

Sound Practice No. 3

Disaster Management Bureau-UNICEF Periodic Briefing Session on Earthquake Disaster Management

Overview

Disaster management is not the responsibility of any particular agency or organization. It requires skilled human resources and well-coordinated efforts from all concerned bodies. These briefing sessions were targeted firstly for architects, civil engineers, private builders and policy makers and secondly for community representatives and other professionals from different relevant agencies with a view to making their roles and responsibilities, related to earthquake disaster management, more realistic and dynamic.

Significant background information

Disaster Management Bureau, with the help of different international funding agencies and local administration and other organizations, has been conducting various types of training sessions, seminars, workshops and other public awareness programs throughout the country. As a continuation of such programs the Bureau, with the funding from the UNICEF, undertook a 5 year long project titled “The Rights-based Planning and Monitoring: Disaster Preparedness”. These briefing sessions were a part of this project.

SP details

Year round briefing sessions in Dhaka have been conducted for professionals from RAJUK (Capital Development Authority), City Corporation, Public Works Department (PWD), Armed Forces, Fire Service and Civil Defense, Ansar (Community Police) and Village Defense Police (VDP).

Each day-long session took place between 09.00 AM to 05.00 PM. Eight (8) resource-persons from different relevant fields were selected to conduct each session for 50 participants.

The briefing sessions had a module in common on earthquake disaster management and public awareness and there were some special topics in each of them for the targeted group.

Nine (9) broad aspects and their contents that were covered during each of the sessions are:

1: Introduction to earthquake disaster management

- Policy of Bangladesh Government for reducing natural disasters;
- Objectives of Ministry of Food and Disaster Management (MoFDM);
- Objectives of the briefing session.

2: General concepts on earthquake, earthquakes in different countries and earthquakes in Bangladesh context

- Nature and characteristics of earthquakes;
- Causes of earthquakes;
- Major earthquakes around the world;
- Recent earthquakes in and around Bangladesh;
- Seismic activities in Bangladesh.

3: Preparation for reducing earthquake disaster loss: Roles and responsibilities of emergency service providing agencies and volunteers

- What is disaster-preparedness;
- Potential loss due to earthquakes
- List of different agencies that can provide support during earthquake disasters;
- Roles and responsibilities of various government and non-government service providing agencies to reduce the potential loss likely to be incurred by earthquake disaster;
- Equipments and machineries that might be necessary for earthquake preparedness;
- How to do the coordination for disaster preparedness;

- How to raise public awareness regarding earthquake.

4: Building Code: Objective, extent and content

- Background of Bangladesh National Building Code (BNBC) 1993;
- Objectives of BNBC 1993;
- Content of BNBC 1993;
- Extent of BNBC 1993;
- Types of different physical infrastructures;
- Guidelines that have been followed in preparation of the BNBC 1993;
- How to enforce BNBC 1993.

5: Response to earthquake: Rescue operations and coordination

- What does response operation to earthquake mean;
- How to observe the situation and fix the priorities;
- How to collect and disseminate information;
- Guidelines for rescue operation, first aid, health services and fire fighting;
- Guidelines for providing shelter and collection and distribution of food, water and other necessary goods;
- Provisions for waste disposal and cremation;
- How to keep disciplines and restrain price-hikes;
- How to keep the transportation and communication system working;
- How to do the coordination between rescue parties and volunteers.

6: Recovery and rehabilitation

- How to regain normalcy in disaster-stricken areas;
- How to accelerate the recovery and rehabilitation works;
- How to conduct the welfare activities for the affected people;
- Decisions to be made for recovery and rehabilitation.

7: First aid to earthquake affected people

- Types of human injuries as a result of earthquake;
- Detailed knowledge/ideas about first aid;
- Necessary qualities of a first aid provider;
- How first aid can help in different kinds of injuries.

8: Outline for emergency response drill for earthquake

- How to conduct emergency response drill;
- Participants of the drill;
- Lessons from the drill.

9: Guidelines for public awareness regarding earthquake

- What is public awareness and why;
- What are the matters that the people should be aware of regarding earthquake;
- How public media can help raising public awareness.

Relevance to Megacities

Universality/Transferability

This practice may be considered transferable to other Megacities, which hold the same kinds of risks with some modifications according to the local context.

Applicability

It is very much possible to conduct such sessions for awareness raising as well as for capacity building since it worked nicely in a multi-tier city governance system in Dhaka and other parts of the country.

Expandability

This type of programs should be carried out more extensively among the community people. Initiatives should be taken to arrange such sessions targeting every Ward of the city. Provision for some hands-on experience should be made through mock exercise. And it would have been more useful if the session was conducted over a few days instead of only one day so that people would get sufficient time to realize.

Orientation/Focus

It is expected that conducting this kind of programs regularly and more extensively will definitely contribute to the overall earthquake disaster management in Dhaka City.

Supporting Documentation

Disaster Management Bureau prepared a guide book for conducting the sessions, which is available with the bureau. This guide book was provided to the participants so that they get the opportunity to review the lessons they were taught.

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