



eBulletin

MAY-JUNE 2023



Summary

This ebulletin summary encapsulates DPNet's diverse activities and collaborative efforts in DRR and climate resilience in Nepal, spanning May to June 2023. The period was marked by several key initiatives, dialogues, and workshops aimed at enhancing the nation's preparedness and response to disasters, fostering partnerships, and driving policy dialogue towards resilient community development. One of the significant events was a policy dialogue on Psychosocial Counselling Service for disaster-affected individuals, emphasizing the integration of mental health support in disaster management stages. This discussion highlighted the crucial role of psychosocial support in enhancing the well-being and recovery of affected communities.

Another critical dialogue focused on the effectiveness of Early Warning Systems (EWS) in disaster risk reduction and management, advocating for a comprehensive multi-hazard approach and the development of earthquake early warnings. This discussion underscored the need for technological advancements and policy formulation to bolster Nepal's early warning capabilities.

The unveiling of the Resilience Assessment and Adaptation for Critical Infrastructure tool, a collaborative effort between WFP and DPNet, marked a technological aspect in disaster response, aiming to improve emergency logistics and response efficiency by addressing road accessibility challenges during disasters. A workshop on the Grand Bargain and the establishment of a National Reference Group (NRG) underscored the imperative of enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian aid through improved transparency, community involvement, and the empowerment of local actors. This event highlighted the need for a collective approach and the inclusion of women and marginalized groups in humanitarian actions.

DPNet also facilitated a discussion on the role of the private sector in DRR, recognizing the significance of leveraging private resources and expertise in building resilient communities. This dialogue emphasized the economic rationale behind preparedness investments and advocated for strategic partnerships across sectors. The agreement among local governments in the Doda Watershed to collaborate on disaster risk mitigation initiatives represented a commitment to sustainable development and climate change adaptation at the local level. This collective effort aims to strengthen climate and disaster resilience in the watershed area.

The Second National Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction provided a platform for stakeholders to discuss the midterm review phase of the Sendai Framework for DRR, sharing insights and strategies to enhance Nepal's disaster resilience. This conference served as a crucial step in aligning national efforts with global DRR goals. These diverse initiatives and discussions reflect DPNet's commitment to advancing disaster preparedness, risk reduction, and climate resilience in Nepal. Through collaborative efforts, technological innovation, policy dialogue, and community engagement, DPNet continues to play a pivotal role in building a safer, more resilient Nepal, addressing both current challenges and future risks.

DPNet Organizes a Policy Dialogue on Psychosocial Counselling Service to the Disaster-affected People



On May 8, 2023, the Disaster Preparedness Network-Nepal (DPNet) organized a Policy Dialogue session titled "Psychosocial Counselling Service to the Disaster-affected People" with financial and technical support from USAID/Tayar Nepal. The program aimed to raise awareness about the crucial role of psychosocial counseling in all stages of disaster management and to generate ideas and recommendations for addressing this important issue.

The session was chaired and moderated by Surya Bahadur Thapa, Chair of DPNet Nepal, and initially facilitated by Dr. Raju Thapa, Vice-Chair of DPNet. Esteemed presenter Senior Psychologist Ms. Chetana Lokshum facilitated the session with her insightful presentation. The event was attended by 28 representatives from diverse sectors involved in disaster management, including mental

health professionals, government and non-governmental agencies, security forces, media, private sector organizations, and academicians.

The policy dialogue commenced with a warm welcome and an introduction by Dr. Raju Thapa, Vice-Chair of DPNet, who highlighted the program's objectives and emphasized the integration of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) with disaster risk management strategies, covering prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery.

Session Chair, **Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa**, further emphasized the significance and objectives of the session. He stated that The Disaster Risk Reduction National Strategic Plan of Action 2018-2030 recognizes the crucial role of psychosocial counseling in post-disaster scenarios. In order to enhance stakeholders' understanding of MHPSS within

the framework of Disaster Risk Reduction, DPNet and USAID Tayar Nepal have collaborated to host a national-level Policy Dialogue. The aim is to foster a collective commitment among stakeholders to prioritize the alleviation of suffering and the enhancement of mental health and psychosocial well-being through the integration of MHPSS into disaster risk management strategies.

During her presentation, *Senior Psychologist Ms. Chetana Lokshum* explored Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) within the context of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). She shed light on the significance of psychological counseling throughout the different phases of the disaster cycle, including prevention/mitigation, preparedness, response, and rehabilitation/reconstruction. Ms. Lokshum highlighted the limited understanding of mental health and the social stigma surrounding psychological issues, emphasizing the need to address these challenges.

Ms. Lokshum proceeded to explain the three essential phases of psychosocial intervention. The pre-phase focuses on raising awareness, providing training, and establishing robust support networks. In the immediate response phase, Psychological First Aid (PFA) and support groups play a crucial role in offering immediate assistance. Finally, the post-phase centers around psychosocial counseling and rehabilitation, involving the expertise of psychologists and psychiatrists. Ms. Lokshum

stressed the urgent need for psychosocial support programs to mitigate the risk of compassion fatigue among service providers and to educate community workers about their boundaries and limitations in this regard.

Krishna Karkee, Disaster Preparedness and Response Specialist of USAID's Tayar Nepal, shared her valuable insights on the importance of psychological and mental health in disaster programs. This opened the discussion session, where participants highlighted their experiences, identified gaps and challenges, and proposed ways forward.

The open discussion session brought forth several key points:

1. The participants emphasized the importance of pre-disaster preparedness training and raising awareness about mental health issues that arise from disasters. They recognized the significance of psychosocial intervention in effective disaster management.
2. There was a consensus on the need for the effective implementation of existing policies and guidelines regarding psychosocial counseling at the grassroots level. This ensures that communities have access to necessary support during and after disasters.
3. The participants highlighted the importance of clear division of roles and responsibilities among various responders, including community mediators, CPSW, psychologists, and security forces. Clarity in these roles

ensures a coordinated and efficient response during disaster situations.

4. A recommendation was received from the floor to establish a separate unit, known as the MHPSS in DRRM taskforce with the involvement and participation of multi-stakeholders involving in MHPSS in DRRM. The taskforce will focus on MHPSS multistakeholder discussions, actions and way forward in developing guidelines and implying the MHPSS in DRRM cycle in a vigorous manner on developing intervention strategies for mental health services and counseling before, during, and after disasters.

5. Representatives from authorities such as MOHP, NDRRMA, and Patan Mental Health emphasized the need to mainstream psychosocial counseling as a cross-cutting issue in disaster management. They stressed the importance of integrating mental health and psychosocial support into overall disaster response and recovery efforts.

6. The participants highlighted the significance of implementing the Disaster Risk Reduction National Strategic Action Plan 2018-2030, with a specific focus on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI), vulnerable groups, and

excluded communities. They emphasized the need for targeted psychosocial counseling and mental health services that address the unique challenges faced by these groups.

In his closing remarks, Session Chair Mr. Thapa assured the attendees that DPNet would take the initiative to continue such interactions and advocate for the integration of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) within the context of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). He emphasized the importance of these discussions and recommendations in enhancing disaster interventions and integrating MHPSS into disaster management strategies. He added that DPNet Nepal will gladly take the lead in formation of the taskforce and work on way forwards focusing on MHPSS multistakeholder discussions, actions and way forward in developing guidelines and integrating MHPSS in DRRM cycle in a spirited manner.

While acknowledging that achieving this integration may require sustained efforts, Mr. Thapa expressed hope for the collective participation and collaboration of all stakeholders. He extended his gratitude to USAID Tayar Nepal and all the expert and practitioner participants for their valuable contributions to the program.

DPNet Organizes a Policy Dialogue on “Effectiveness of Early Warning System in Disaster Risk Reduction and Management”



On May 15, 2023, DPNet, in collaboration with USAID/Tayar, organized a policy dialogue to assess the effectiveness of the Early Warning System (EWS) in Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM). Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa, Chairperson of DPNet, presided over the event, which was attended by notable figures including Dr. Gangalal Tuladhar, a National Council for DRRM member and Former Education Minister, who served as the Chief Guest. Prof. Dr. Bishal Nath Upreti, President of NCDM, underscored the pressing need for a comprehensive multi-hazard early warning system, with a specific focus on earthquake early warnings, and emphasized the significance of formulating an instrumentation policy for the EWS. Ms. Archana Shrestha, a Senior Divisional Meteorologist at DHM, shared invaluable insights and experiences regarding hydro-meteorological advisory initiatives.

News in Detail:

Prof. Dr. Bishal Nath Upreti presented on Early Warning Systems for Earthquakes, Floods, Landslides, Debris Flow, and GLOF and discussed the importance of Early Warning Systems (EWS) for earthquakes, floods, landslides, debris flow, and glacial lake outbursts in Nepal. He highlighted the lack of EWS for earthquakes and debris flow in the country, emphasizing that every Nepali is at risk due to Nepal's fragile geography. Dr. Upreti pointed out the changing nature of disasters in Nepal, with increased intensity and unpredictable snowball effects leading to multiple disasters. He provided an overview of current landslide, debris flow, and flood situations in Nepal and stressed the need for new approaches to EWS, incorporating advanced technologies like extensometers, soil moisture sensors, and rain gauge stations. He also discussed challenges such as limited

weather stations, lack of understanding among communities, and the impact of climate change and melting glacier lake outbursts. Dr. Upreti emphasized the role of local governments as first responders and suggested collaboration with donors to establish sustainable EWS, particularly for earthquakes. He concluded by promoting the establishment of an Earthquake Early Warning System in eastern Nepal, which could provide valuable seconds of warning for evacuation and saving lives.

Dr. Archana Shrestha discussed the learning, best practices, challenges, and action plan of the Early Warning System (EWS) implemented by DHM. Dr. Shrestha highlighted the concept of the Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (MHEWS) as an integrated mechanism to inform people about hazards and guide government, communities, and individuals in minimizing impacts. Dr. Shrestha emphasized the need for a people-centric approach to enhance efficiency and effectiveness. She provided updates on the current status of DHM's MHEWS and shared information on weather warning and forecasting scales, data, and graphs.

The presentation covered procedures for flood and glacial lake outburst flood (GLOF) EWS, including sources and monitoring mechanisms for rainfall, river level, cold wave, and fog. Dr. Shrestha outlined major challenges such as limited human and financial resources and presented solutions such as weather SMS, impact-based forecasting, and improving

forecast reliability and lead time. DHM is formulating policies to enhance forecast reliability, collaboration with stakeholders, institutional structure, research, and investment. Dr. Shrestha emphasized the need for systematic observation and the implementation of automated monitoring systems for effective EWS. She concluded by suggesting the development of a master plan in collaboration with I/NGOs, the UN, governments, and academia.

Dr. Basanta Raj Adhikari emphasized the importance of providing information rather than just warnings in a whole society approach and Build Back Better strategy. He highlighted the need for evidence-based and scientifically formulated EWS policies that are understandable by policymakers and the general population. Coordination gaps between local, provincial, and federal governments pose challenges that can be addressed by establishing an accessible and contextualized EWS. Integration of communities and local governments into the system, along with risk mapping, is crucial for ownership and sustainability.

Mr. Surya Narayan Shrestha emphasized the integration of indigenous knowledge, scientific observation, policies, and acts for an effective early warning system. He highlighted the importance of a clear and sensitive policy that protects society and emphasized the need for an earthquake early warning system, supported by a comprehensive dataset and tailored ground

motion prediction equations for Nepal. Community-level awareness programs were recommended to improve the understanding and effectiveness of the SMS alert system.

Mr. Som Nath Paudel shared his experience on the transboundary flood program highlighting the pre-during-post disaster manual. The manual is utilized in India and Bangladesh but in Nepal the manual is neglected after the project was phased out.

Dr. Rabindra Dhakal shared that NAST has established GPS stations for land movement monitoring but lacks the expertise to interpret the available data. They expressed interest in collaborating to utilize and distribute the data to the public. In addition, NAST aims to integrate data collection, interpretation, communication, and coding-decoding for information dissemination in satellite imaging even without a network connection. Challenges include communication, lack of human resources, and technical glitches in earthquake early warning systems. NAST is researching satellite development for monitoring the earth's movement and urges collaboration and expansion of networks with government and non-government agencies.

Mr. Chintan Timalsina emphasized the differences between the earthquake and flood early warning systems, noting the need for long-term investments and patience to achieve an effective system. He highlighted the importance of identifying risk and safe zones

through research studies and the lack of seismological expertise in academia. Data sharing, communication clarity, low investment in instrumentation, complex procurement policies, and lack of research policies are additional challenges. Collaboration with organizations working in emergencies is crucial, and clear and simple policies should be implemented.

Ms. Anu Adhikari highlighted the language barriers hindering communication and understanding in the community. Strengthening community and local government capacity is crucial for ownership and sustainability, and investment in EWS can reduce casualties.

Mr. Suraj Gautam highlighted the lack of information on river-stage monitoring due to insufficient data, emphasizing the need for mechanisms that facilitate data sharing. Mr. Gautam questioned the adequacy of hydro-meteorological stations and the sustainability of the EWS model.

Dr. Raju Thapa suggested establishing the Taskforce to work on the effectiveness of EWS through coordination with different stakeholders and monitoring of EWS progress in all sectors.

Mr. Om Prakash Ghimire highlighted the need for dialogue and action to address gaps and opportunities within the government. Further added importance of overcoming language

barriers and illiteracy in the community when generating and disseminating information and suggested audio format and local languages should be used for inclusivity and accessibility.

Ms. Amika Rajthala suggested the provision of thematic information training and the availability of fellowships to expand the network of disaster journalism.

Ms. Krishna Karkee shared plans for eight policy dialogues addressing various disaster themes to review and address challenges and practices. Collaboration and coordination with the government are crucial for sustainable Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM). She highlighted the importance of strengthening coordination, collaboration, institutional capacity, research studies, technology provision, and effective information dissemination. Communication gaps should be identified and procedures redesigned within policies.

Dr. Meen Bahadur Poudyal Chhetri highlighted the need to proactively identify gaps and emphasized the importance of improvement in the Departments of Mines and Land. He suggested exploring international practices for monitoring through satellite technology and advocated for satellite placement by the federal government. He expressed concerns about ineffective Sample/Pilot Early Warning Systems and emphasized the need for substantial impact rather than symbolic efforts. Dr. Chhetri

stressed the prevention of disasters, capacity strengthening in relevant departments, increased investment, qualified human resources, research in disaster risk knowledge, and effective implementation of policies.

Dr. Ganga Lal Tuladhar highlighted the increasing casualties from landslides despite reduced flood casualties. He shared budget allocation in the national plan and emphasized shared responsibility among the government, experts, and organizations for risk-informed sustainable development. He advocated for incorporating DRR mitigation measures in the Common Minimum Program, leading to automatic inclusion in the national plan with a budget allocation.

A commitment paper was signed by all participants which was produced for the effectiveness of the Early Warning System to strengthen the multi-hazard Early Warning System incorporating existing challenges, strengthening disaster-related stakeholders, infrastructure, and research capacity. He stressed the significance of policy revisions, EWS, institution capacity strengthening, human resource development, investments, and collaboration with DHM in mitigating hydro-meteorological disasters. He called for an integrative approach to EWS, involving health, agriculture, and local governments, and emphasized coordination, networking, data sharing, and information dissemination.

Recommendations from the event:

The roles and responsibilities of local governments, communities, provincial governments, the federal government, and relevant entities should be clearly defined for the implementation of the Effective Early Warning System (EEWS). A task force should be formed comprising experts, stakeholders, and representatives from various sectors to thoroughly analyze the challenges faced in implementing EWS and formulate comprehensive strategies for progress. The task force should consider perspectives from the grassroots level to the policy level. The resources need to be allocated for investments

towards strengthening the capacity of local governments, communities, and relevant institutions to effectively implement and sustain EWS. Promoting information sharing, data exchange, and knowledge transfer among stakeholders to enhance the effectiveness of EWS.

Please click the following link to access the presentations of Prof. Dr. Bishal Nath Uprety and Archana Shrestha (Ph.D.):

<https://www.dpnet.org.np/resource-detail/1275>

<https://www.dpnet.org.np/resource-detail/1276>

Shaping Disaster Response with Technological Innovation



In a collaborative effort, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and Disaster Preparedness Network Nepal (DPNet) unveiled the **Resilience Assessment and Adaptation for Critical Infrastructure (RA2CE)** tool on May 19th, 2023, aimed at improving emergency responses in Nepal. The tool, developed by Deltares and WFP Nepal,

mitigates delays in disaster response due to a lack of road accessibility information.

Dr. Raju Thapa stressed the role of effective data management in disaster preparedness and response, acknowledging existing challenges including limited technology infrastructure, privacy concerns, and cultural appropriateness. Mr. Maan Kshetri from WFP Nepal outlined

the capabilities of the RA2CE tool, highlighting its role in identifying isolated settlements during flood disasters and facilitating effective disaster responses.

A feedback session facilitated questions about data input, conflict, and integration, technical considerations, and policy and collaboration. Mr. Kshetri, responding to the queries, reassured that the tool collates data from numerous authoritative sources and employs stringent ground truthing for verification. It also handles disaggregated data, operates without internet connectivity, and aligns with the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) National Policy 2018.

Remarks from other key speakers underscored the need for collaboration and efficient data management. The Senior Statistics Officer, Mr. Ram Krishna Regmi, acknowledged the challenges in data management but emphasized that the RA2CE tool was a step forward towards better disaster management in Nepal.

News in Details

In an event held on 19th May 2023 in Kathmandu, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and Disaster Preparedness Network Nepal (DPNet) showcased a new tool designed to enhance emergency response capabilities in Nepal. The program titled 'Timely Logistics Information for Emergency Response' aimed at demonstrating the RA2CE (Resilience Assessment and Adaptation for Critical Infrastructure) tool's potential in

augmenting emergency preparedness and management. Senior Statistics Officer, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Mr. Ram Krishna Regmi, chaired the program. The event was facilitated by Er. Kshitiz Paudel, DPNet Program Coordinator. The program's primary goal was to share the RA2CE tool and gather participant feedback, fostering collaboration among humanitarian organizations, Government of Nepal, and the private sector.

Developed by Deltares and WFP Nepal, the RA2CE tool intends to combat the issue of delayed information on road accessibility during emergencies, which often impedes relief delivery to affected populations. The tool leverages the principles of graph theory to calculate accessibility and pinpoint isolated locations during flood events, thus making disaster response more efficient. The solution provided by the RA2CE tool is highly innovative, complementing and advancing existing procedures and technologies. The model automates manual analysis and provides critical information for emergency response planning and disaster risk management. It also has user-friendly interfaces, ensuring ease of use for various stakeholders.

During his presentation, Dr. Raju Thapa highlighted the critical role of data management in disaster preparedness and response in Nepal. He discussed the importance of data in risk assessment and planning, predictive analysis for early warning systems,

resource allocation and coordination, real-time communication through digital platforms, post-disaster assessment, and community engagement. Dr. Thapa also underscored the challenges faced in Nepal's data management. These challenges include limited technological infrastructure, lack of standardization, accessibility issues, privacy concerns, and the need for cultural appropriateness. Despite these challenges, organizations like DPNet are committed to bridging the data management gap and enhancing disaster risk reduction efforts in Nepal.

Mr. Maan Kshetri, from WFP Nepal, offered a comprehensive overview of the RA2CE tool. He detailed its user requirements, particularly focusing on the demand for information during flood disasters. Mr. Kshetri introduced the RA2CE Tool and its significance in conducting spatial analysis to identify isolated settlements and affected service centers. Emphasizing the importance of the RA2CE tool and the 72-hour rapid assessment, Mr. Maan elucidated on their contributions to effective disaster response and preparedness. He concluded his presentation by acknowledging the partners involved in implementing the tool and proposing to institutionalize this tool into government system.

The program then moved to a moderated feedback session, led by Dr. Sridhar Thapa from WFP, where participants raised questions about the tool. Participants raised a series of in-depth questions across four key themes during

the discussion - Data Input and Verification, Data Conflict and Integration, Technical Considerations, and Policy and Collaboration.

For Data Input and Verification, the participants sought to understand the data input mechanism for the local levels. They asked whether this was an automatic or manual process and the type of data used in the source map, especially whether it was sourced from open-source tools. Clarification was also sought about the possible involvement of security sectors and the government in data input and the government's level of engagement. Participants were interested in the cost implications for the beneficiaries or users of the tool, the authentication and verification process of the received data, and who would have access to the data generated by the tool.

Under the theme of Data Conflict and Integration, the discussion focused on how the tool could prevent data conflict, given the variety of software used by different agencies. Participants were curious about the tool's capability in handling disaggregated data from Gender Equality, Social Inclusion (GESI) lenses, and whether a demo version could be presented. There were questions about the efficiency of the tool in processing disaggregated data, its ability to generate community household data, and whether it could provide information about household vulnerability.

When considering Technical Considerations, participants asked how the tool could incorporate a cluster system and remain IT-friendly for effective operations. They were keen to understand the means of verification for the tool's reliability and if logistics capacity assessment could be implemented for all 77 districts of Nepal. Questions were also raised about the update process for post-disaster data, the authenticity of satellite data sources, how the tool managed data precision, validity, and challenges during emergencies, and what integration plans were in place for the tool's current development stage.

Finally, for Policy and Collaboration, the participants wondered about the policy issues that needed resolution to effectively engage government stakeholders. They asked about the progress in data management, how collaboration with international agencies could ensure the availability of high-frequency data during emergencies, and if the tool could operate without internet or telephone service. They also wanted to know about the challenges associated with human resources and lengthy processes in emergency scenarios, and how the tool could evolve and align with government and private sector efforts for emergency response.

In response to various queries raised by participants, Mr. Maan offered detailed explanations regarding the functionality and features of the RA2CE tool. For queries related to Data Input and Verification, Mr. Maan

clarified that the tool amasses secondary data from a range of authoritative sources such as the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), Department of Road, Health, Education, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, and the Survey Department of the Government of Nepal (GoN). The tool also integrates primary data obtained via satellite imagery from Sentinel-1, with rigorous ground truthing to ensure data verification. The RA2CE tool is designed to be freely accessible and capable of accepting data inputs from a multitude of sectors, including the government, at no cost. The tool uses a meticulous cross-referencing system with ground and secondary data for data authentication.

When discussing Data Conflict and Integration, Mr. Kshetri stated that the RA2CE tool is designed to circumvent possible data conflicts through quick preliminary estimations and frequent updates. The tool effectively handles disaggregated data, using CBS data as its reference point, and can demonstrate its functionality through a demonstration for stakeholders. Moreover, the tool is capable of computing the number of households affected based on the data of affected buildings, which assists in identifying potentially vulnerable areas.

Addressing Technical Considerations, Mr. Kshetri revealed that the tool aligns with the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) National Policy 2018 and is currently seeking active

participation from the Government of Nepal. Impressively, the tool can function without internet or telephone connectivity, ensuring uninterrupted service during emergencies. However, he acknowledged that the need for technically proficient analysts posed a potential challenge. In response to the demand for high-frequency data during emergencies, Mr. Kshetri suggested the Bipad Portal as a possible solution. Future plans involve evolving the tool through continuous engagements with the government and private sectors to enhance emergency response capabilities.

As for Policy and Collaboration, Mr. Kshetri said that the RA2CE tool incorporates a cluster system to optimize operations and relies on ground-collected and secondary information for verifying its reliability. While it offers valuable data for Logistics clusters, extending the Logistics Capacity Assessment (LCA) to all districts of Nepal necessitates more location-specific data. The tool handles data precision and validity adeptly but may face difficulties with image availability during emergencies. Overcoming these challenges involves strategic approaches, like Nepal Government can appeal to satellite companies through UNRCO/UNOCHA and activate the Space Charter to redirect the path of the satellite. The tool's development currently prioritizes integration with the operations of the Government of Nepal.

After open floor discussion, The *UNRCO representative, Mr. Prem Awasthi*, shared his

insights during his speech. He emphasized the necessity of addressing data gaps through an integrated approach that combines both social and technical perspectives. He pointed out that nothing is perfect or permanent and that improvements can be made progressively. He noted the existence of a government policy for satellite-based data acquisition and the need to fortify the decision support system. He also pointed out that current interventions tend to be guided by power rather than evidence-based data, giving an example of political leaders desiring to use helicopters in their respective areas.

On the other hand, *Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa, the Chair of DPNet*, underlined the need for coordination and networking to avoid duplication and utilize resources effectively. He suggested DPNet as a potential platform to map out who is doing what and pondered how to make such a system more contextual and user-friendly. He also encouraged all participants to contribute to DPNet's online resource center if they possess any crucial DRR-related resources, data, and documents.

Finally, *Mr. Deepak Acharya from the Ministry of Home Affairs* highlighted the Government's capacity for data collection with the existence of NEOC and 74 DEOCs. He recognized the necessity of involving the police to guarantee accurate data, although this process may be time-consuming. He suggested that tools like the one under discussion could play a critical role in ensuring efficient and

timely data acquisition. However, he acknowledged the challenge that would inevitably arise concerning the maintenance of data quality from such tools.

In his concluding remarks, Mr. Ram Krishna Regmi, Senior Statistics Officer, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, expressed gratitude to the UN WFP Team for their relentless efforts in developing the RA2CE tool. He discussed two crucial aspects: policy and technical issues. He noted that while progress had been made in managing data, engagement with government stakeholders is necessary to address policy concerns. Regmi acknowledged that the private sector is efficient in mobilizing resources during emergencies and added that the government has a wealth of human resources. However, he pointed out frequent personnel changes and lengthy bureaucratic processes could be challenging during emergencies. Discussing the development phase of the RA2CE tool, Regmi noted that it was in its initial phase and would require time to mature. He further emphasized that high-frequency data should be freely available during emergencies, necessitating collaboration with international agencies. Finally, he thanked all attendees for their participation and closed the program.

This event was a crucial step in sharing and discussing the potential of the RA2CE tool to

transform disaster response and management in Nepal. It provided a platform for various stakeholders, including government representatives, humanitarian organizations, and technical experts, to exchange ideas and feedback about this innovative tool. Addressing the critical need for timely logistics information during emergencies, the RA2CE tool aims to increase resilience and adaptability of critical infrastructure. It symbolizes a significant leap in harnessing technology and data management to enhance disaster preparedness and response efforts. The discussions and presentations during the program underscored the importance of data management, the challenges faced in this field, and the role of innovative tools like RA2CE in addressing these issues. Moreover, the program highlighted the value of collaboration among various stakeholders to optimize resources and maximize efficiency in disaster management. In light of the event, the next steps for the stakeholders involve addressing the raised concerns, enhancing collaboration, working towards policy issues, and integrating the tool effectively with existing systems. As reiterated by the participants, the success of the RA2CE tool and similar innovations will play a significant role in shaping Nepal's future disaster management. The continued engagement and collaboration of all stakeholders is expected to ensure that this tool and future initiatives can best serve those affected by disasters in Nepal.

Workshop Held on Grand Bargain and National Reference Group in Nepal



LALITPUR, NEPAL - A historic workshop concerning the Grand Bargain and the establishment of a National Reference Group (NRG) was held on May 24, 2023, in Lalitpur. This event was facilitated by DPNet and DiMaNN, partnering with ActionAid Nepal, Tearfund, and NEAR. The workshop was chaired by Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa, Chairperson of DPNet and DiMaNN. Sujeeta Mathema from ActionAid stressed the need for disaster management, and called for the inclusion of women in leadership roles. Mr. Pratap Maharjan of ActionAid emphasized the importance of involving women's groups in humanitarian efforts in his report, "Bargaining for Better". Ms. Shahida Arif from NEAR emphasized the value of local leaders in crafting effective response strategies. Mr. Hasta Bahadur Sunar from Tearfund shed light on the achievements of the Grand Bargain. Sharing the feedback received from DPNet's virtual discussion platform Dr. Raju Thapa

suggested a crucial need for improved transparency, efficiency, and community involvement in disaster aid management. Mr. Surya Narayan Shrestha from NEAR explained its origins and structure, highlighting the future role of the NRG in translating global commitments into local action.

The workshop concluded with the decision to form a National Reference Group, comprising nine members from organizations DPNet Nepal, DiMaNN, NGO Federation, NFDN, RDN, WFDA/FEDO, NSET/NEAR, ActionAid, and Tearfund. DPNet was appointed as the coordinator of this committee, overseeing its activities and playing a critical role in developing the NRG. The committee will focus on coordinating various initiatives and activities, and devising the Terms of Reference (ToR) and future plans for the NRG. This workshop accentuated the collective vision of enhancing the effectiveness and

efficiency of humanitarian aid, promoting collective bargaining power, local leadership, and inclusivity in all humanitarian actions.

News in Details:

LALITPUR, NEPAL - On 24 May 2023, a thought-provoking workshop on the Grand Bargain and National Reference Group took place at Hotel Himalaya, Lalitpur. The event was organized by the Disaster Preparedness Network Nepal (DPNet) and the National Disaster Management Network of Nepal (DiMaNN) in collaboration with Action Aid Nepal, Tearfund, and NEAR (Network for Empowered Aid Response). The workshop commenced by chairing the session and inspiring a welcome note by Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa, the Chairperson of DPNet and DiMaNN.

Dr. Daya Sagar Shrestha of DiMaNN, MC of the program highlighted the event objectives and highlighted the pressing need of the National Reference Group in Nepal to make the humanitarian aid system more efficient and cost-effective, especially from the lenses of administrative cost.

Ms. Sujeeta Mathema, Executive Director, ActionAid, emphasized several key points regarding "Bhavya Samjhauta" (the Grand Bargain) and its relevance to effective humanitarian response, disaster management, and preparedness. She stressed the non-negotiable priority of prioritizing disaster management and preparedness in light of the

increasing occurrence of crises like landslides and floods. Mathema called for a scrutinization of the commitment shown by countries that have signed the Grand Bargain, considering the magnitude of the challenges at hand. She also underscored the importance of understanding the impact of disasters, emphasizing the need for efficient preparedness to alleviate distress, stress, and anxiety, and to build resilience. Another significant aspect highlighted by Ms. Mathema was the respectful distribution and planning of assistance, ensuring that affected communities' needs and rights are respected. She emphasized the need to acknowledge and involve women's leadership in disaster management, as their perspectives can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness and relevance of assistance. Additionally, Ms. Mathema emphasized the importance of accountability, transparency, and de-politicization in disaster management processes to build trust and ensure the efficient allocation of resources. She highlighted the significance of shifting power and resources to local actors and communities for sustainable disaster management and response. Lastly, Ms. Mathema looked forward to the next workshop as an opportunity to establish a clear national position on disaster management, aligning it with both national and global perspectives.

Addressing virtually *Ms. Shahida Arif, NEAR's regional representative for Asia and the Pacific*, expressed her support and emphasized the global significance of the issue at hand. When discussing localization, it is

essential to recognize the broader context and the potential for accelerated progress through investments in humanitarian efforts. Ms. Arif highlighted the critical importance of valuing the perspectives of local leaders, as their insights are invaluable for shaping effective response strategies. To facilitate meaningful progress, it is imperative to allocate adequate time and attention to listen attentively to their viewpoints.

Followed by an extensive report on "Bargaining for Better" presented by **Mr. Pratap Maharjan of Action Aid Nepal**. Mr. Maharjan highlighted the need for more meaningful inclusion of women's groups in the Grand Bargain 2.0, an international humanitarian aid agreement. The report revealed the Grand Bargain has not been able to shift power, resources, and decision-making to local actors, in particular, Women's Rights Organizations (WROs) and Women-led Organizations (WLOs). He noted that the Grand Bargain's current framework inadequately addresses gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (GEEWG). Based on literature and qualitative survey data from ActionAid's WRO and WLO partners across 10 countries, Mr. Maharjan reported that 64% of survey respondents were uncertain whether their voices and opinions were heard or acted upon within the Grand Bargain. This lack of transparency and inclusion has led to a perception that the Grand Bargain remains 'gender-neutral'. Mr. Maharjan also highlighted that less than 1% of aid from top humanitarian

donors was allocated to fragile states and directly to WROs and WLOs in 2020. WROs and WLOs also face challenges accessing pooled funds, such as the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund.

In response to these findings, Mr. Maharjan called on Grand Bargain signatories, including donors, UN agencies, and international NGOs, to enable meaningful engagement of WROs and WLOs, increase the amount and quality of humanitarian funding that goes to these groups, and review risk mitigation policies. He also urged these bodies to ensure WROs and WLOs have the resources they need to engage in leadership roles and to reevaluate their approach to partnering with local actors. Mr. Maharjan's presentation underscores the demanding need for a feminist lens in the design and implementation of international humanitarian aid, starting with the Grand Bargain 2.0.

Mr. Hast Bahadur Sunar, Public Policy Adviser at Tearfund, delivered a presentation regarding the international humanitarian aid framework, the Grand Bargain, focusing on the context of Nepal. One of the key points raised in his presentation was the impressive efficiency savings realized through the Grand Bargain between 2016 and 2021. Initially, the expected savings through efficiency measures over the five-year period were estimated at USD 1 billion. However, quoting one of the sources, Mr. Sunar presented that the actual

savings have far exceeded this estimate, amounting to approximately USD 4 billion.

Mr. Sunar opined that the localization process currently happening at the global level could possibly be attributed to, for the differential savings between the expected and actual figures underscores the effectiveness of the Grand Bargain in streamlining international humanitarian aid. He presented some more pertinent facts and figures around the need and urgency to deliver Grand Bargain and localization commitments for the effective and efficient humanitarian response. The funding size and shortfall to respond to global humanitarian needs as presented in the figures depicted that the needs are widespread, the financing gap is huge to be able to address the needs and therefore, the need to improve the way the global humanitarian system operates is an urgent call.

Part of Mr. Sunar's presentation focused on the need to build on what's already in place in regards to the Grand Bargain and Localization process – achieved through the Accelerating Localization through Partnerships Programme, among others, earlier in Nepal. He advised to refer to some pertinent research references around how the process of localization could be advanced and accelerated in Nepal, and also, guided through the discussion regarding what needs to be initiated based on the learning from the past. The Grand Bargain and localization journey so far and next steps in the specific context of Nepal were presented as suggestive

actions for the National Reference Group to be established vis-à-vis the global GB 2.0 context for Nepal.

Mr. Surya Narayan Shrestha, Leadership Council Member of NEAR and Executive Director of NSET, delivered a detailed presentation on making aid more effective and efficient, discussing the origins and structure of the Grand Bargain, a humanitarian financing initiative. The Grand Bargain was proposed by a UN panel to address the growing gap between humanitarian needs and available resources. Launched at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, it is an agreement between major donors and aid organizations to improve the effectiveness of humanitarian action. Its commitments include investments in preparedness, risk reduction, and mitigation, alongside measures to broaden the base for humanitarian action. The Grand Bargain, while not binding, encourages organizations and donors to commit to transparency, collaboration, and continuous improvement in their humanitarian efforts. It is structured around 51 commitments organized into eight thematic work streams, each focusing on a specific aspect of aid effectiveness, from greater transparency to simplified reporting requirements. In 2021, the signatories endorsed the Grand Bargain 2.0 framework, which revised the structure and introduced new elements like the National Reference Groups and Caucuses. These aim to translate global commitments into meaningful change at the

national level and ensure effective humanitarian response.

Mr. Shrestha highlighted ongoing efforts in Nepal to establish a National Reference Group, an inclusive local body of humanitarian actors, to better address humanitarian needs. He also discussed the Grand Bargain's future, noting that the concept of the National Reference Group would continue in the larger context of the Local Leadership Lab being launched by NEARBY. Mr. Shrestha ended his presentation by highlighting the monitoring implementation process and the possibility of new signatories joining the Grand Bargain. He concluded with a look ahead to the Grand Bargain Annual Meeting set for June 19-20, 2023 in Geneva, where the progress of Grand Bargain 2.0 will be reviewed, and the next phase of the initiative will be launched.

Feedback received from DPNet's virtual discussion platform in Nepal suggests a crucial need for improved transparency, efficiency, and community involvement in disaster aid management, according to Dr. Raju Thapa. The virtual discussion focused on the Grand Bargain, an agreement struck in 2016 aiming to streamline the humanitarian aid system. As the Grand Bargain 2.0 commences, conversations are underway to maximize its benefits and understand its relevance in Nepal. Participants emphasized the importance of the Grand Bargain, citing its potential to reduce administrative costs and enhance efficiency in humanitarian assistance. However, concerns

were raised about the slow disbursement of aid, high administrative costs, politics involved in aid distribution, and an overall lack of transparency in resource allocation. One significant point of discussion revolved around the need for better community involvement in disaster management. Suggestions were made to strengthen community institutions, incorporate affected communities in decision-making processes, and directly invest in communities for future disaster preparedness. On the issue of humanitarian values and ethical considerations, participants criticized individuals who appear to use aid distribution for self-promotion and emphasized the importance of a selfless and effective approach to aid rooted in human moral values, honor, and dignity. Equity and proportionality in aid distribution were also identified as areas needing attention. Participants called for greater consideration of contextual factors in aid distribution, along with the potential role of the National Reference Group (NRG) in ensuring diverse stakeholder representation and inclusivity. The feedback highlighted the importance of the NRG as a coordination mechanism for local and national stakeholders, ensuring transparency and amplifying the voice of the affected population. Urgent action to establish the NRG in Nepal was called for, with Disaster Preparedness Network Nepal (DPNet) suggested as a potential interim coordinator. Dr. Thapa's presentation underscores the need for enhanced collaboration, transparency, and community involvement in disaster aid

management, elements that will be crucial in realizing the goals of the Grand Bargain 2.0 in Nepal.

In his special remarks, *Prof. Dr. Hari Darshan Shrestha, a founding member of NEAR* and a member of its first leadership council, highlighted several important points related to conflict, organizational accountability, and the role of local organizations in humanitarian efforts. He emphasized the need for transparency, the absence of corruption, and the importance of documented evidence to support these claims. Prof. Dr. Shrestha called for a simplified funding structure that would enable direct support to local organizations and reduce administrative costs. Recognizing the significance of building the capacity of local organizations, he stressed the need for continuous capacity-building processes, especially for organizations focused on response activities.

Prof. Dr. Shrestha discussed NEAR as a global advocacy group and acknowledged the challenges faced during its establishment. He expressed the view that new entities are unnecessary and suggested that NEAR should operate solely as an advocacy group. Prof. Dr. Shrestha also highlighted the work of Degan Ali, a prominent figure in decolonizing development aid and rethinking humanitarianism. Degan played a pivotal role in developing the concept of a global south civil society network and co-founded NEAR in 2016. Degan's advocacy for the localization

movement and the Grand Bargain's target of allocating 25% of funding to local actors was emphasized. Regarding NEAR's independence, Prof. Dr. Shrestha proposed that DPNet could facilitate its functioning while ensuring independence, as governmental ownership might limit effective advocacy. He shared his experiences in establishing networks and emphasized the importance of building capacity and preserving institutional knowledge. He stressed the need for local and community-centric approaches, acknowledging the unique thoughts, cultures, and practices of different places and communities. As a member of NEAR, Prof. Dr. Shrestha recognized the importance of including community representatives to ensure their voices are heard. He advocated for community participation within the National Representation Group to better understand local contexts, needs, and capacities. In conclusion, he emphasized the need to prioritize the well-being of affected people in all humanitarian efforts and initiatives.

During the open discussion session at the workshop, participants addressed various issues within different thematic areas. The evolution and impact of the Grand Bargain were explored, covering its origins, structure, revisions, efficiency savings, and challenges. Transparency, efficiency, and ethics in humanitarian aid were also discussed, including concerns about high administrative costs, slow disbursement, and the role of politics and private companies in aid

distribution. The importance of empowering and involving local organizations and actors in disaster management and community level awareness was emphasized, highlighting the need for direct investment, incorporation of cultural and social aspects, and the role of Women's Rights Organizations (WROs) and Women-led Organizations (WLOs). Inclusion, equity, and proportionality in aid distribution were raised as important considerations, emphasizing diverse stakeholder representation and contextual factors. The role of national and local coordination mechanisms, such as the National Reference Group (NRG), collaboration with the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (NPDRR), and the interim coordination role of the Disaster Preparedness Network Nepal (DPNet), were discussed. Lastly, the workshop addressed the incorporation of gender and social inclusion considerations in aid management, emphasizing the Grand Bargain's approach to gender equality, criticism of being gender-neutral,' and the significance of Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) considerations.

The workshop concluded with the decision to form a National Reference Group, comprising nine members from organizations DPNet Nepal, DiMaNN, NGO Federation, NFDN, RDN, WFDA/FEDO, NSET/NEAR, ActionAid, and Tearfund. DPNet was appointed as the coordinator of this committee, overseeing its activities and playing a critical role in developing the NRG. The committee

will focus on coordinating various initiatives and activities, and devising the Terms of Reference (ToR) and future plans for the NRG. The primary objectives of the committee will be to coordinate various initiatives and activities, as well as develop the Terms of Reference (ToR) and future plans for the National Reference Group (NRG).

The workshop, recognized as the inaugural historic event of its kind, received acknowledgment from the program chair, Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa, who proclaimed it a resonant success. Mr. Thapa provided a comprehensive summary and expressed his gratitude. He emphasized several important points, starting with the need to prioritize marginalized groups who are vulnerable. He called for further discussions on how signatory countries are implementing the Grand Bargain and highlighted the valuable insights that NGOs working on the ground can contribute to this dialogue. Effective delivery of services was emphasized as a crucial aspect. Mr. Thapa also underscored the significance of National Reference Groups for self-criticism and monitoring. Acknowledging the challenges faced by local organizations in integrating and accessing resources due to insufficient funds, he stressed the importance of collective approaches to enhance bargaining power for better service delivery. The increasing occurrence of disasters was also noted as a pressing concern. Additionally, Mr. Thapa reiterated the need to focus on marginalized groups, the discussions around signatory

countries' efforts on the Grand Bargain, and the valuable insights from NGOs working on the ground.

Finally, Chair Thapa emphasized that the workshop effectively showcased the unwavering dedication of all the stakeholders involved in bolstering the Grand Bargain and National Reference Group's endeavors in Nepal. Mr. Thapa expressed his gratitude, concluding the session on a positive note. The event provided valuable insights and discussions on various important aspects, emphasizing the need for research to assess the

status of local organizations after project completion and the importance of ensuring their functionality for successful capacity-building efforts.

Please click the following links to access the presentations delivered during the workshop:

- [Bargaining For Future Bringing a Feminist Lens to Grand Bargain 2.0](#)
- [Grand Bargain and Localization Discourse in Nepal](#)
- [Feedback Received from Virtual Discussion Platform](#)
- [Overview of Grand Bargain: How aid can be made effective and efficient](#)

Guest Lecture on Grand Bargain, Localization, and Its Significance in the Humanitarian Field



On 30 May, 2023, DPNet, in collaboration with DiMaNN, NEAR, and Samarpan Academy Institute of Crisis Management Studies (ICMS), organized a guest lecture session on the significance of the Grand Bargain,

Localization and its significance in the humanitarian field. The event featured Ms. Sahida Arif, a highly experienced humanitarian and resilience expert, and Regional

Representative at NEAR (Network for Empowered Aid Response).

The program was conducted in the presence of esteemed individuals including Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa, Chairperson of DPNet/DiMaNN; Mr. Sanat Kumar Basnet, Retired Inspector General of APF Nepal and Chairperson of ICMS; Dr. Raju Thapa, Vice Chair of DPNet and Member of Board of Directors, ICMS; Mr. Bishnu Pd. Timilsena, General Secretary of DiMaNN; and Mr. Pratap Maharjan from Action Aid Nepal with the participation of 44 personalities from different organizations including ICMS. The program was moderated by Dr. Kishor Adhikari, Principal of ICMS.

The program commenced with a warm welcome and program introduction session by Dr. Kishor Adhikari, followed by an insightful presentation and sharing session from Ms. Sahida Arif. The event featured discussions on the NEAR network and the Grand Bargain initiative along with localization, both aimed at improving humanitarian aid systems and empowering local actors and communities.

Ms. Sahida Arif, humanitarian and resilience expert, and Regional Representative at NEAR (Network for Empowered Aid Response) begin her presentation by providing an introduction to the NEAR network, which stands for Network for Empowered Aid Response. The NEAR network is a collective of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) from the Global South

that share a common objective of promoting fair, equitable, and dignified partnerships within the aid system. The network emphasizes the importance of genuine local participation in development and disaster management to ensure effective aid reaches those in need. Ms. Arif highlighted the significant role played by local organizations in responding swiftly to crises, often saving lives in the crucial initial days of emergencies.

Additionally, Ms. Arif shed light on the Grand Bargain, an agreement that emerged from the preparations for the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016. The Grand Bargain is a unique partnership between major donors and humanitarian organizations committed to enhancing the efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability of humanitarian action while ensuring that aid reaches those in need. Ms. Arif clarifies that the Grand Bargain has evolved over the years, with the endorsement of the Framework and annexes for the Grand Bargain 2.0 in 2021.

Ms. Arif further explains that the Grand Bargain 2.0 aims to achieve better humanitarian outcomes for affected populations by prioritizing enhanced efficiency, effectiveness, and greater accountability. Two crucial priorities have been established to guide the future of the Grand Bargain: reaching a critical mass of quality funding for an effective and efficient response, and providing greater support for local responders' leadership, delivery, and capacity,

as well as the participation of affected communities in addressing humanitarian needs. Originally involving the five largest donors and six largest UN agencies, the Grand Bargain now boasts 66 signatories, including member states, NGOs, UN agencies, Red Cross/Red Crescent movements, and intergovernmental organizations. In 2022, these signatories are actively implementing commitments across five workstreams, which include greater transparency, support and funding for local and national responders, joint needs assessments, participation revolution, and harmonized reporting requirements.

Ms. Arif, reflecting on past achievements and the role of workstreams within the Grand Bargain 2.0 describes that three workstreams were decided to be closed down: increasing the use and coordination of cash-based programming, reducing duplication and management costs through functional reviews, and enhancing quality funding. However, the commitment to enhance engagement between humanitarian and development actors remains a cross-cutting commitment.

In the open discussion session, participants actively engaged by raising questions related to the capabilities of local NGOs, the involvement of local actors, and mechanisms for enhancing

the capacity of these organizations. Ms. Sahida Arif, provided insightful answers to address the question referring to core documents [How to Implement the Grand Bargain Commitments at The Country-Level?](#) and [The Grand Bargain 2.0 Endorsed framework and annexes.](#)

Dr. Kishor Adhikari, Principal of ICMS, summarized the session, emphasizing the significance of Ms. Arif's lecture in promoting effective humanitarian aid delivery at the local level. Dr. Adhikari expressed gratitude to Ms. Arif for her valuable insights, highlighting the crucial role played by local communities in addressing the challenges they encounter.

Concluding the session, Ms. Anita Dhakal, a student from ICMS, delivered a vote of thanks to the presenter for her enlightening session. She expressed gratitude to Ms. Arif for sharing her expertise and providing valuable insight on the topic. Ms. Dhakal also extended her appreciation to all the participants for their active participation and presence in the program.

Please find the presentation by Ms. Arif [Guest Lecture on Grand Bargain, Localization, and Its Significance in the Humanitarian Field](#) at the DPNet ORC.

DPRP Formulation Meeting Organized in Lalitpur District

On 7 June 2023, District Administrative Office, Lalitpur organized a workshop on “Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan (DPRP) Formulation and Pre-planning of Lalitpur District” in support of DPNet and NSET. The workshop aimed to enhance preplanning of DPRP and establish a Thematic Group for the preparation of the DPRP for Lalitpur District.



The event was chaired by Mr. Rudra Prasad Pandit, CDO of Lalitpur, and the Master of Ceremony was Mr. Amar Deep Sunuwar, Deputy CDO of Lalitpur. The participants included representatives from different agencies of federal government, provincial and local government, Security forces Nepal Army, Nepal Police, Armed Police Force, National Investigation Department (NID) and development partners such as NSET and DPNet and private sector entities.

The workshop began with the national anthem, followed by an introduction by the participants. Mr. Rudra Prasad Pandit, CDO of Lalitpur and Cha extended a warm welcome to all

attendees. The program was then followed by presentation of esteemed presenters.

Mr. Amar Deep Sunuwar, Deputy CDO, delivered his presentation titled "Presentation on Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan for Lalitpur District 2023 (ललितपुर जिल्लाको विपद् पूर्वतयारी तथा प्रतिकार्य योजना २०८०) Nepali". During his presentation, Mr. Sunuwar emphasized several key points regarding the district's vulnerability to various disasters throughout the year, including earthquakes, heavy rainfall, avalanches, landslides, and floods. He stressed the need to reduce human, structural, and economic losses in Lalitpur District.

To enhance disaster preparedness, Mr. Sunuwar proposed measures based on past experiences and data assessment. These measures included raising community awareness, promoting coordination between stakeholders, and ensuring efficient management of disaster response funds. He highlighted the importance of prompt response, avoiding duplication, and adopting a "one-door policy" to prioritize life-saving initiatives during and after a disaster.

Furthermore, Mr. Sunuwar emphasized the mobilization of security forces and other stakeholders, while also outlining the clearly defined roles and responsibilities of government agencies, security forces, development partners, private sectors, banking

institutions, media, and academia. He identified major hazards in Lalitpur District, such as earthquakes, fires, forest fires, landslides, floods, urban floods, epidemics, road accidents, hailstorms, and lightning.

In assessing the district's preparedness, Mr. Sunuwar examined the availability of health centers, human resources, ambulances, engineers, rescuers, logistics arrangements, volunteers, and means of transportation. He also highlighted the existing capacities of Lalitpur, including funds, health centers, education centers, water supply, logistics, and lifeline management.

To facilitate effective disaster management, Mr. Sunuwar proposed a work division among political parties for fund collection and human resource mobilization. He stressed the importance of collaboration among local governments and the involvement of the Red Cross Society for logistics, volunteers, and search and rescue operations.

Additionally, Mr. Sunuwar outlined emergency preparedness strategies, including the establishment of the District Emergency Operations Center (DEOC), Local Emergency Operations Center (LEOC), and information centers. He emphasized the importance of conducting review and reflection meetings, rapid response and assessment, and the appointment of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) focal persons. Furthermore, he highlighted the formation of thematic groups involving

development partners to ensure comprehensive disaster preparedness and response in Lalitpur District.

Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa, Chairperson of DPNet, delivered a presentation on the "Monsoon Preparedness and Counteraction Plan." He commenced by introducing DPNet as an umbrella organization comprising INGOs, NGOs, and UN agencies with primary focus on coordinating and networking, knowledge sharing, capacity building, and policy advocacy. Mr. Thapa mentioned that DPNet serves as the member secretariat of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (NPDRR), which consists of nine thematic groups. Mr. Thapa highlighted the significant contributions of DPNet in the field of disaster management. Previously, DPNet took the initiative to prepare and publish the Nepal Disaster Report in 2009, which is now undertaken by the Ministry of Home Affairs. Moreover, DPNet has taken over the organization of pre-monsoon workshops, a responsibility previously held by the Nepal Center for Disaster Management (NCDM). Currently, the Ministry of Home Affairs is responsible for organizing these workshops.

Regarding the monsoon situation in Nepal, Mr. Thapa noted that it begins in June. The main objectives of the Monsoon Preparedness and Counteraction Plan revolve around assessing past data and fostering coordination among various stakeholders, including the federal government, local government, private sectors,

and development partners. The potential hazards expected during the monsoon season in Lalitpur District are floods, landslides, epidemics and damages in infrastructure.

Mr. Thapa emphasized the actions that need to be taken to address these hazards. These include conducting assessments based on past data, learnings and current situations, categorizing hazards, arranging logistics, identifying risk zones, assessing lifeline facilities, and gathering specific data on vulnerable groups such as senior citizens, children, women, marginalized individuals, and people with disabilities. Additionally, he highlighted the importance of having adequate health facilities, manpower, and machinery such as dozers and excavators.

Furthermore, Mr. Thapa stressed the usefulness of data and statistics in the aftermath of a hazard, citing past experiences where the unavailability of data posed challenges. He emphasized the significance of collecting data related to open spaces, community centers, party palaces, schools, and other relevant areas. Proper information circulation during disasters was identified as a crucial aspect of effective monsoon management.

The challenges in monsoon management were also discussed by Mr. Thapa. These challenges encompass negligence, lack of coordination, inadequate preplanning, insufficient information, awareness, and circulation, as well as the failure to integrate development into

disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategies. Addressing these challenges is vital for ensuring effective monsoon preparedness and response.

Dr. Raju Thapa, Vice Chairperson of DPNet, delivered an informative presentation on the "Overview of Disaster Risk and Monsoon Preparedness." Dr. Thapa began by showcasing a picture of a landslide area and emphasized the significance of preplanning in disaster management. Dr. Thapa further engaged the participants by sharing various images depicting the geographical and seismological scenarios related to earthquake risks and the damage caused by past earthquakes.

During his presentation, Dr. Thapa elaborated on the seismic gaps present in Nepal and shared research findings regarding earthquake scenarios and the potential damage that could occur in the future. He also discussed the flood scenario specific to Lalitpur district. Dr. Thapa highlighted the issues associated with unmanaged urban settlements, emphasizing the irregularities in building constructions that pose seismic hazards.

Furthermore, Dr. Thapa addressed the sensitivity of the lacustrine deposits in the Kathmandu Valley to different disasters. He emphasized the importance of proper disaster preparedness and prevention measures in such areas. Dr. Thapa also raised concerns about the haphazard construction of roads and bridges,

which can contribute to disasters if not properly planned and executed.

Dr. Thapa stressed the importance of allocating adequate resources for disaster preparedness. He explained that reducing investment in preparedness measures may result in exponentially higher losses after a disaster occurs. This underlines the significance of proactive planning and resource allocation to mitigate and manage the impacts of disasters effectively.

Mr. Surya Narayan Shrestha, Executive Director, NSET delivered an informative presentation on the “Overview of Disaster Risk and Monsoon Preparedness” shared comprehensive disaster data from 1971 to 2019, focusing on Nepal and the Lalitpur district. He highlighted that while fire, floods, and landslides are recurrent disasters, earthquakes, although infrequent, have significant impacts.

Mr. Shrestha also discussed the relevant constitutional laws and policies related to disaster management in Nepal, including the Nepal Constitution, Local Government Federation Act 2074, Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act 2074, 15th Periodic Plan (2076/77-2080/81), and the Disaster Risk Reduction National Act.

An overview of the Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan (DPRP) was provided by Mr. Shrestha, emphasizing its objectives and the

importance of effective planning. The development of the plan involves several phases, including stakeholder identification, discussions among stakeholders, resource monitoring, thematic discussions on specific areas such as search and rescue equipment, emergency logistics, and emergency shelter. Workshops are conducted to develop the plan, followed by orientations and amendments as necessary. Thematic groups were identified as key frontline stakeholders and organizations involved in the DPRP. Nine thematic groups were formed and operationalized, with seven thematic areas identified specifically for Lalitpur. These areas include coordination and information management, food, non-food items, water, sanitation and hygiene, health and nutrition, education and protection, and rehabilitation and reconstruction.

The upcoming plan includes thematic group meetings, draft preparedness, and the development of a preparedness plan. The expectation from thematic groups is to provide information as soon as possible, set meeting dates, and present their respective plans.

During the question-and-answer session, strategic planning was highlighted, covering four areas: understanding risk, disaster risk governance, disaster risk reduction and investment, and effective disaster preparedness and counteraction planning. The previous year's counteractive plans, challenges faced, implementation details, and a review of the previous plan were also discussed. The

adequacy of the thematic areas was raised as a question, with consideration given to the possibility of adding or redesigning thematic areas as needed. The Bipad portal, which serves as a collective information platform, and the workforce aspects, including funding and the management information system/reconstruction management information system operated by the CDO, were also clarified. Throughout the presentation, Mr. Surya Narayan Shrestha provided a clear methodology and framework for understanding and implementing the DPRP.

Mr. Amardip Sunuwar facilitated the placement of thematic group tags on seven tables, and the organizations themselves chose to remain in the groups that aligned with their areas of expertise. They were then encouraged to share their concepts and plans within their respective thematic groups.

Open Discussion Session

Mr. Babu Raja Maharjan, the President of the Nepal Red Cross Society, highlighted the importance of the previous Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan (DPRP) that was submitted to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) and prioritized by the CDO. As part of the plan, there was an increase in security forces' simulation exercises and human resources. Additionally, it is crucial to incorporate 23 different aspects in the guidelines, including the consideration of volunteer guidelines for future planning. These volunteers have received training in first aid

and CADRE, reflecting a valuable lesson learned from previous years. Managing human resources effectively is of utmost importance. The previous DPRP was categorized into eight parts, which should also be taken into account when developing the upcoming plan.

Mr. Manoj Bahadur Nyachhyon, representing the Lalitpur Chamber of Commerce and Industries, requested the consideration of food arrangements.

Mr. Prastuti KC, from Habitat for Humanity, emphasized the need for a market assessment regarding food, rehabilitation, and reconstruction as part of the preparedness plan. This is crucial as supplies are often limited during emergencies. It is also important to focus on strengthening the capacity of volunteers.

Mr. Hari, representing the Lalitpur District Administrative Office, highlighted the existing coordination gap with the hospital. He suggested that the implementation procedure should be carefully considered to address this issue.

Mr. Niranjana Shrestha, representing the Soil and Watershed Management Office, stressed the importance of integrating water management into the preparedness plan. He suggested that water management should be included as a thematic group.

Mr. Hem Bahadur Shrestha, APF (Armed Police Force), stated that the APF is a frontline

stakeholder in emergency situations. He emphasized the need for effective mass management in disaster preparedness. He also suggested the development of a collective plan for disaster preparedness. Additionally, he stressed the importance of equipment management for effective counteraction, noting that the current search and rescue equipment can only address 7 to 8 types of disasters.

Mr. Dinesh Prasad Thani, the District Coordination Officer, clarified that local government holds the authority to approve infrastructure planning and should take the lead in applying building codes. He suggested inviting political representatives as they are also involved in these matters. He recommended reviewing thematic groups and ToR for further planning. While coordination is not prioritized, he emphasized its importance in ensuring effective implementation.

Mr. Prakash Kafle, representing OXFAM, acknowledged the organization's limitations in working specifically in limited areas, as it is primarily a humanitarian organization. However, he assured support in the planning process.

Mr. Dinesh Gurung, from the DCA, expressed commitment to participating in thematic group discussions.

Dr. Dol Prasad Chapagain, from Kathmandu Upatyaka Khanepani Limited, highlighted challenges faced, including the identification of

vulnerable buildings without taking steps to dismantle them. He suggested the need for clear classification of disasters and the formation of clusters with experts and resources. He also recommended the provision of rewards for effective mobilization of human resources in responding to disasters.

Mr. Siddhi Bikram Shah, representing the District Police Officer, stated that the strength and capacity of the police force would be reflected in the thematic group discussions. He proposed utilizing the mobile network and involving NTC (Nepal Telecom) and Ncell to facilitate communication during emergencies. He also highlighted the importance of capacity mapping at the valley level and brainstorming a plan for managing and involving the police force in disaster management. He emphasized the need for an accident management plan, considering both minor and major accidents.

Mr. Amardip Sunuwar requested all participants to voluntarily join thematic groups by providing their names. He mentioned that subsequent meetings would be organized and participants would be informed accordingly. This workshop aimed to facilitate smart planning for disaster preparedness and the counteraction plan for 2080.

In his closing remarks, **CDO Mr. Rudra Prasad Pandit**, highlighted the importance of pre-planning formulation and revitalizing the Monsoon preparedness and counteraction plan for the year 2080. The 15th strategic plan was

concluded during this workshop, which focused on three key areas. Firstly, there was a reflection on past experiences and lessons learned. Secondly, the current needs and priorities were identified and addressed. Lastly, future plans and coordination strategies were discussed. The workshop emphasized the integration and mainstreaming of feedback and suggestions into the planning process to minimize the social, economic, and environmental impact of disasters. A major

aspect was the consideration of wastewater management and drainage systems in policy development, as well as the inclusion of forest fire management and addressing the needs of the most vulnerable populations, particularly women and children. Furthermore, the workshop emphasized the importance of integration, coordination between local governments and districts, and both horizontal and vertical coordination to ensure effective planning and response effort.

Discussion Program on Role of Private Sector in DRR



DPNet Nepal, in collaboration with USAID Tayar Nepal, conducted a Policy Dialogue focusing on Private Investment in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) for Resilience today on 12th June, 2023. The event aimed to catalyze collaboration, coordination, and partnerships between private sectors and DRR organizations for constructing resilient communities. The program witnessed representatives from the

National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA), United Nation (UN), Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI), National Business Initiative (NBI) along with the individuals from other government, non-government and private sector organizations.

Mr. Kailash Rijal, General Secretary of DPNet Nepal, started the dialogue by delineating the significance of private sector engagement in disaster response. He highlighted the need to formally leverage the private sector's resources and expertise in synergy with DRR organizations. Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa, Chairperson of DPNet Nepal, accentuated the importance of stimulating public-private partnerships and employing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) transparently and accountably for community resilience.

Technical Expert Mr. Suman Shakya from Tayar Nepal, underscored the vital role of the private sector in DRR throughout his presentation that was titled [Policy Dialogue on Private Investment in Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience](#). Drawing attention to the economic aftermath of the 2015 Nepal Earthquake, he emphasized that the private sector's exposure to disaster risks is often unaddressed. Mr. Shakya posited that the private sector is integral to the nation's economy, and its growth is indispensable. Highlighting the private sector's stewardship of critical infrastructure and resources imperative for emergency management, he stressed on the necessity of preparedness and resilience. Mr. Shakya noted that while the private sector has been commendable in rendering financial support post-disasters, it is not sufficiently fortified to tackle natural and human-induced disasters due to limited awareness and capacity. He drew attention to the fact that investing \$1

in resilience saves \$4-7 in response, yet, Nepali businesses are bereft of necessary preparatory apparatus. Mr. Shakya advocated for the government and civil society organizations to build enduring alliances with the private sector, recognizing them as invaluable partners in disaster resilience.

Mr. Kedar Neupane, pinpointed that the private sector's role in DRR resilience should expand beyond fundraising to actively safeguarding and mitigating losses in the private sector. He highlighted the need for risk mapping, auditing, disaster insurance, and community-based DRR mechanisms.

Mr. Pratap Kumar Pathak talked about policy dialogue's role in facilitating evidence-informed policymaking in his presentation titled [A Policy Dialogue on Private Investment in DRR for Resilience Building](#). He reflected on the capricious and intricate nature of disasters and stressed the necessity of risk-informed private sector investments. He also drew parallels with international frameworks such as the Sendai Framework for DRR.

Dr. Bal Ram Chapagain, Assistant Professor at Tribhuvan University, underscored the importance of private investment in DRR, citing compliance with policies and legal obligations, moral obligations, good governance and risk reduction, and value creation for the private, public, and government sectors during his presentation titled [Private Investment in Disaster Risk Reduction for](#)

Resilience. Dr. Chapagain voiced concerns that most DRRM endeavors are reactive and are geared more towards emergency response and relief rather than preparedness. He lamented the lack of cross-sector collaboration, improper utilization of CSR funds, and the deficiency in awareness regarding disaster risk financing instruments. Dr. Chapagain pushed for an appraisal and rating system for CSR contributions. He also elaborated on how the private sector could foster resilience through building robust infrastructure, undertaking risk assessments, investing in research and development for early warning systems, employing insurance and risk transfer, creating supply chain resilience plans, employing CSR funds in community-based DRR programs, and engaging in advocacy, knowledge sharing, and collaborations.

The open discussion moderated by Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa witnessed participants raise issues such as the ambiguity in the functional definition of private sectors, the necessity for

well-defined roles, accountability and transparency among contractors, and the importance of enduring alliances. They accentuated the necessity for clarity and awareness about the scope of private investment in DRR. **Mr. Dhruva Bahadur Khadka, Under Secretary at NDRRMA,** shared various government initiatives in DRR resilience and underlined the importance of reorienting development to focus on DRR priorities.

In his concluding remarks Mr. Thapa said that the event proved to be instrumental in acknowledging the pivotal role of the private sector in DRR and resilience. It indicated the need for fostering collaboration among the private sector, government, and humanitarian organizations for the judicious allocation of resources towards preparedness, mitigation, and response in disaster management, with an overarching goal of reducing economic losses and fostering sustainable development.

Discussion Program on Establishing Media Beats Dedicated to DRR and Climate Change

KATHMANDU, June 16, 2023 – A discussion program was convened by DPNet, with the coordination of the former Secretary of the Government of Nepal and DPNet Advisor Mr. Kedar Neupane, focusing on the establishment of media beats dedicated to Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA). The event was attended by

prominent media personnel, including the former Chairperson of the Federation of Nepali Journalists (FNJ), Mr. Bishnu Nisthuri.

Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa, Chairperson of DPNet, addressed the program's objectives, highlighting the current lack of dedicated media beats for DRR and climate change

issues. He emphasized the necessity to initiate dialogues and involve the media in covering these critical areas. Additionally, he informed that the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA), in collaboration with DPNet and USAID/Tayar Nepal, is organizing a National Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (NCDRR) where journalists can play a pivotal role in disseminating the conference's outcomes.



Dr. Raju Thapa, Vice-Chairperson of DPNet, voiced concern over imminent disasters, such as mega earthquakes in the Western and Eastern parts of the country, due to long seismic gaps. He stressed the necessity of sensitizing communities to multi-hazard issues to safeguard lives and properties. **Mr. Ram Krishna Bhandari of Kantipur Television** underscored the national implications of disaster reporting. He cited the example of flood inundation in the Terai region, often exacerbated by Indian road infrastructure blocking water flow from Nepal. He urged that journalists need sensitization, training, and networking to convincingly report on DRR and CCA.

Mr. Sagar Pandit from Rajdhani Media shared his proposition for forming a special task force for monsoon news coverage and expressed a willingness to explore the establishment of a DRR beat within Rajdhani Media.

Ms. Anita Bindu, Senior News Editor of NTV, emphasized the need for mass sensitization through the media. She pointed out that people often disregard building codes, making high-rise buildings that are hazardous. She also stressed that media beats for DRR and climate change should be voluntary, and media houses should recognize the importance of DRR news instead of prioritizing news that sells.

Journalist Mr. Prasant Aryal advocated for lobbying with media houses to create DRR and climate change beats. Sharing his experience at News 24, he emphasized the importance of persistence in efforts to sensitize the public.

Journalist Mr. Chakra Karki highlighted the grave risks of GLOFs and snow avalanches and the need to sensitize communities to use Early Warning Systems effectively. He also urged greater respect for indigenous knowledge in addressing disaster risks.

Co-editor of Setopati, Mr. Govinda Luitel, emphasized the importance of sustained coverage on DRR and climate change issues rather than event-based reporting. He acknowledged being sensitized by the program

and expressed interest in exploring series-based news coverage on DRR and CCA.

Mr. Bishnu Nisthuri suggested exploring alternatives to creating DRR and CCA media beats, such as identifying responsible individuals and sensitizing them at provincial level first and then federal levels. This approach, he said, would help in establishing a more structured framework for DRR and CCA media coverage.

Mr. Nawaraj Mainali from Naya Patrika stressed that news on DRR and CCA should resonate with the potential impacts on lives and properties. He underscored the need for structured media beats to achieve this.

Journalist Mr. Surendra Pandey highlighted the challenges in reaching editors and media

house owners. He suggested empowering local journalists to cover DRR and CCA, emphasizing the importance of orientation at the local level.

Former Secretary of Government of Nepal, Mr. Kedar Neupane, summarized the discussion by underscoring the importance of sensitizing journalists on DRR and CCA to foster community awareness. He advocated for the creation of media beats, registered or otherwise, dedicated to these issues and stressed the need for resource mobilization to sustain such efforts. The discussion marked a crucial step in the ongoing efforts to address disaster risks and climate change issues in Nepal, drawing attention to the significant role that media can play in sensitizing communities and fostering adaptive actions.

Agreement between Doda Watershed Local Governments Handed to Chief Minister



Dhangadhi, June 9, 2023 – Ten local governments of the Doda Watershed in Sudur Paschim Province have signed an agreement to collaboratively work towards mitigating disaster risks in the Doda Watershed area. This region encompasses the Chure and Terai parts of the province. The understanding involves local bodies from Kailali, Kanchanpur, Doti, and Dadeldhura. These local bodies have shown their commitment to mitigate disaster risks and carry out associated activities, considering climate change, sustainable development, and resilience. The signatories of the agreement include mayors from Chure and Godawari Municipalities in Kailali, Laljhadi, Belauri, Purnavas, Krishnapur, and Shuklaphanta municipalities in Kanchanpur, Joroyal rural municipality in Doti, and Alital rural municipality and Parashuram municipality in Dadeldhura.

In the agreement, the signatories have agreed to identify key stakeholders in the Doda Watershed area, assess natural resources and socio-economic data, and develop strategies for climate and disaster resilience. The agreement also includes providing various training programs for affected communities, establishing a technology-friendly multi-hazard early warning system, and managing disaster risk reduction. DPNet, Mercy Corps, and NEEDS Nepal have expressed their commitment to support the local governments in building resilience in the Doda Watershed.

After the signing of the agreement, discussions were held with the Finance Minister of the Far Western Province, Mr. Naresh Kumar Shahi, to prioritize disaster preparedness and risk reduction during the planning and budget allocation processes. Minister Shahi ensured that he will do the needful to allocate budget for the watershed and such collaborative effort. Further discussions were also conducted in the presence of the Minister for Ministry of Internal Affairs and Law, Mr. Basanta Pratap Singh and Chief Minister, Mr. Kamal Bahadur Shah regarding the role of the provincial government in disaster preparedness and risk reduction, including the condition of disasters in Far Western and Nepal as a whole. Dr. Raju Thapa, DPNet Vice Chair, emphasized the NPDRR as a vital platform unifying all disaster risk reduction stakeholders. He asserted the necessity of such a platform at the provincial level, to foster improved coordination and effective disaster management. *Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa, the Chair of DPNet*, underscored the importance of implementing an NPDRR-like structure in the province. He expressed his dedication towards nurturing a resilient Sudur Paschim Province through cooperative and strategic disaster management efforts. Dr. Ganga Lal Tuladhar, former Education Minister, requested special budget allocations and programs for disaster risk reduction. On this occasion, he also handed over the signed agreement for the Doda Watershed and the National Platform for

Disaster Risk Reduction Guidelines to the Chief Minister.

Minister Prithvi Bahadur Singh expressed support for a Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction platform in Sudur Paschim Province, emphasizing the importance of proactive preparedness and planning to protect the vulnerable Doda Watershed. He acknowledged the potential of the Provincial Platform for DRR to unite stakeholders and promote a common interest in effective disaster management. The Minister's remarks highlighted the need for foresight and proactive measures to mitigate the impact of disaster, shifting the focus from post-disaster relief to pre-emptive measures for the humanitarian cause.

The Chief Minister, Kamal Bahadur Shah, in his role as a pivotal decision-maker for the

Sudur Paschim Province, illustrated a compelling interest in the proposed disaster risk reduction platform. His recognition of the platform's potential to unify efforts and strengthen disaster management at a provincial level was evident. Looking ahead, he made a firm commitment to collaborative action, promising to work in conjunction with significant stakeholders including DPNet, Mercy Corps, and NEEDS Nepal, among others, in their pursuit of disaster risk reduction. His readiness to lend his support to these development partners reflects his proactive stance towards the cause, underscoring his commitment to secure a resilient future for the province. This promise marks a significant milestone in strengthening alliances and reinforcing the collective endeavor to mitigate the devastating impacts of natural calamities.

Second National Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (NCDRR)



The two days long 'Second National Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

(NCDRR)' concluded successfully in Kathmandu, Nepal from the 29th to the 30th of

June 2023. The conference was organized under the leadership of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) with technical and financial support from Disaster Preparedness Network (DPNet) Nepal and USAID Tayar Nepal. In regard to the midterm review phase of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) this year, 2023, in the global context, this conference was organized to discuss the four priority areas of SFDRR. It was attended by a total of 319 participants belonging from different backgrounds such as MoHA, MoFAGA, MoUD, MoHP and NDRRMA, private sector organizations, development partners, civil soety organizations, I/NGOs, academia, and the media graced the event with their valuable presence, and ideas sharing.

The opening of the Second NCDRR was honored by esteemed dignitaries from various sectors. Mr. Dinesh Bhattarai, Secretary, MoHA led the event as the Chief Guest by formally inaugurating the conference by lighting a lamp, symbolizing the commitment to illuminating knowledge. The opening session was chaired by Mr. Mahadev Panth, Joint Secretary, MoHA. Ms. Ranjana Rai, Section Officer, MoHA graciously hosted the session and the notable guests delivered opening remarks, focusing on the importance of collaborative efforts and inclusive strategies in disaster risk reduction.

Mr. Tulsi Prasad Dahal, Under Secretary, MoHA, highlighted Nepal's participation in the

global Sendai Framework, emphasizing the development of a National Strategy based on this framework.

Ms. Kalpana Aryal, Disaster Risk Management Specialist, USAID emphasized the significance of the 2020-2025 Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) in health and education and advocated for inclusive decision-making and ongoing planning processes along with the importance and effectiveness of implementing Disaster Insurance/ Financing while developing disaster-related products for DRM that motivates Project grantees.

Mr. Hemraj Dhakal, Vice Chair, FNCCI highlighted the inclusion of DRR in FNCCI's subcommittee, emphasizing the importance of private sector engagement along with the participation of vulnerable communities and persons with disabilities and the effect of disaster in agriculture.

Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa, DPNet Chair emphasized the conference's importance as it incorporated learnings from previous consultations and conferences. Mr. Thapa urged turning slogans into action, highlighting Nepal's unique constitutional inclusion of the term "disaster." He emphasized collective efforts, feedback, and suggestions as the basis for meaningful change.

Mr. Rudra Singh Tamang, Joint Secretary, NDRRMA highlighted the comprehensive

review and reflection provided by the conference in alignment with the four pillars of the Sendai Framework, the importance of collaboration in understanding and taking action in the field of DRR and announced an upcoming national workshop through the National Platform for DRR (NPDRR).

Mr. Krishna Chandra Neupane, Director General, ADCCN emphasized the need for diversified roles, acknowledging the importance of everyone's effort during disasters even concerned impact of social disasters, the impact of climate change on agriculture and indigenous technology.

Mr. Dinesh Bhattarai, Secretary, MoHA and Chief Guest of the event highlighted the event's focus on the four themes of the Sendai Framework.

In regard to the midterm review phase of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) this year, 2023, in the global context, four technical sessions were held where 20 papers were presented aligning with those four priority themes of SFDRR. A plenary session on 'Sharing Local Government DRR Practices' was conducted in which representatives from MoFAGA, various municipalities, MuAn, and NARMIN actively participated. The technical sessions namely are; Session A: Understanding Disaster Risk, Session B: Strengthening Disaster Risk Governance at All Levels, Session C: Investing in Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience, and Session D:

Enhancing Disaster Preparedness for Effective Response and 'Build Back Better' under the chairmanship of four experts **Mr. Mahadev Panth, Joint Secretary, MoHA (Chief, Disaster and Conflict Management Division), Mr. Tulsi Bahadur Shrestha, Joint Secretary, MoHA, Ms. Saloni Pradhan Singh, Former Member of the National Planning Commission, and Dr. Gangalal Tuladhar, Former Education Minister** respectively.

A Marketplace was arranged to demonstrate the learning materials and relevant resources regarding DRR where 26 DRR stakeholders showcased their materials, publications, and productions throughout the program period.

The key outcomes of the conference include:

- The conference launched a hardcopy version of Nepal's Voluntary National Report for the Midterm Review of the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.
- Successful Mid-Term Review and assessment of the implementation of the SFDRR 2015-2030 and identification of existing gaps that contributed to assessing the way forward in addressing those gaps catering to the needs ensuring GEDSI inclusion, majorly focusing on hearing-impaired individuals and individuals with physical disabilities while embracing the participation of all non-binary individuals and groups as well

while accommodating EWS, rescue and relief efforts.

- Policy Recommendations for building resilience in a holistic approach with a collaboration between communities, governments, concerned stakeholders, and researchers to address the challenges in DRR.
- Supported the effective implementation of DPNet’s DRR Strategic Plan of Action 2018-2030 while fostering a comprehensive and coordinated approach to DRR among the diverse range of stakeholders involved.
- Exchange of ideas and sharing of lessons learned during field-level implementation and its systematic documentation aided in shaping an idea for the forthcoming presentations of the Government at regional and global DRR events and preparation of the DRR Journal of DPNet.

Major learning from the recommendations:

- To effectively implement SFDRR and DRR policies, further enhancements on disaster insurance/financing, risk management integration in development processes, investing in preparedness measures, fostering collaboration among different levels of government, conducting risk and multi-hazard assessments, prioritizing research and development initiatives, enhancing volunteer management systems, constructing resilient structures, disseminating knowledge and information, developing and harmonizing policies, and prioritizing resilience in development projects needs to be made.

- Need for increased awareness and active involvement of stakeholders in order to effectively incorporate GEDSI principles into disaster management considering meaningful participation and leadership of all individuals, encompassing diverse backgrounds and abilities, throughout the stages of preparation, rescue, relief, and simulation practices.
- Importance of enhancing the role of science, technology, and innovation in DRR, such as the development and adaptation of homegrown technology for effectively addressing local issues and improving the overall well-being of Nepalese society.
- Need to prioritize and strengthen the engagement of experts and academia throughout the planning phase of DRR, focusing on evidence-based research along with a focus on media involvement on pre-disaster preparation and resilience-building efforts.
- Establishing operational preparedness, coordinating various sectors' capabilities, regular drills and enhancements of public health emergency preparedness, as well as addressing mental health and psychosocial support is crucial in Public Health Emergency Management.
- Recognizing the role of the private sector in disaster resilience by viewing them as partners and advocating for their active engagement in pre-disaster planning and preparation, promoting the implementation of business continuity management practices can

encourage investment in disaster-resilient products and services.

As a closing remark, Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa, DPNet Chair expressed appreciation towards the participants, authorities, and volunteers for contributing to the conference's success. He emphasized the importance of compiling a comprehensive proceedings report and providing accessible presentations on the DPNet website for continued access.

Mr. Tulsi Prasad Dahal, Under Secretary, MoHA highlighted the significance of gathering recommendations and feedback for future programs. He emphasized promoting inclusiveness through disability-friendly publications and adopting a GEDSI approach,

utilizing homegrown technologies, addressing fire hazards, and prioritizing the development of a Business Continuity Plan to enhance DRR efforts and build resilience.

Mr. Mahadev Panth, Joint Secretary, MoHA took over the closing ceremony of the conference by acknowledging the valuable feedback received throughout the conference. Mr. Panth shared insights from previous reconstruction efforts and expressed heartfelt gratitude to all individuals involved in organizing and participating in the event.

The details of the conference can be accessed at: [National Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction \(NCDRR\) 2](#)