly align with local contexts. He stressed the importance of customizing these standards to match the specific conditions of the region. Mr. Gurung introduced SEADS as a concept that revolves around seeds within the context of disaster management. Mr. Gurung further clarified the fundamental essence and objectives of the SEADS Standard, with a specific focus on aspects related to infrastructures, tools, crops, and agriculture. He underlined the environmental advantages of using local seeds, highlighting their natural and eco-friendly qualities. However, he also noted the rising preference for hybrid seeds, which has resulted in consequences for the agricultural sector and implications for farmers.

Dr. Raju Thapa, Program Chair highlighted the importance of the SEADS standard and the need for mainstreaming it in DRRM. Dr. Thapa

shared the steps for a successful implementation of SEADS standards that involve precise translation, consultation, well-structured training, and creative engagement strategies to effectively communicate and apply the standards within the community. He clarified the fact that DPNet Nepal is

competent and interested enough to work as a focal point with different stakeholders for the effective implementation of the SEADS Standard and its localization. He concluded the session by expressing his gratitude to all the participants present at the event.

Policy Dialogue on Disaster Risk Reduction Policies

On August 24, 2023, DPNet Nepal organized a

attendance included Mr. Tulsi Prasad Dahal,



significant discussion session focused on the hybrid model in Policy Dialogue on Disaster Risk Reduction policies. Dr. Raju Thapa, Acting Chair of DPNet Nepal, presided over the program, which featured a keynote presentation by Mr. Pradip Koirala, Joint Secretary of the Government of Nepal and Former Chief of the Disaster and Conflict Management Division at the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA). Distinguished guests in

Chief of Disaster Study Risk Reduction and Recovery Section at MoHA, Mr. Santosh Gurung, Lieutenant Colonel of the Nepal Army, Mr. Dambar B.K, Senior Superintendent of Police in Nepal Police, Mr. Amit Singh, Deputy Superintendent of Police in APF, Mr. Rudra Adhikari, Joint Director at NRCS, Mr. Herve Gazeau, Program Coordinator with IFRC, Mr. Tirtha Raj Joshi, Deputy Chief of Party from USAID's Tayar, in addition to

representatives from UN agencies, NGOs, CSOs, and the private sector.

The keynote speaker, Mr. Pradip Koirala, initiated his presentation by emphasizing the significance of laws, acts, and policies tailored to benefit the general populace at the grassroots level. In addition, he emphasized the need to prioritize farmers' inclusion in policy discussions, asserting that 50% representation of farmers in such debates is paramount. He underscored that decision-makers must have a clear understanding of perspectives and decisions to avoid potential misinterpretations that could lead to disastrous outcomes. Bridging the gap between planning and reality, he asserted, hinges on comprehensive understanding.

Mr. Koirala raised questions about potential disparities between the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) and our interpretation of it. He highlighted the prevalent focus on the monsoon season rather than adopting a year-round approach. He also critiqued the tendency to concentrate solely on establishing a single institution for Disaster Risk Governance, asserting that governance across all sectors is vital. He expressed concerns that investments in DRR were confined to foreign investment expansion, and he called for a shift towards focusing on capacity building, reliability, and collaboration with the government for effective disaster response.

In lieu of pursuing new policies, Mr. Koirala advocated for leveraging the advantages of existing ones. He shared that the National Planning Commission has begun recognizing the importance of policy discussions. He stressed that megastructures should be constructed with disaster sensitivity integrated into development. However, he acknowledged the confusion among various government agencies regarding development impacts, building code implementation, and urban fire control.

Reflecting on his experience at the MoHA and assessing five years of implementing the DRM Act, Mr. Koirala revealed that only 10% of the necessary work on DRR has been accomplished, with 90% remaining. He mentioned that over two dozen policies introduced by the DRR Executive Committee haven't been effective in practice, and many ministries hesitate to take ownership of them. The ministries argue that these policies should be passed through the ministerial cabinet. Yet, when these policies are presented to the cabinet, the responsibility is deflected back to the executive committee. This cyclic game has created a policy limbo in disaster risk reduction and management, leaving many initiatives in a standstill. He pointed out that ministries function under their respective acts, sometimes conflicting with the DRRM Act.

Furthermore, Mr. Koirala emphasized that the role of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA)

mirrors that of the National Emergency Operation Center (NEOC), leading to role and responsibility duplications among agencies such as data portals, emergency operation centers, and stockpiles. He advocated for reevaluating the existing governance system. He proposed that there should be a dedicated Ministry like in Japan under Prime Minister Officer to look after disaster which can ensure quality of development work from the disaster management perspective as well.

Open Discussion Session:

Mr. Sunil Sun Shakya pointed out the existing gap between policies and effective implementation, urging a shift towards resilience-building across sectors rather than relying solely on relief efforts.

Mr. Shyam Sundar Jnavaly emphasized a pragmatic approach, prioritizing actions over policies. He suggested aligning policy formulation with actionable plans and questioned the current duplication of agencies, advocating for streamlined governance and policy coherence.

Ms. Chadani Joshi praised the initiative's coordination efforts while underscoring the need for better inter-agency communication. Stressing the importance of resilience in all sectors, she affirmed that DRR offers a comprehensive solution.

Mr. Pramod Lamichhane drew attention to the pivotal role of quality infrastructure in DRR.

He cited examples from countries like Japan, emphasizing the significance of robust construction practices and technology adoption. He also urged proper land use planning and highlighted the need for skilled labor in construction projects.

Mr. Govinda Rimal highlighted the importance of community-level awareness and criticized the current weak implementation and monitoring mechanisms. He emphasized that DRR should be integral to the national building code and woven into all policies.

Mr. Kedar Neupane underscored the ongoing transitional phase and the need to integrate DRR within government structures. He stressed the importance of a well-defined NDRRMA with a clear structure, budget, and team. He urged cohesive policy and implementation strategies across government levels.

Ms. Manisha Dhakal called for LGBTQI inclusion in DRR policies and sensitive accountability for inclusive DRR. She recommended increasing open spaces for safety.

Mr. Bishnu Kharel emphasized documenting best practices, researching DRR effectiveness, and unbiased evaluations of NDRRMA and MoHA's functions.

Mr. Bishnu Prasad Timilsina called for reviews of DRR policies and increased governmental commitment. He emphasized that the development of laws is an evolutionary

process rather than a revolutionary one, and they should be regularly reviewed to address gaps and needs.

Mr. Chabbi Paudel stressed the connection between DRR and agriculture and advocated for integrated policy implementation.

Mr. Ram Prasad Rimal stressed the importance of policies taking into account technological aspects in addition to community-level and individual-level concerns, rather than solely focusing on administrative aspects.

Mr. Kedar Babu Dhungana highlighted the need for addressing fire and other potential hazards. He suggested that the government should classify priority areas, and development partners should contribute to these government-classified priority areas. He also emphasized the importance of establishing and mobilizing a common forum to collaboratively achieve goals in DRR.

Mr. Santosh Gurung emphasized the importance of aid and financial support in DRR while also highlighting the need to take into account national security interests.

Mr. Santosh Sharma underscored the necessity of integrating DRR considerations effectively into development initiatives to ensure sustainable progress. He highlighted the government's pivotal role in DRR, while also emphasizing the importance of collaboration among various agencies to achieve a

comprehensive and effective approach to disaster risk reduction.

Mr. Kailash Rijal highlighted the need for localized research and documentation. He also emphasized the proper collaboration and communication between inter-ministry among governments for effective DRR.

Mr. Ram Krishna Bhandari emphasized the importance of awareness and preparedness to reduce the impacts of monsoons and potential hazards.

Mr. Dambar BK called for analyzing policy-implementation gaps and providing localized DRR materials. He noted a lack of shared understanding hindering policy execution.

Mr. Amit Singh highlighted the importance of addressing policy gaps rather than developing new legal frameworks for effective DRR.

Ms. Amika Rajthala highlighted prioritizing infrastructure safety for sustainable DRR within the country.

Dr. Dilip Kumar Gautam acknowledged challenges in understanding and implementing DRR policies, suggesting placing NDRRMA under the Prime Minister's Office for stronger coordination. He called for focused agency roles to minimize duplication.

Mr. Tulsi Prasad Dahal emphasized the importance of distinguishing between policies and programs in DRR. He stressed the necessity of enhancing the capacity of each

sector involved in DRR. According to Mr. Dahal, the MoHA is currently undertaking a policy audit, a pivotal stride toward effectively implementing DRR-related regulations and policies. He assured that MoHA is committed to integrating the feedback received from the discussions into their efforts. Addressing suggestions and queries from floor Mr. Pradip Koirala emphasizes the importance of DRRM practitioners advocating for our nation's concerns, prioritizing domestic matters over international ones. Mr. Koirala emphasizes the need for a clear distinction between micro and macro perspectives to facilitate the effective identification of issues. He advocates for streamlining organizational efforts to minimize duplication and assigning functional and policy-level responsibilities to distinct entities. Highlighting the practicality of policies and their implementation, Mr. Koirala emphasizes the necessity for periodic revisions when necessary. He underscores the significance of discerning between functional and policy-related aspects and undertaking appropriate actions for each. Recognizing the complexity of the task, he suggests that a single agency may not be equipped to manage all aspects effectively. To this end, he proposes a division of roles, with the Prime Minister's Office overseeing policy matters and the Ministry of Home Affairs taking charge of implementation.

Closing speech

Dr. Raju Thapa highlighted several critical areas for advancing DRR efforts. He stressed

the importance of fostering resilience across various sectors, aligning policies with practical actions, and enhancing communication among different agencies. He emphasized the integration of DRR principles into policies, followed by effective policy implementation through dedicated budget allocation and cohesive strategies. Inclusivity in policies, the need for hazard accountability, and the creation of open spaces were also focal points in his recommendations. Dr. Thapa emphasized the shared responsibility of stakeholders in ensuring robust DRR practices in Nepal. Furthermore, he underscored the significance of documenting best practices, conducting research, and carrying out unbiased evaluations. These measures would be instrumental in addressing gaps in policies, ensuring infrastructure safety, promoting localized research, raising awareness, and bridging understanding gaps.

In the closing remarks Dr. Thapa highlighted the importance of organizing such policy dialogue emphasizing the urgent need to address this matter promptly, especially considering current position at the midterm review of the Sendai Framework. He expressed his appreciation to all participants and recognized the Red Cross for their efficient logistical management and provision of the venue. With these remarks, he concluded the program.