

REPORT

Training of Trainers on Community Based Disaster Management for the Dzongkhag Disaster Management Committee of Bumthang Dzongkhag from December 8-14, 2010.

“Under Reducing Climate Change Induced Risks and Vulnerabilities from Glacial Lake Outburst
Floods in Punakha-Wangdue and Chamkhar Valleys” supported by the LDC Fund through
UNDP/GEF

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Background

The Department of Disaster Management, Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs (MoHCA), organized a “Training Workshop on Community Based Disaster Management for the Dzongkhag Disaster Management Committee and Teams of Bumthang Dzongkhag from 8-14 December, 2009.

The workshop was organized through the project “Reducing Climate Change Induced Risks and Vulnerabilities from Glacial Lake Outburst Floods in Punakha-Wangdue and Chamkhar Valleys” supported by the LDC Fund through UNDP/GEF and executed by the Department of Disaster Management (DDM), MoHCA.

The overall goal of the project is to enhance adaptive capacity to and creating awareness in reducing GLOF risks in Bhutan.

Participants at this workshop included representatives from all sector under Bumthang Dzongkhag. The workshop was facilitated by officers of the Department of Disaster Management (DDM), local consultant.

Overall Goal

To train and enhance the awareness of the Dzongkhag officials and other stakeholders and counterparts on the natural disasters threat in Bhutan and to introduce the community based disaster risk management (CBDRM) process to participants.

The workshop would ensure that the Dzongkhag officials and stakeholders realize the impending risks from GLOF and other various hazards and make CBDRM plans an integral part of the Dzongkhag initiative.

Objectives

To sensitize and give orientation to the Dzongkhag staff and other stakeholders on the impending disaster risks in particular GLOF faced by the Dzongkhag and the need for:

- Understanding the Disaster Risk management Framework and basic concepts related to disaster management.
- Formation of Dzongkhag Disaster Management Committee (DDMC), Dzongkhag Disaster Management Teams (DDMT) and their roles and responsibilities.
- Introduce in detail the Disaster Management Planning Guidelines for the preparation of comprehensive Dzongkhag Disaster Management Plans that addresses planning and other requirements in terms of human resources, equipment, capacity building and funding etc.
- To understand the assessment tools i.e. vulnerability assessment, capacity assessment and risk assessment in preparation of the disaster management plans.

- Disaster Communication Plan/ Flow of Information and Communication and establishment of emergency operations centers (EOC) in the Dzongkhags.
- To initiate CBDRR preparedness and planning to ensure that necessary materials, partnerships, and strategies are well placed to maximize preparedness and responses.

Methodology and Workshop Materials

The workshop focused on natural disasters likely to occur in Bhutan and the impact this would have on the lives, livelihoods and safety of the communities. The steps involved in planning for and responding to disaster emergency situation were discussed in focused sessions. This information enabled the participants to share ideas, issues and challenges involved in preparedness planning and responding to an emergency and to address key areas and gaps in their own district response. The final day of the workshop allowed participants to discuss and formation of Dzongkhag Disaster Management Committees and DDMT in detail and to outline strategies to train Training of Trainers (ToT) at the Dzongkhag level who would initiate CBDRR planning at the Geog levels.

The workshop methodology focused on active participation, providing substantial time for groups, individual reflection and presentations to larger participants. Questions were welcomed throughout the workshop with extended time allowed for discussion and input by all, including the facilitators (resource persons).

All participants were given a copy of Community Based Disaster Risk Management participants' handbook and other relevant handouts.

Workshop Proceedings

The biggest lesson shared by countries that have faced big disasters and coped with painful losses is the importance of involving communities in the process of risk reduction before disasters and in delivering effective response during disasters.

A community-based approach in disaster management is necessary in the risk-reduction process because communities are the local experts and know not only their own risks and needs but also possess innate skills, capacities and knowledge to enhance the process. Communities need to lead response efforts simply because they are the first responders and have the advantage of time and location to make the essential difference in their communities.

In a country like ours with rugged mountainous terrain, settlements in isolated pockets and fragile road networks, building a community-centered disaster management strategy is a fundamental requirement. T

The National Disaster Risk Management Framework endorsed by the government in 2006, therefore, gives community-based disaster risk management (CBDRM) a central place in our disaster management system.

CBDRM is defined as “a process of disaster risk management in which at-risk communities are actively engaged in the identification, analysis, treatment, monitoring and evaluation of disaster risks in order to reduce their vulnerabilities and enhance their capacities”.

To further strengthen the role of communities in disaster management endeavors in the country, the draft National Disaster Management Bill endorses the institutionalization of decentralized and empowered disaster management committees at the Dzongkhag and Gewog levels. The National Disaster Management Plan would be based on the Dzongkhag Disaster Management Plans, which in turn would be based on plans formulated at the Gewog level.

To implement these policies and strategies is easier said than done as community based initiatives require long-term and consistent efforts and commitment from all concerned stakeholders, especially from the communities themselves. It will take us time to reach our ultimate goal of “disaster-resilient communities”, but we have begun the journey.

From 8th -14th December, 2009, the Disaster Management Teams of Bumthang Dzongkhag were trained in CBDRM through “Reducing Climate Change Induced Risks and Vulnerabilities from

Glacial Lake Outburst Floods in Punakha-Wangdue and Chamkhar Valleys” supported by the LDC Fund through UNDP/GEF.

The DM team comprises of sector heads, supporting staffs and technical officials of Dzongkhag Administration. The training was facilitated by the officials of the Department of Disaster Management.

During the six days training held in Chhumei Gup Office, the participants were trained using the draft curriculum formulated by the Department of Disaster Management.

The subjects covered during the training were as follows:-

- Introduction and Importance of Community Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM)
- Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction into Plans, Policies and Development activities
- How to make a Safer and More Resilient Community
- The CBDRM Process – Hazard, Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment
- How to formulate the CBDRM Plan and community-based implementation
- Community based Monitoring and Evaluation
- CBDRM tools to collect data and information related to hazards, risks, vulnerabilities and ways to assess and prioritize risks and the means to reduce the risks.

More importantly, during the training, we had the opportunity to test the tools with the communities in pilot areas – Genakha and Bjimina Gewogs. The field exercise brought home the reality of how difficult it would be to mobilize the community, to make them realize the importance of disaster risk management, to make them realize their own capacities and to ultimately come up with disaster management plans that would be owned by them. The field exercise also clarified community perceptions on hazards in their communities and how disaster risks and basic development and livelihood needs converged at the community level.

Conclusion

The Department of Disaster Management, since its formation has initiated many activities to raise awareness, builds capacities and strengthen our preparedness in coordination with relevant Ministries and Agencies. The training is also one of the many activities geared especially towards strengthening capacities in vulnerable dzongkhags, under the “Earthquake Risk Reduction and Recovery Preparedness programme” funded through the UNDP. Similar orientation and ToT workshops will also be conducted in Chukha and Samdrup Jongkhar which are the two other pilot Dzongkhags under the ERR&RP Programme.

This training is a continuation of the Community Based Disaster Risk Management Training conducted in Punakha and Wangdue, where the Dzongkhag Disaster Management Committees were made aware of the National Disaster Risk Management Framework, their roles and responsibilities and was trained in Community Based Disaster Risk Management Process. The Department aims to conduct similar CBDRM ToT workshops in all 20 dzongkhags within the 10th Five Year Plan.

During the six days training period participants discussed and learn in detail - Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Concepts, the importance of mainstreaming DRR concepts, the Community Based Disaster Risk Management Process and its steps and the various tools to conduct Hazard, Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments. The trained DDMCs also visited the communities in order to field test our knowledge and collect and collate data through the various tools which were covered during the course of the training. The Department of Disaster Management is hopeful that the training will equip the DDMCs and Dzongkhag officials with the know-how required to facilitate and come up with Gewog Disaster Management Plans in their respective Dzongkhags.

The Department of Disaster Management, with continued support from the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs and in coordination with relevant sectors and agencies and the UNDP is committed towards building the capacities and facilitating the functioning of disaster management institutions, especially in the Dzongkhags.

