

## REPORT

### **State Level Consultation on Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation into developmental planning**

**Date** | 07/07/2015

**Venue** | Hotel Mascot, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala

**Organized by** | SDMA, Dept. of Revenue and Disaster Management & UNDP

**Project** | GoI – UNDP Project on Enhancing Institutional & Community Resilience to Disasters & Climate Change 2013-2017



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## **Introduction**

The project 'GoI - UNDP Enhancing institutional and community resilience to disasters and climate change' supports efforts of the state government to accelerate implementation of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation plans. One of the activities of the Annual Work Plan of 2015 was to hold consultation on mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into developmental planning.

The project steering committee of the state of Kerala, initiated the discussions with the nodal departments by sharing the concept paper much before the program so that each department representative becomes familiar to the topic for deliberation. The consultation was held on the 7<sup>th</sup> July 2015 at Symphony Hall of Hotel Mascot from 10:00 to 04:30pm.

The meeting started with an introduction and welcome by Dr Sekhar L Kuriakose, Member KSDMA and Head (Scientist), SEOC. He elaborated on the objectives of the consultation and the desired outcome of this meeting, followed by self-introduction of each participant.

## **Keynote Address**

Dr Vishwas Mehta, Principal Secretary, Revenue & Disaster Management delivered the Keynote address. He is also the State Project Director of the GoI-UNDP project. He started off the address by thanking every participant, specially the UNDP, for pioneering this topic in the state. Later, he addressed the audience about vulnerability of Kerala to disasters climate change. He also quoted some of his personal experiences in the case of the disasters like floods and cyclones in Bihar and Orissa. He also opined that the biggest problem faced by our country is the density of population and Kerala is no exception. This ultimately is reflected in the number of casualties during a disaster event.

He also mentioned that he has observed a lack of awareness among the government officials about the disaster management and even the basics of rescue and other emergency operations. He also pointed out that the officials themselves are lacking the basic know-how about safety. On mainstreaming, he urged the officials to bring guidelines, policies and plans which are achievable and executable. He requested the officials to start thinking out-of-the-box and find the solutions in the group discussions which will follow.

## **Technical Sessions**

Mr Joe John George, State Project Officer, introduced the facilitator of the days' sessions, Shri Arun Sahdeo, UNDP to the participants. He further invited him and handed over the sessions to him.

Shri Arun Sahdeo started the session thanking the government of Kerala, revenue & disaster management department for hosting such a consultation meeting.

He then made a brief presented on 'Introduction to Mainstreaming DRR & CCA'. He started off with the basics of disaster management, quoting the lessons learned from major disasters of the country such as the Gujarat Earthquake, Bihar & J&K Floods. He also explained the

difference between hazards & disasters when a participant raised a clarification on the same. He commented on the poor institutional resilience to disasters, in our country. He gave an example of the major earthquake in Gujarat killed 15000 people in India, whereas, a similar earthquake of same magnitude which occurred in California succumbed to only one death.

Cities in the country show that they are increasing the risks to disasters rather than preventing them. Poor planning and faulty constructions are adding to the plight, he also emphasised on climate change, climate variability and climate change adaptation required to be considered while planning.

While talking about ‘Mainstreaming’, he said that Mainstreaming DRR & CCA into the development planning process essentially means looking critically at each activity that is being planned, not only from the perspective of reducing vulnerability of that activity from natural hazards and climate change impacts, but also from the perspective of minimizing that activity's potential contribution to hazard specific vulnerability. It is a process whereby DRR & CCA measures are fully institutionalized into the developmental policy and practices by all stakeholders at all levels. In the mainstreaming process, disaster risks and climate change impact considerations are mandatorily factored into development activities right from the planning stage in order to achieve sustainability and resilience.

The need of mainstreaming was also deliberated. The importance can be known from the background such as the DM Act 2005, National Policy on Disaster Management 2009, Five Year Plans, Scheme Appraisal, Flexi Funds – CSS, Support from MHA, Review of Schemes etc.

Mainstreaming DRR is a dynamic process; a) ensuring the development is protected through DRR elements and, b) ensuring that development does not increase the people’s vulnerability to disasters.

He introduced two approaches towards mainstreaming which were

- 1) Mainstreaming into overall national development & planning
- 2) Mainstreaming into specific priority sectors through flagship schemes.

At the end of the presentation, Shri. Arun Sahdeo put forward the message that, prevention is always better than cure; and for the prevention of disasters the officials need to put utmost care in policy making and find solutions. Also, he suggested that national budgets may be enhanced by the departmental budgeting for disaster management. Also, certain examples like the idea of including triage doctors in every ICU’s of every hospital, thus Hospital planning, School Planning, House planning etc. needs to be disaster management oriented. Early warning systems etc. need to be triggered by the officials, department wise. Also, keep record which will support the officials in post disaster audit. Create enabling environment – for policy, planning and for this the tools which can be used are the guidelines, checklists & technical support.

Dr. Sekhar L. Kuriakose, Member KSDMA, Head (Scientist) gave a short presentation on the topic ‘Climate Change, Climate Extremes & Natural Hazards – Fiction, Facts & Future’. He

started off his presentation with a slide introducing some old newspaper clippings on the subject of climate change; such as ‘India most affected due to Climate Change – Stern’, ‘Climate Change hits mango production – The Hindu’, etc. He then continued with the topics such as ‘the bleak future of monsoon!’ and how India is going to be affected, if monsoon drops. Everybody agrees that climate change will be evident in monsoons too. Change in monsoons is observed and recorded.

Towards the end of his presentation, Dr. Sekhar displayed the HIGS – CC & NH Research + Policy & Governance method. He concluded by putting forward a food-for-thought to the government officials about whether a similar framework can be developed in the state? So that, Kerala state will have the observational data to prove and help in policy making and thus help the administrations with solid evidence.

There was a brief question & answer session about some topics in his presentation by the officials.

### **Group Discussion**

Post lunch, the group reassembled in the hall, and the group activities on action planning for mainstreaming DRR & CCA were done under the supervision of Shri. Arun Sahdeo. Five groups viz. Health, Urban development and housing, Agriculture/horticulture & animal husbandry, Education and Water & Sanitation were formed on the basis of different departments participated and a set of questionnaire was provided to each group to be filled after discussions.

The discussion had two components

- a) To review and rate the existing practices in the department in a scale of 0-5, and identify the issues against each review point.
- b) To identify three major issues out of the many identified and suggest methods to address the same.

After the presentations by the group representatives, Shri. Arun Sahdeo thanked each group for their enthusiastic participation in the programme. He further thanked the State and officials who organized this meeting.

The proceedings of the group discussion is captured in Annexure – 1

### **Future Plan of Action**

- Follow-up meeting with the representatives of various departments to make further department wise action plan in the State.
- Encourage D.M plan preparation for each department.
- Nominating one nodal officer from each department for disaster management
- Inter-departmental meeting on DRR & CCA

## FEEDBACK

Consolidated feedback by participants in %

Sl.No	Questions	V.Bad	Bad	OK	Good	Excellent
1	Relevance of the theme of the consultation			20	33	47
2	Technical Sessions & Presentation			14	33	53
3	Group Discussions		7	7	53	33
4	Resource materials distributed	7	7	33	40	13
5	Was this program helpful for you ?			20	47	33
6	Will you influence your department/agency in mainstreaming DRR & CCA ?			20	33	47
7	Venue & Lunch			20	33	47

### Further comments

- Requires follow -up programmes
- More Technical Presentation would have been good
- Mainstreaming to be implemented in the state as early as possible with specific requirement of the state such as nuclear disaster, Dam failure etc.
- More resource materials pertaining to this subject would have given in a pen drive.

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## Annexure 1

### The Snaps of the Consultation

