

# Documentation of Integration Processes

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Sahbhagi Shikshan Kendra is a not for profit Organisation established in the year 1992 and is working for the past 4 years on Flood Disaster Mitigation in Bahraich District of Uttar Pradesh. The present document is an outcome of implementation of Project titled, “Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Management into Local Development Processes for Uttar Pradesh” which is being currently implemented in 7 flood affected blocks of Bahraich District, Uttar Pradesh with the collaboration support of Malteser International Germany and donor support from European Commission Humanitarian Aid Department (ECHO).

This document is an attempt to document the integration processes adopted throughout the project period to mainstream DRR concerns into the local development processes from the Panchayat Level to the District Level .

**Prepared by,**

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## Background

Bahraich District is located 108 km north-east of Lucknow, the state capital, bordering Nepal in the North and North-East and the Districts of Lakhimpur, Sitapur in the West, Barabanki in the South, Gonda and Shravasti in the South-West and West. According to Census (2001), Bahraich has 2.384.239 inhabitants and a size of 5.745 km<sup>2</sup> (415 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup>). Owing to its geo climatic conditions, flood is a recurrent phenomenon in the district. Every year, monsoon brings heavy rainfalls in the foothills of Himalya in the Nepal and the district which swells the river Ghaghra and Sarju bringing flood in the region.

India being a signatory to the Hyogo Framework of Action passed Disaster Management Act, 2005 as a follow up to the Hyogo Framework of Action. Chapter IV of this Act notifies every State to form District Disaster Management Authority and to take measures for prevention and mitigation of disaster at the district level through the coordination of different departments in concern.

Malteser International, Germany and Sahbhagi Shikshan Kendra, Lucknow through its intervention in the area found out that though the DDMA has been formed and trained to deal in the event of disaster like situation, its efficiency and effectiveness is wanting at the block, panchayat and the community level.

In order to address this gap a 15months project titled, " Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Management into Local Development Processes for U.P was launched in June 2009 with one of the its result areas focusing on developing the capacities of local communities and Panchayati Raj Institutions for risk assessment and integrate DRR concerns in their development plans.

The project implemented series of activities aimed at enhancing the capacities of communities to better equip themselves with prevention and mitigation measures in the event of disaster like situation with the integration of DRR concerns into the local development process being the cross cutting issue.

## The Processes Involved

### Identification of Key Stakeholders

The process of integration encompasses different levels of administrative structures and it becomes pertinent to bring them to a common consensus to synchronize Disaster Risk

An integrated, multi- hazard approach to disaster risk reduction should be factored into policies, planning and programming related to sustainable development, relief, rehabilitation and recovery activities in post- disaster and post conflict situations in disaster prone countries.

*Hyogo Framework of Action  
(2005) Priorities for Action*

Concerns to their respective developmental interventions. Hence, key Stakeholders were identified by the project at four different levels of administrative/governance structure who were directly or indirectly related in CBDRR led process. Also, the level of each stakeholder was identified and their political position analyzed i.e. whether the stakeholder is positive, negative or neutral. Thereafter, separate strategies for each level of stake were drawn to get the desired result. Figure 1 below lists some major stakeholders identified during the process.



### Intervention at Community Level

The project identified community as the primary and most important stakeholder for the promulgation of CBDRR approach and put in its maximum efforts to sensitize and mainstream these actors to the development process. During the stakeholder analysis it was found that local communities could not visualize themselves as planning, execution or monitoring partners in the DRR process. The reason being ignorant of the *Gram Shabha meetings*<sup>1</sup> and the functions of Gram Shabha in development planning,



<sup>1</sup> Gram Shabha meets twice a year, one in the first and the other in the last quarter of the financial year

execution, monitoring and evaluation. It was for the first time the communities were led into planning process under the project. In order to simplify the planning process and ensure maximum participation of communities Participatory Rural Appraisal tools were used for DRR planning. Once the planning was complete the plans were presented in the community meetings for the purpose of triangulation. During this process the role of Panchayat and the Gram Shabha was discussed in detail to sensitize the community to take their plan forward in the Gram Shabha meetings. Hamlet Development Committee (HDC) was formed during this process. These HDCs have been made responsible to raise the matters related to disaster risk concerns of their hamlets in the Gram Shabha meetings. An altogether of 45 HDCs was formed comprising of 479 members in 50 hamlets of the project area who took the responsibility of integrating their DRR plans into Panchayat Plans. These HDCs were on regular intervals given handholding support by the project to increase their capacities. Before the Panchayat meetings, the action plans of each hamlet were merged and oriented to HDCs. A dummy gram shabha meeting was organised as a practice for the HDCs. Out of 8 Panchayats of the project area, 7 panchayats conducted gram shabha meetings in April 2010 where respective HDC members not only put in their DRR concerns in the meetings but also ensured that these plans were documented in the panchayat plans.

The project also had implementation of 150 activities as one of the activity. The HDCs actively involved themselves in its implementation and contributed their time and labour. They took the responsibility of vigilance and monitoring during the construction of structural components apart from contributing their resources in terms of land and labour. In the event of any conflict, the HDCs resolved them in their meetings and devised mechanisms to share the community resources created under the project. They have taken the responsibility of operation and maintenance of the assets created under the project, thereby integrating them into their community assets.

***HDC is a hamlet level citizen collective which comprises of members of the hamlet to work for the progress of their respective hamlets***

***Key Features of HDC***

- *Comprises of 8-14 members*
- *Are unanimously selected by the community*
- *They meet twice a month to discuss the development issues*



### At the Panchayat Level

The project as a strategy developed effective liaison with the Gram Pradhan and updated them on the project. Initially, the Gram Pradhans saw its role limited to working on the instruction of block and district officials in the event of disaster but regular meetings and participation in project's activities helped them in getting some insights of DRR planning process. However, they resisted the idea of inviting all the community members in the gram shabha meetings to formulate the Panchayat



action plan. Twice the dates of gram shabha meetings were postponed and finally in the month of April 2010 the meetings were called and integration of DRR plans into the panchayat plans made possible. The Panchayat Secretary responsible for these panchayats was overwhelmed on seeing the participation of both men and women in the meetings and he collected the copies of DRR plans for reference. The Pradhans too then realized the importance of community's view will devising panchayat plans. However, the project could not initiate the integration process in one of 8 panchayats; Bagahiya during this period and it is likely that the DRR plans will be integrated in the forthcoming gram shabha meetings in November 2010.

### Intervention at the Block Level

Development blocks are the first administrative unit in the development structure. The project team built an effective liaison with the Block Development Officer and the health officer of the Community Health Center. It was found that the BDOs saw the flood affected community as burden to their job. As a strategy of the project, HDCs were regularly interfaced with the BDO either at his office or in the villages. This helped in greater understanding of both the concerned. The DRR plans were shared with the B.D.O. who has also been assigned as Project Officer, NREGA. As a result as an immediate effect two village roads which were part of the DRR plans; one in Kohli Panchayat and one in Matrepur Panchayat built under NREGA. The BDOs also took keen interest in the DRR plans for their data usage and updation of their own records. During the implementation of 150 activities, the BDO office was shared with the implementation plans to avoid duplicity. BDO played crucial role in the integration process by passing orders to organise gram shabhas meetings in April 2010. At the CHC, effective liaison helped the community to access it more easily and medicines were easily available at the centre.

## **At the Tehsil/Subdivision Level**

At this level two pronged strategy was adopted; One by effective liasioning at the project level and the other through advocacy by the community. The project on regular basis updated its project progress to the Sub Divisional Magistrate. This helped in creating his interest to the project. The SDM and his line staffs conducted series of meetings in the flood affected area prior to monsoons to assess the preparedness measures of the community and the gaps to be worked upon. Lekhpals did the survey of all the flood affected areas and matched with DRR data of the project. Here too duplicity was averted by sharing the activities with each other. The S.D.M. acknowledged the existence of the Task Force Members and a joint Identity Card was issued for the purpose, thus providing administrative authenticity to the task force members.

In order to promote the issues of DRR on a wider level the project organsied Womens Day celebration cum rally were around 800 women from the flood affected areas echoed their demands to mitigate the flood impact. They handed over their charter of demands to the SDM.

## **At the District Level**

At this level of administrative structure, the project met with failure initially. It was felt that the District Magistrate who is also the ex office of District Disaster Management Authority was not concerned with the preparedness and mitigation components of Disaster Management. The project teams were not able draw in any fruitful discussion till February 2010. However, during this period the team liasioned with the Project Officer, District Disaster Management Cell, Bahriach, other NGOs of the district. The scenario changed in February with the change of District Magistrate. The project team was invited to participate in one of the official meetings of the District called by the D.M. on 12th March 2010 to take a stock of preparedness of the district in the event of flood. This meeting happened to be a cornerstone for the project. The project team shared its findings/analysis of the DRR plans and the potential solutions. Also, a sample DRR plan along with DRR planning framework was presented to the D.M. in the meeting. As an immediate outcome of the meeting the D.M. took various decisions for prevention and mitigation measures which directly impacted the flood affected areas considerably. The D.M. passed order for micro planning of all the flood affected villages to assess the gap. He agreed in principle to the raised handpumps as a possible solution to provide safe drinking water in the flood affected areas. Orders were passed to ensure availability of snake anti venom at the CHC which was one of the major concern in the DRR plans. He asked his Engineers to look for possibility of toilet solutions.

After this meeting the project speedened its lisation with the District Magistrate and other concerned departments. In one of such meetings, the project team was able to successfully incorporate DRR action planning in the micro plan framework of the administration.

Series of meetings thereafter led to vital actions in the project area. Major of them being as follows:

- Construction of 800 raised handpumps in the district
- Construction of raised platforms in the villages
- Construction of raised platforms in the villages
- Provision of boats for each panchayats
- Animal vaccination prior to the flood

Thus, during these fifteen months, project was able to make an in road to the development process at all levels to integrate DRR concerns. This integration process started showing the signs of change during the implementation of activities. At one front the community started owning the process and on the other hand the administrative structures complimented with meaningful inputs. This integration process and inter coordination between all the levels of stakes in the Flood 2009 (Annexure A).However, this also has opened up new challenges to keep the process continuing which at present looks ephemeral.

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# Bahraich Flood 2010

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Response of

Sahbhagi Shikshan Kendra & Community Based Disaster Management Committees

In 8 Panchayats of Kaiserganj and Jarwal Block of Bahriach District, U.P

Report prepared by

Disaster Management Resource Centre

SSK, Lucknow



Heavy rainfall in the Himalayan foothills and subsequent release of water from barrages to the river Ghagra inundated 87 villages with an approximate of 630 hamlets in August 2010. The District Administration and other agencies of development are involved in providing relief to the flood victims and ensure minimum damage to the loss of life and resources. Disaster Management Resource Centre, a unit of SSK, Lucknow which is based in Kaiserganj Sub Division of the District and is engaged in capacity development of the community and the grassroot governance structures to take up preparedness and mitigation measures to thwart the ill effects of flood through DIPCHO project funded by ECHO too took up the responsibility of providing relief to the flood victims in 8 Panchayats of Kaiserganj and Jarwal block.

### **DMRC's and Project Response**

#### **Informing the Community & Ensure Safe Evacuation**

The Early warning System (EWS) established at the DDMC, Bahraich regularly informed the Task Force Members regarding the release of water from the dams. The task force members in turn took action based on the information like blowing the sirens and disseminating the message through megaphones. This EWS installed at the District not only helped in speedy information in the project area (DIPECHO project) but also to all the flood affected districts and hence helped the community to prepare in advance for early response and evacuation. Once the flood waters entered the villages and evacuation became inevitable, the search and rescue task force member made under the project swung into action and assisted the flood victims in evacuation to safe places with the help of wooden and mechanized boats. At the embankment these task force members helped the flood victims in making temporary arrangements.



### Temporary Shelter & Safe Drinking Water

It has been seen that people do not evacuate from the villages entirely and few of the family members especially the women remain in the villages. Hence, providing them with some makeshift arrangement was a big challenge for the project team and the district administration. The project team identified vulnerable families most affected by flood with the help of task force members and procured 110 tarpaulin sheets from the district administration (which it procured from UNICEF) and provided it to the vulnerable families. Two tents were also procured from the administration and erected at the embankment; one each at Behrampur & Ahata Panchayat. On similar lines 400 Jeri Cans were procured from the administration and distributed to the vulnerable families to store safe drinking water. The task force members helped the community to store safe drinking water from the raised hand pumps. *Sunderlal, a resident of Ahata Panchayat says, "This is for the first time we are getting clean water in the villages during the flood. Earlier, we had to survive on flood water only".*

### Provision of First Aid

The District Administration has ensured that medical team gives its services to the flood victims at the embankments. As a support to it, the First Aid Task Force members are also using their knowledge and First Aid Kit in identifying and providing first aid to the flood affected families. These task force members are providing first aid in the hamlets where the medical doctors do not go and helping the community to reach to the health camps. The project team on its part procured 60,000 chlorine tablets, 50,000 ORS sachets and 200 kgs of bleaching powder from the District Administration and provided it to the task force members to distribute to the flood affected families.



### Support Provided in Relief Operations

The District Administration ensured the availability of food to the flood victims. Community kitchens are in operation in the flood affected areas and the district administration has tried its best to reach to the maximum number of people. However, smooth running of these kitchens can only be ensured when the community too provides its helping hand. With the facilitation of our project team the administration accepted the help of our task force members in running these kitchens. The task force members are present at the kitchen sites, help the cooks in preparing meals, take prepared food to the far of areas on their boats and help in management of large crowd. The team members are in close contact with the administration and apprise of the situation regarding the demand and supply at the kitchen sites.

### Awareness Generation

SSK on its part printed leaflets and is distributing in the area to remind people “Do’s & Don’t” during flood. The leaflet carry messages like :

- Support administration in relief works
- Give first priority to vulnerable viz. old aged, disabled, women and children take their special care
- Do not drink contaminated water

SSK also provides daily updates on flood to all the relevant stakeholders in the State by assembling data from different sources.



Overall, it can be said that SSK is acting as a bridge to the administration and community to join together and fight against the flood disaster in the district.

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