

A Compendium of Case Studies:
**Adaptive and Localized Actions
for Inclusive Early Warning
and Emergency Response**



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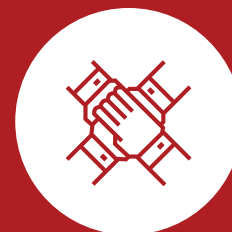
Lakkhana Tasaka

This publication is a compilation of case studies under joint effort of the program on Building Resilience through inclusive and Climate Adaptive Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia-Pacific (BRDR), with support by Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), and the Asian Preparedness Partnership (APP) established by the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (the foundation).

The findings and conclusions contained within this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect positions or policies of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

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About Asian Preparedness Partnership

The Asian Preparedness Partnership (APP) is a unique multi-stakeholder regional partnership established by its founding member countries which include Cambodia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Philippines, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. Formed in 2017 with technical and secretariat support from the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) as well as assistance from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (the Foundation) and the United States Agency for International Development Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID BHA). Its goal is to achieve “safer and well-prepared communities through locally-led disaster risk management (DRM) actions, so that disaster impacts on at-risk communities of Asia will be reduced”.

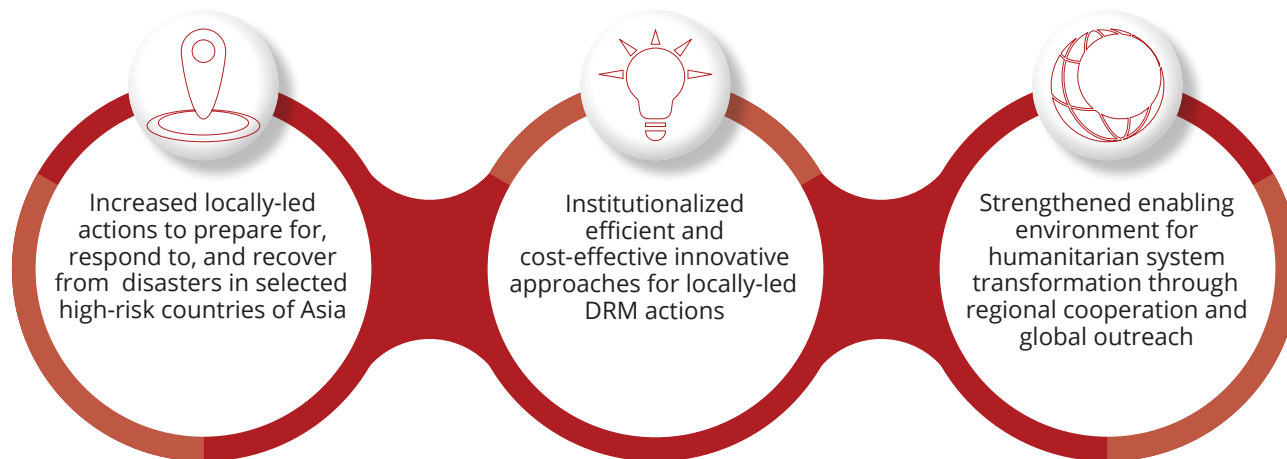
APP defines localization as “A process whereby local, sub-national and national humanitarian actors, namely governments, civil society and non-government organizations, the private sector, media, academia, etc.,

take a lead role, in a collaborative manner to plan and implement priority actions in disaster preparedness, humanitarian response, and recovery through mobilizing internal resources and external humanitarian funding.”

Building on APP Phase 1

APP Phase 2 was initiated in October 2019 to consolidate and build on the success and progress of APP Phase 1 (2016 -19), while scaling up and scaling out its outreach regionally and globally to have a greater impact on supporting the locally-led disaster preparedness, response and recovery actions. APP Phase 2 endeavors to create individual champions, support organizational development, and facilitate system transformation at local, national, regional, and global levels, in order to accelerate the “localization of humanitarian response and preparedness”.

Key Outcomes of APP



About Building Resilience through Inclusive and Climate-Adaptive Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia-Pacific (BRDR)

Building Resilience through Inclusive and Climate-Adaptive Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia-Pacific (BRDR) is a five-year program that aims to protect development gains and to enhance regional cooperation on inclusive and gender-equal risk reduction approaches. The BRDR Program focuses on establishing evidence-based methods, tools, and practices for building the resilience of the most vulnerable communities in South-East Asia. It also aims to share the lessons learned at regional forums in order to replicate successful approaches. The program supports the implementation of innovative and inclusive measures that link stakeholders engaged in development, disaster risk reduction (DRR), climate resilience (CR), and emergency preparedness and response.

The BRDR Program aims to:

- Enhance the role of the Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management (RCC) in supporting member countries in implementing global frameworks and serving as a conduit for South-South learning, transboundary DRR, and knowledge-sharing;
- Promote inclusion and rights-based approaches in DRR and CR; Promote gender equality and women's leadership for DRR and CR;
- Assist national governments and local-level stakeholders to strengthen disaster preparedness and emergency response measures;
- Facilitate the use of risk information and sex-age-disability-disaggregated (SADD) data for decision-making processes;
- Mainstream DRR and CR into development policy and programs.

The BRDR program seeks to achieve its objectives and targets by building on current good practices, and by providing scientific evidence and technical assistance on new and innovative methods, tools, and practices for inclusive DRR to participating governments, civil society organizations, and regional bodies. The program is supported by Sweden through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and implemented by the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), and the Raoul Wallenberg Institute (RWI).

Expected Outcomes

Regional

Strengthened capacity for regional cooperation to build resilience for future climate and disaster risk in Asia-Pacific

National

Increased uptake of risk-informed approaches to development and social protection to reduce disaster and climate risk and vulnerability

Institutional

Enhanced gender equality and rights-based approaches in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation

Approach

- Continuity and ownership by building on existing work
- Multi-tier capacity development
- Regional cooperation
- Partnerships and complementarities
- Rights-based approaches and gender equality
- Alignment of interventions with key global frameworks

Introduction

The adversities of natural hazards are mostly felt by grassroots communities who are disconnected from information and knowledge needed to safeguard themselves during a climate disaster. Asia is ranked among the regions with the highest disaster occurrences and numbers of affected population each year. The widening gap between marginalized groups and emergency preparedness responses suggests that disaster risk management (DRM) efforts do not reflect inclusive early warning systems (EWS) and emergency preparedness for effective response. As a result, potentially vulnerable segments of population such as persons with disabilities (PWD), refugees, disadvantaged groups, and temporarily displaced people tend to be left behind from disaster preparedness measures, and face many barriers to inclusion in early warning and response.

These circumstances highlight that EWS and response strategies must recognize the various needs of indigenous communities, people with learning differences and displaced communities in areas without internet access. Warning instructions on impending weather hazards or virus outbreaks should be created in a way that is easy to decipher and useful for marginalized groups to quickly respond to and mobilize to safer spaces. Strategies, policies and decisions have to take into account the needs of at-risk groups. Hence, building resilient and inclusive communities can only be possible when EWS interventions and DRM efforts are cognizant of the different capacities of vulnerable groups.

The booklet on A Compendium of Case Studies: Adaptive and Localized Actions for Inclusive Early Warning & Emergency Response draws upon case studies contributed by the national representatives to the APP from Cambodia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, and Sri Lanka and thematic experts from the ADPC. The case studies capture the synergy between countries in terms of establishing EWS and inclusive measures for emergency response. They demonstrate how each government and country stakeholders manages multi-faceted issues and builds resilience through inclusivity and unity among local and community networks within the country, emphasizing on timely and accurate dissemination of people-centered EWS, proactive COVID-19 response measures, and utilizing of data and information management for response planning, with special attention to marginalized groups and potentially vulnerable populations.

The case studies were developed with technical guidance and facilitation support by Dr. Matthew Scott, Senior Researcher at RWI. It is also supported by BRDR Program and the Regional Technical Working Group on Inclusive Approaches to Localization (RTWG-IAL), a regional platform of the APP to promote, enhance and advocate for inclusive approaches in disaster preparedness and emergency response among country and local stakeholders.

Inclusion ensures that all people are able to participate in society regardless of their background or specific characteristics, which may include: race, language, culture, gender, disability, social status, age, and other factors.

Source: <https://unterm.un.org/unterm/display/record/unog/na?OriginalId=54543b2da2a21d27852573360057b2bc>

Why Do Inclusive Approaches Matter?



Nature-induced disasters heighten the uncertainty and exclusion that are a norm for disadvantaged people. Marginalized groups turn out to be an afterthought in disaster risk reduction (DRR) efforts and are to a varied extent excluded from EWS.

Emergency response strategies can be made diversity inclusive and transformative based on data obtained on the vulnerable groups. Using the data, countries can identify those who are most susceptible to climate disaster. The demographic will include those that face climate risks due to social exclusion, remoteness, lack of access to technology, education, or having physical and mental impairment, for example, indigenous communities, ethnic minorities, people with learning

differences, and displaced communities in hard-to-reach areas. An inclusive environment will provide autonomy to marginalized groups to access, receive and respond to warning instructions in the face of natural or man-made hazards.

The capacity to cope in emergency situations is dependent on inclusive infrastructure and EWS. Therefore, enabling inclusion cannot be a token gesture, but a willful commitment to prepare a DRR framework where no one is left behind.

In order to do so, it is essential to identify vulnerable groups and persons with disabilities so that development organizations and government institutions can design EWS and emergency response measures tailored to their specific needs.



Communities in remote areas disconnected from EWS



Illiterate and technologically illiterate people



Disadvantaged and disabled people



Persons with sensory disabilities (deaf, blind)



Persons who do not speak the majority language



People living in remote areas without radio/mobile phone access

Inclusive Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response for Vulnerable People

Gender is a prevalent factor that determines vulnerability. Other intersecting factors including age, disability, regional, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status also indicate the degree of vulnerability to disasters. Hence, it's crucial to bring gender intersectionality to the forefront of DRR efforts. This provides perspectives of how sex and gender overlap and intersects with other social factors.

Therefore, personal characteristics such as age, disability, religion, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation as well as gender identity may affect social inclusion and further exacerbate instances of discrimination and ostracism of at-risk communities.

Vulnerable groups are physically, mentally or socially disadvantaged persons who may be unable to meet their basic needs and may therefore require specific assistance. Persons exposed to and/or displaced by conflict or natural hazard may also be considered vulnerable. Vulnerable groups may experience a higher risk of poverty and/or social exclusion. This includes persons with disabilities, pregnant women, children, elderly persons, prisoners, certain members of ethnic minorities, people with language barriers, and the impoverished.





Children

According to United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)
"A child means every human being below the age of 18 years."



Elderly

The United Nations (UN) explains:
"Traditionally, the United Nations and most researchers have used measures and indicators of population ageing that are mostly or entirely based on people's chronological age, defining older persons as those aged 60 or 65 years or over."



Migrants and Displaced Populations

International Organization for Migration (IOM) states:
"A person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons."



Refugee

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee (UNHCR) elaborates:
"Someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion."



Marginalized Groups

European Institute for Gender Equality details that:
"Different groups of people within a given culture, context and history at risk of being subjected to multiple discrimination due to the interplay of different personal characteristics or grounds, such as sex, gender, age, ethnicity, religion or belief, health status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, education or income, or living in various geographic localities"



Persons with Disabilities (PWD)

According to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD):
"Persons with Disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others."

Type of Disabilities



Visually impaired



Hearing impaired



Speech impaired



Physically handicapped



Neurological disability



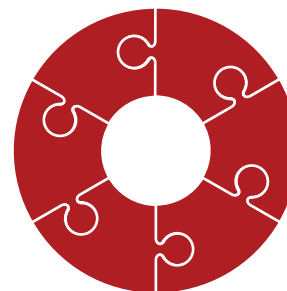
Cognitive impairment

People-Centered Response

Effective EWS is an important part of emergency response. It can create accessibility for vulnerable persons, as well as cater to people with specific needs. These systems ensure that warning messages are relayed in a timely manner and actionable by the people. People-centered EWS mandates constant engagement with marginalized groups and local actors.

EWS is an integrated system of hazard monitoring, forecasting and prediction, disaster risk assessment, communication and preparedness activities systems and processes that enables individuals, communities, governments, businesses and others to take timely action to reduce disaster risks in advance of hazardous events.

The four main components that complete the people-centered EWS puzzle are:

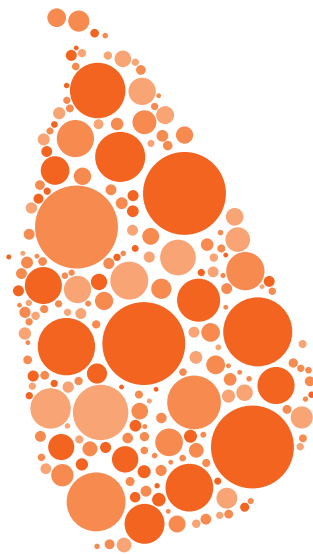


- Identifying climate risks and disease outbreaks
- Forecasting, monitoring and warning systems
- Communications and accurate data dissemination
- Response capacity

Each case study shows how individual country has ensured inclusive approach in emergency responsive and early warning.



Sri Lanka



Empowering the Marginalized Through Data Sharing: Making EWS Accessible to Vulnerable Groups

Disaster Landscape

Climate-induced disasters bring a host of challenges for Sri Lanka. These events jeopardize the livelihoods and welfare for vulnerable groups comprising women, children, elders and persons with disabilities¹. Floods, landslides, and torrential rains unleash extreme events leading to substantial crop and housing damage.

Heavy rainfall in December 2020 affected 111,659 people (33,316 families) across 14 districts. The disaster also devastated 106 houses and partially damaged 3,783 houses. Designing inclusive EWS remains a challenge due to scarcity of accurate real-time data on national, subnational and grassroots levels. Therefore, Sri Lanka urgently needed to incorporate robust data and information systems to their disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) in order to enhance early warning,

emergency response, and resilience building against climate hazards.

Preparedness and Response in Action

Resilient communities are the ones who are equipped with the necessary information and awareness about their location, climate vulnerability, and the help available to survive in the aftermath of a natural disaster.

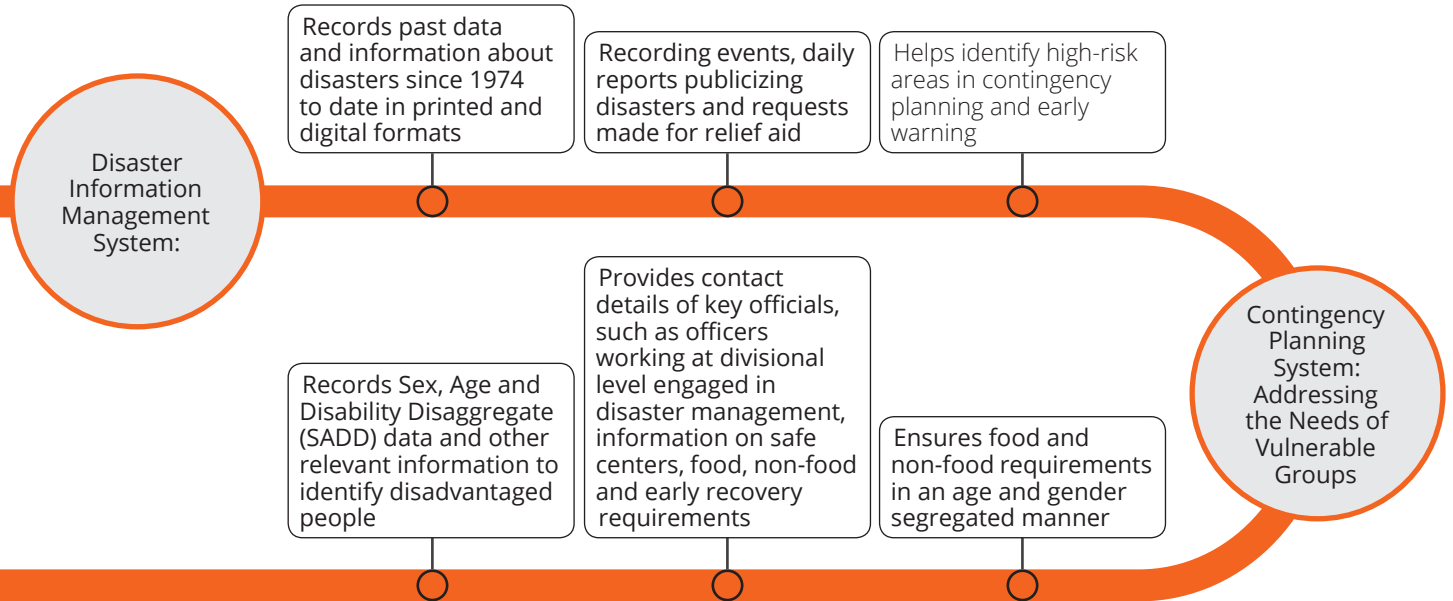
Sri Lanka is conducting data and information collection, analysis and dissemination using an Information Management Strategy. This process aims to engage multiple stakeholders in preparedness, response and recovery actions. It seeks to support those affected by disasters, with a special focus on the vulnerable groups in accordance with national and international standards (Sphere/UNHCR).

Sri Lanka's initiatives include the development of Disaster Information Management System initiated by the Disaster Management Centre (DMC) of Sri Lanka with technical and financial support from the Disaster Risk Management (DRM) program of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok (RCB) in 2017. This database is widely used by agencies engaged in emergency preparedness and DRR.

The National Disaster Relief Services Centre (NDRSC) recognizes the importance of enhancing preparedness and building resilience for vulnerable communities. The center prepares and issues situation-based plans through their contingency planning system when faced with calamities. This information on the number of at-risk groups at every *grama niladhari* division or sub-unit of District Secretariat is shared among stakeholders. The situation-based plans build on the premise of improving relief and rescue operations, while streamlining humanitarian services delivery by responsible agencies and emergency response stakeholders in a more harmonized manner.

¹ Statistics sources: <https://reliefweb.int/disaster/fl-2020-000237-lka>

Key Takeaways

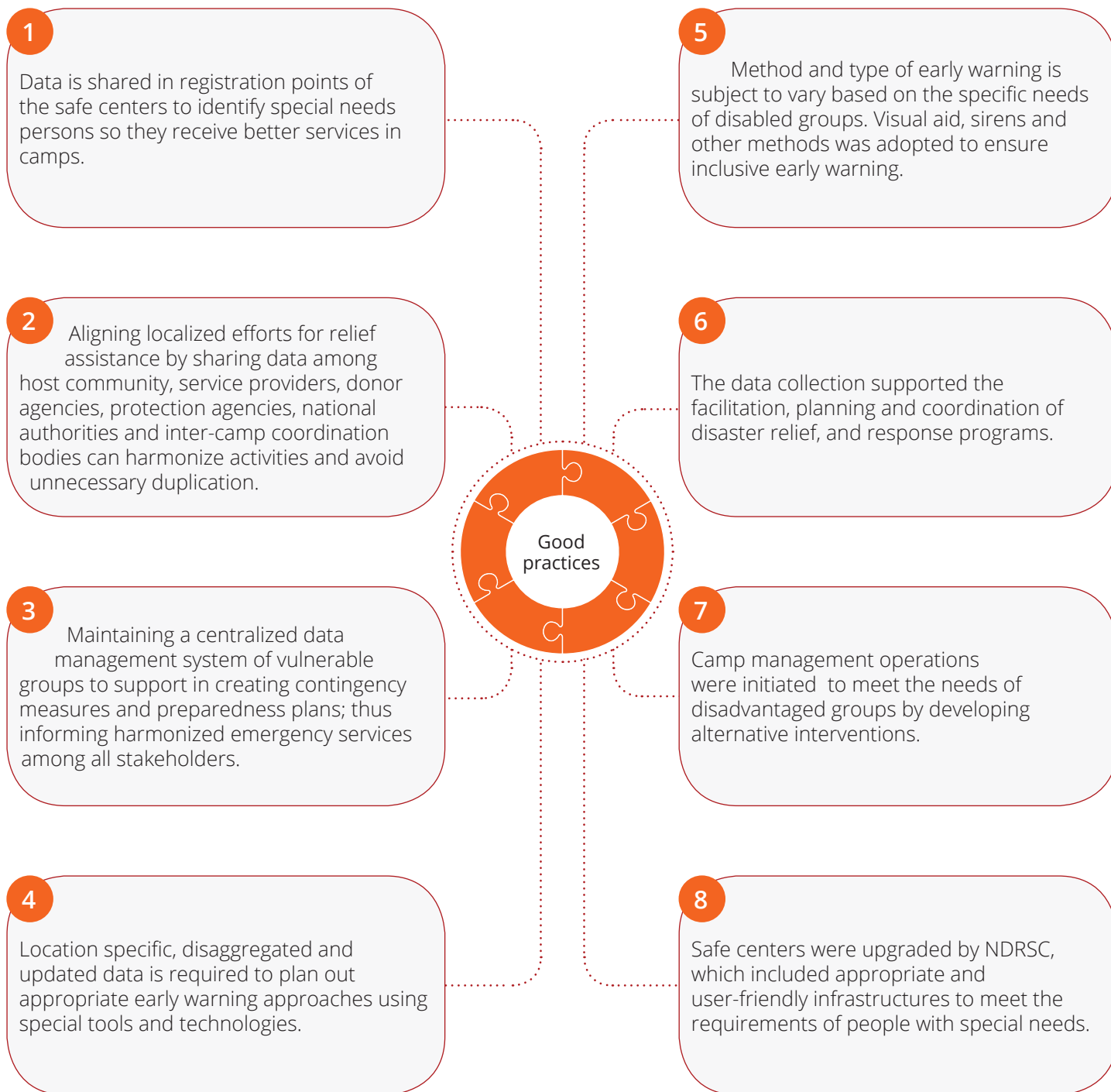


Making a Difference

Environments and ecosystems are constantly changing due to climate-induced disasters. With considerable uncertainty about the future, practical approaches to prepare for, cope with and respond to climate shocks and stresses is necessary. Adapting to these changes begins with knowledge. Establishing communications measures that are inclusive of vulnerable groups builds informed communities. Hence, developing the unique system of SADD data collection and utilization is a step towards making disaster preparedness for emergency response inclusive of the various categories of disadvantaged people.

Data-Driven Vulnerable Group Tracking During Climate Emergencies

- Data sharing in safe centers
- Stakeholder engagement
- Centralized data management system
- Disability specific EWS





Philippines



Understanding Starts When You Listen: *Planning EWS with Persons with Disabilities*

Disaster Landscape

Persons with disabilities are at greater risk during climate emergencies in the Philippines. There were over 1.6 million persons with disabilities in the country, comprising women, children and elders in 2020². The country is subjected to an average of 20 cyclones every year. Five of which are classified as destructive, making these marginalized groups four times more vulnerable.

Access to information about persons with disabilities has only been integrated recently, into knowledge management systems for DRR. To make DRRM more inclusive for persons with disabilities, Center for Disaster Preparedness (CDP) takes into cognizance the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and the Republic Act No. 9442 or the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons and included

persons with disabilities to their initiatives to better understand their specific needs.

Preparedness and Response in Action

In order to establish disability-inclusive early warning approaches, it is essential to come close to those personally affected by the ordeal. CDP conducted their pilot program in four municipalities in **Eastern Samar, Philippines**. Their aim was to promote the rights of persons with disabilities through community development and organization, representation in local development bodies and engagement in planning processes.

Making a Difference

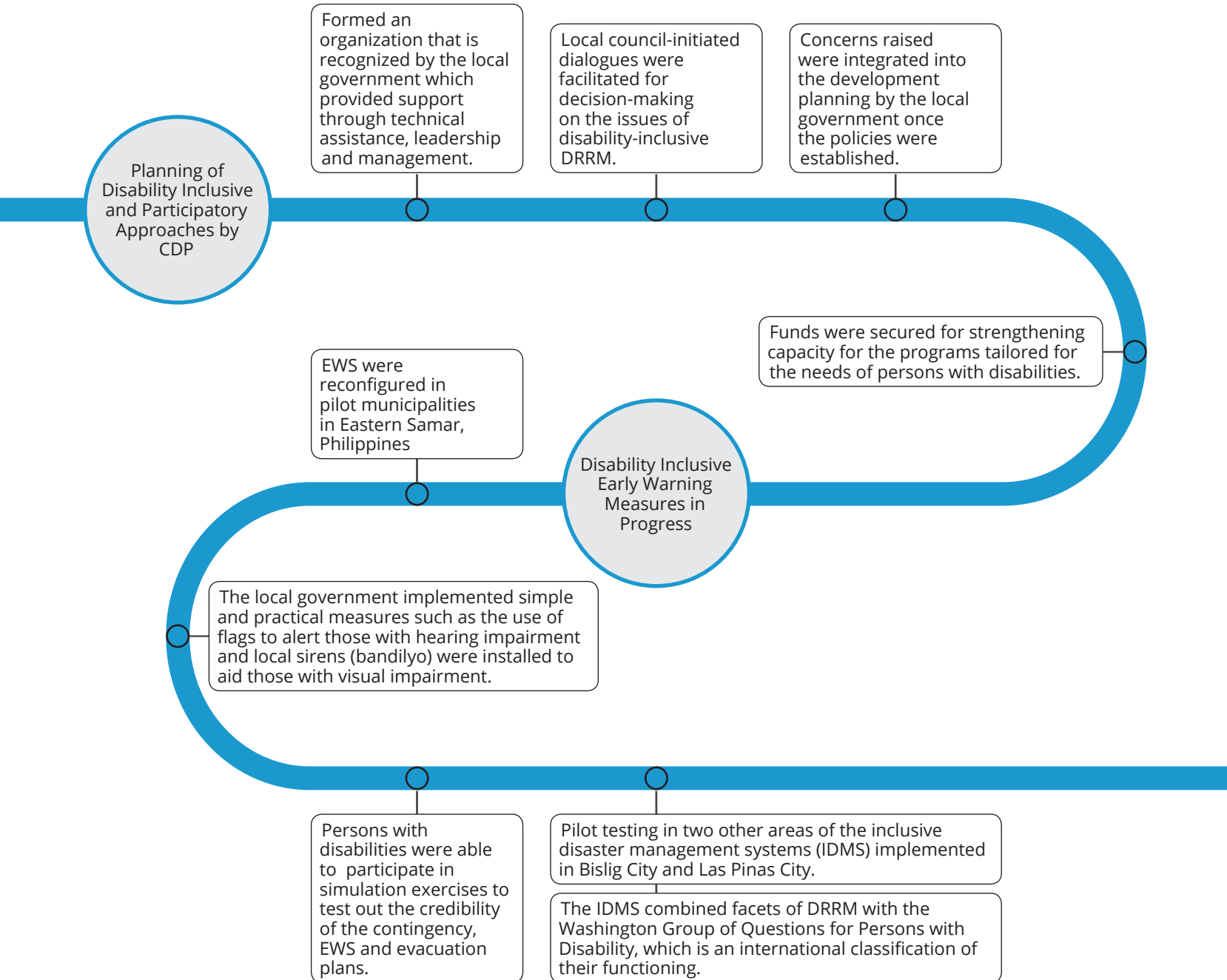
Positive outcomes are established at the planning stage. Impactful engagement and representation allow vulnerable groups to voice their concerns. CDP seeks to understand the current situation of persons with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. It continues to appeal to the national government to include questions on persons with disabilities in its next census, which is to be conducted by the Philippine Statistical Authority (PSA). These efforts empower them to acquire knowledge and information through multiple channels with the intention to sensitize a wider audience about their circumstances.

Disability-Inclusive EWS Tailored in Collaboration with PWD

- Including local leaders into PDAO
- Engaging persons with disabilities for planning EWS
- Prioritizing persons with disabilities in evacuation measures
- Multi-sectoral linkages for persons with disabilities

² Statistics sources: <https://www.adrc.asia/nationinformation.php?NationCode=608&Lang=en#:~:text=Located%20along%20the%20typhoon%20belt,five%20of%20which%20are%20destructive.>

Key Takeaways



1

Leaders of local organizations were invited to the Persons with Disability Affairs Office (PDAO) of the local government to help build rapport with them.

2

Leadership vacuum created in the local organization of persons with disabilities requires succession planning. This will promote capacity building of second liners who can assume leadership roles whenever required.

3

Engaging vulnerable groups in the planning stage can enable the government to design early warning messages according to their different capacities. The issuance of colored warning flags for people with hearing loss and local sirens for people with limited vision will enable timely early warning and response capacity.



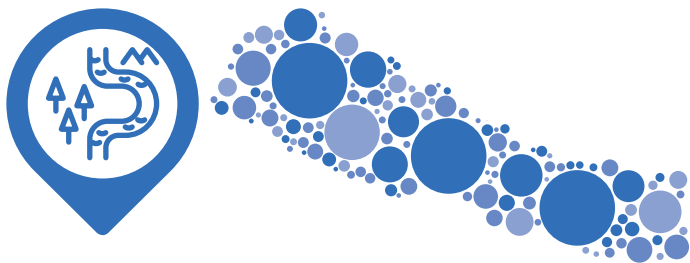
4

Persons with disabilities are highly prioritized during evacuation*. Other social inclusion efforts included children and youth, older persons and indigenous people.

5

Connections with government, media, private sector, and other relevant stakeholders involved in DRRM, can equip persons with disabilities with equal access to information and enhance preparedness.

* in accordance with the national aspiration of "leaving no one behind."



Nepal

Safety Across Communities: Tackling Water-Induced Disasters Near Babai and Karnali Rivers

Disaster Landscape

Nepal faces some of the most pronounced climate shifts. The country's 6,000 rivers threaten downstream communities particularly during the monsoon season. Thirty-five districts were affected by intense rainfall as a result of 144 water-induced disaster incidents in 2021³. Western Nepal bears witness to the death of hundreds as well as, property and infrastructure damage and displacement of homes resulting from the Karnali River floods. The Babai River also adversely affects the marginalized communities residing in its vicinity.

People in the downstream areas like Geruwa and Rajapur municipalities (of Bardia district) as well as Janaki and Tikapur municipalities (of Kailali district) are affected by the Karnali River disasters. The Gulariya, Barbardia, Thakurbaba, and Madhuwan municipalities are impacted

by the Babai River. It is home to ethnic minority and the diverse ethnic castes Madhesi, Dalit and other Brahmin/Chhetri communities in Gulariya Municipality. The challenge lies ahead in conveying necessary

information on evacuation to persons with disabilities and ethnic minorities living in these disaster-prone areas.

Preparedness and Response in Action

The Karnali River EWS was established in 1963 as a hydrometric station at Chisapani. In 2010, it was upgraded with a telemetric system with the support of the Government of Nepal, Mercy Corps Nepal, and Practical Action. The EWS station's community outreach was extended by Practical Action, Radhakrishna Tharu Janasewa Kendra, Centre for Social Development and Research (CSDR), and Nepal Red Cross Society in Bardia district while Mercy Corps Nepal and Nepal Red Cross Society supported it in Kailali district.

The Babai River EWS consisted of a water metering station established in 1989 in Chepang which was later upgraded to a telemetric system and connected to the district emergency operations center (DEOC) system since 2010. Practical Action and local partner organization Radhakrishna Tharu Janasewa Kendra, Bardia, Nepal Red Cross Society Bardia and CCDR, Banke have contributed through various projects to expand the flood warning system at the community level and digitalize the information system from 2006 onwards.

Making a Difference

Although the local government faces constraints in disseminating information in risk-prone areas, certain measures that were locally driven have been considered useful in raising awareness among marginalized communities. The initiatives have been demonstrated through physical, visual and technological early warning messaging approaches, and third-party humanitarian efforts through awareness intervention of vulnerable groups, complemented by communication technology. They've proven to be helpful in providing rescue and rehabilitation services to those who are particularly susceptible to the backlash of natural disasters.

³ Statistics sources: <https://kathmandupost.com/climate-environment/2021/07/03/nepal-received-above-normal-rainfall-in-june-causing-disasters>

Key Takeaways

Karnali River & Babai River Early Warning Station's Timely and Inclusive Community Outreach

At-risk community identification, dissemination of early warnings and community capacity building.

Improved early dissemination of information to reduce flood vulnerability from the Karnali river. An automatic radar has been installed on the Chisapani bridge for river surface information monitoring which constantly updates the status of the river.

The danger level is marked for 10.5 meters but the alert signal is for 9.8 meters to inform the downstream residents.

Involved organizations helped expand the outreach of the information system to the community level.

Thirty-two communities and schools were identified along the Babai River in the current Bardia Municipality, Gulariya Municipality, among key targeted groups of EWS.

This information system benefits 82 communities in five municipalities

Early Warnings to Alert Grassroots Communities Vulnerable to River Disasters

- Identifying at-risk persons
- Flood preparedness measures adopted
- Task forces deployed in 78 downstream districts
- Sirens and SMS established as EWS

More people-centered and inclusive early warning started evolving with various organizations that have conducted activities to determine the at-risk communities and possible multi-hazard vulnerability of the downstream communities of the Karnali River.

The gauge stations on the river seemed to be installed to gather necessary information. However, the 2010 Gazettes established that the telemetric system was essentially linked to community-based EWS.

Vulnerability Mapping

Meaningful Participation of Diverse Groups

The data collection supported the facilitation, planning and coordination of disaster relief, and response programs.



Mapping and Pre-identification of People in Vulnerable Areas

Various task forces and capacity building initiatives have been conducted in 78 downstream communities of Karnali River and 32 communities* in the downstream areas of Babai river. This has helped to promote flood awareness at the community level.

In Rajapur Municipality, the at-risk households with maternity, pregnancies and persons with disabilities are marked as high, medium, and low during the mapping and identification process.

The involvement of people of gender, ethnicity, and different abilities have been taken into consideration in the task forces formed by the organizations at the community level.

*Footnote: (Kailali District: Janaki Goupalika and Tikapur Municipality, Bardia District: Geruwa Goupalika, Rajpur Municipality, Madhuwan Municipality, Thakurbaba Municipality, Barbardia Municipality, and Guleriya Municipality)

The vulnerability analysis carried out at the at-risk communities by various development organizations has identified and marked vulnerable groups.

Households with pregnancies, maternity and persons with disabilities are marked as high priority and are also included in search and rescue and response.

Task forces formed at the community by various organizations are still working to exchange information, for upstream update and downstream alert. People of the downstream area contact the upstream community to update themselves on the river level. When the level reaches near the danger mark at the station of the respective rivers, the downstream community receives information and uses sirens for preparation in a timely manner.

Strategies Adopted to Reach Marginalized People

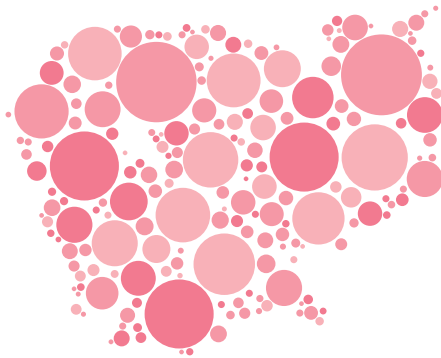


Communication and Dissemination of Early Warning Messages for Diverse Populations

Locals of Rajapur Municipality now receive information on mobile and they respond accordingly using sirens in the community to inform others. In Chisapani, a blue band is used when the water level is normal at 9 meters and a red flag is used when it is critical at 10 meters.

People are alerted through mic announcements.

The government has been issuing three-day flood forecast information through text messages, DHM website, social media like Facebook and Twitter. The DEOC informed that the concerned communities of the municipalities are to receive the forecast three days in advance.



Cambodia

Early Warning and Early Response for COVID-19: *Safety Protocols for Factory Workers*

Disaster Landscape

The impact of COVID-19 had forced factory owners to pull their shutters down. Prospects appeared bleak for global supply chains and low-income workers had plunged into an economic crisis. Hundred thousand factory workers were left with no income sources as 100 factories across the country ceased operations during the pandemic. The economic impacts of COVID-19 had reduced growth projections from 7.7% to 2.1%.⁴ The onset of the novel disease had stunted Cambodia's economy and imposed financial chaos on factory workers and low-income families.

Garment workers are central to Cambodia's export-driven economy. The pandemic amplified uncertainties due to the onslaught of mass declines in overseas orders.

However, factory lights being switched off pushed an already precarious group into financial vulnerability.

Preparedness and Response in Action

The national government took on a solution-oriented approach. The government, along with partners and supported by WHO global strategies and WHO Western Pacific Regional Action framework, had developed the 'National Master Plan for COVID-19' to control the transmission of the virus and minimized the economic losses felt by factory workers.

Factory closures caused mass lay-off for workers. The government gauged that financial ramifications were the ones that need immediate attention. They introduced an emergency cash transfer program for vulnerable families affected by the pandemic. The Prime Minister Hun Sen provided about USD 30-40 million to families and communities who qualified as poor and vulnerable. The aid was delivered to 500,000 families to prevent citizens dying from hunger.

The outbreak shifted focus to inoculation because prevention is often the best response. Offsetting the spread required monitoring outbreaks and patient health and recovery. The virus may continue to remain an unprecedented crisis in the foreseeable future and thus must be managed systematically. The Ministry of Health (MOH), WHO and other stakeholders worked in collaboration to set up a surveillance system to detect, isolate, treat infected patients and roll out contact tracing. Officials and stakeholders approached prevention measures with a multi-tiered mechanism. Hotspot hunting narrowed down high-risk locations and mobile units were set up to ensure rapid testing on the spot. This process continued to trace each person that came in contact with infected patients and placed them under mandatory quarantine.

At the same time, the outbreak had caused officials to reconsider postponement of new year holiday dates. The government of Cambodia and the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MLVT) issued this directive in order to prevent the spread of the disease.

⁴ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/cambodia/overview#1>

Key Takeaways

Measures to Flatten the COVID-19 Curve

Postponement of the new year dates from 14 to 16 April 2020 to a five-day replacement holiday at a later date.

Employees taking unwarranted leaves without employer's permission had their salaries deducted. Employers who approved unwarranted leaves were obligated to pay for the employees' quarantine period.

All employees on holiday leaves were required to complete a strict quarantine period of 14 days before returning to work.

The Ministry of Information enabled ringtones to alert communities to follow the precautionary instructions to curb the spread of COVID-19.

The Cambodian government predicted that employees may take an extended leave on the original Khmer New Holiday period, going against government's guidance. Subsequently, these directives were established to ensure unwarranted leaves were not encouraged.

When the pandemic became increasingly protracted, it was vital to seek meaningful links between response and recovery mechanisms. Early warnings were meant for those who were the most vulnerable. EWS play a pivotal

role in building resilience and empowering marginalized groups during emergencies. The MOH's preparedness efforts made communities and health services more resilient to the first phase of COVID-19, with no reported deaths or infections among healthcare workers.

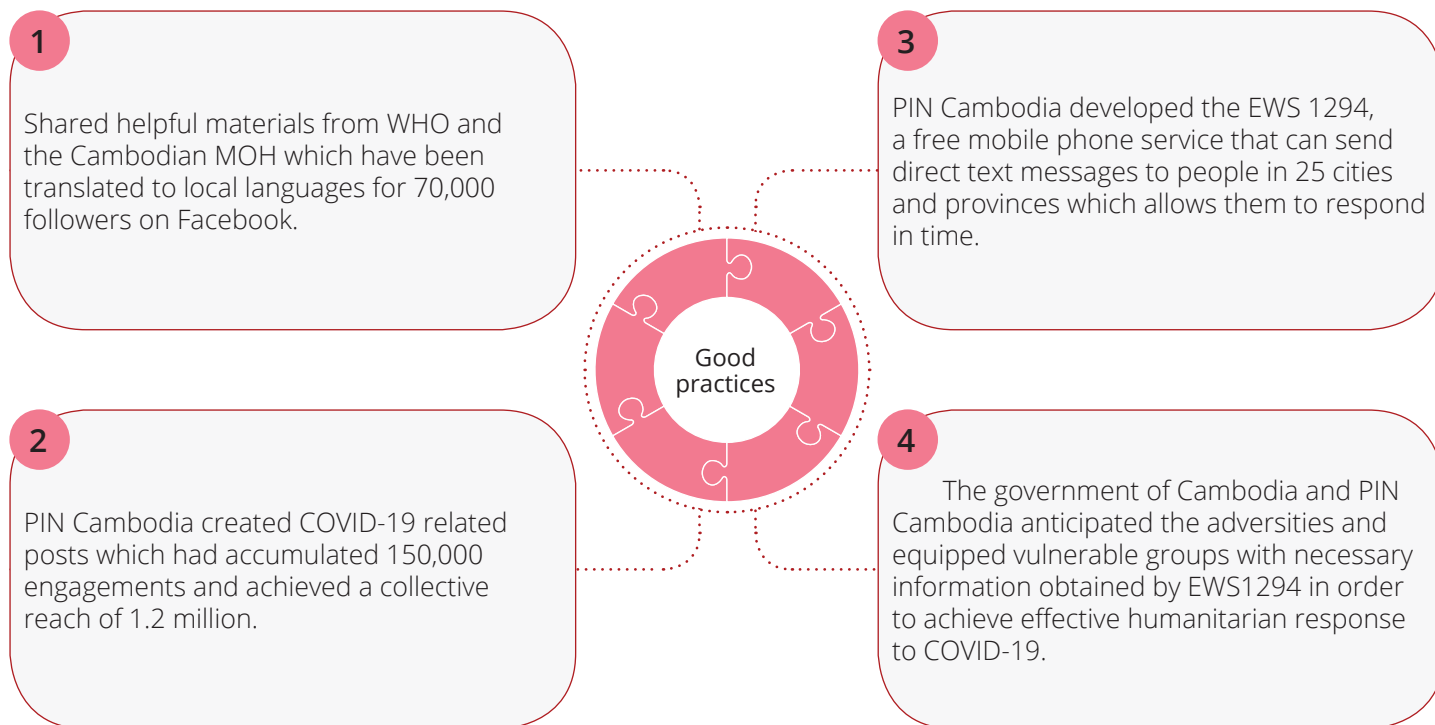
From January to May, 11,869 tests were conducted. The Government of Cambodia had increased the number of hospital beds and developed strong clinical guidelines including diagnosis and management of COVID-19.

Making a Difference

While natural calamities are on the rise, material losses are unavoidable. Transformative EWS can anticipate future risks and reduce the loss of human lives. Therefore, Cambodia shifted towards people-centered EWS to protect the marginalized groups in the country. Humanitarian organization People in Need (PIN) Cambodia and its partners developed EWS 1294, a mobile based short code providing its users a cost-free outgoing call as a voice based alert in the event of any climate hazard.

COVID-19 Precautions Established Workforces

- Populations alerted about disasters through EWS 1294
- Real-time epidemic and forecasting tools used to predict and contain virus outbreak
- EWS 1294 sends safety instructions to users when a natural disaster is impending
- Communities alerted on rising water levels, weather conditions and safety measures





Pakistan



Promoting Self-Reliance: Addressing the Needs of Refugee Women Affected by COVID-19 Through Financial Aid

Disaster Landscape

Situated on the outskirts of Peshawar district, the inhabitants of Khazana Refugee camp were disproportionately affected by the pandemic. Nine hundred refugee families in the camp lost their homes, livelihoods, and stability. Increasing COVID-19 cases had compromised their ability to move forward. Food and health insecurity had intensified the sudden and extended loss of income. Domestic violence, triggered by family tensions and unemployment became a reality for the women in the camp. Women who were previously earning became victims of increasing gender-based violence at home. In coordinating the delivery of protection and assistance, building safety nets are crucial in environments that are conducive to such atrocities.

Temporary shelters, more often than not, become permanent homes for refugee families. Living in cramped conditions, refugees in the Khazana Refugee camp are residing in 200 clay-made houses. Physical precautions and social distancing are not an option for them.

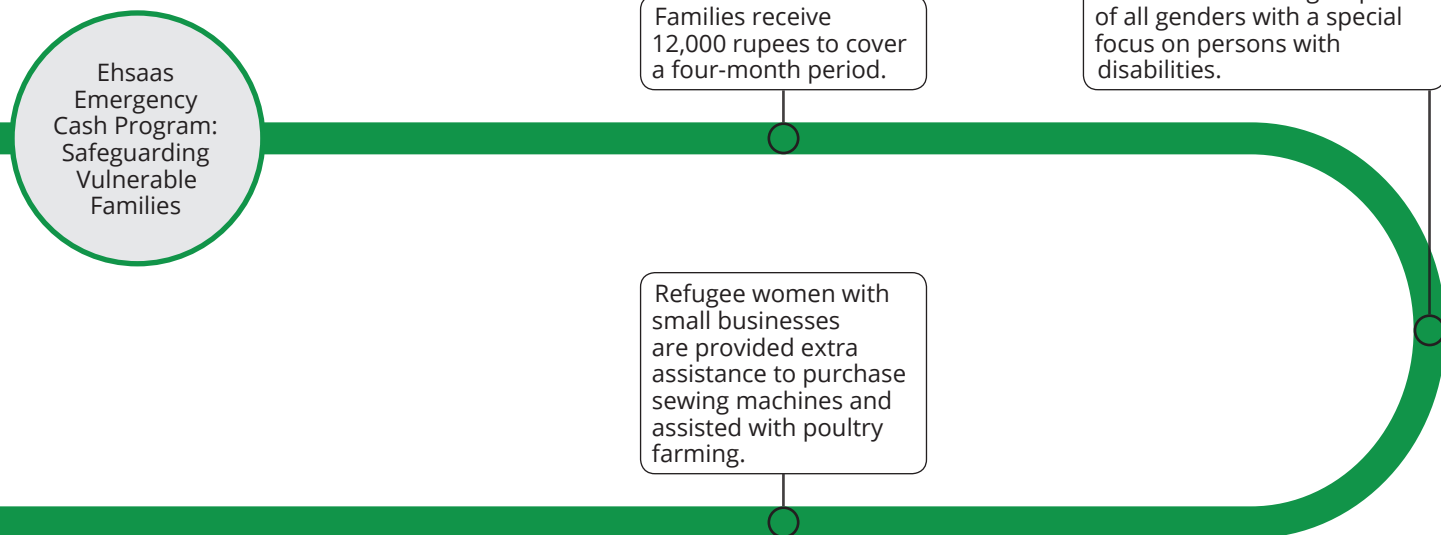
Camps are unsustainable structures that compromise the health and wellbeing of refugees. The lockdown restrictions magnified the uncertainty refugee women experienced on a daily basis. These concerning trends signified the need for urgent camp management techniques from local organizations. As part of the initiatives driven by local humanitarian organizations, effective communication and precautionary information dissemination on COVID-19 precaution played an important role in preventing the spread of the disease. Although response efforts in the camps are commendable, strengthening capacity support through targeted anticipatory action policies may minimize their vicissitude.

Pakistan hosts a large Afghan refugee population of 1.4 million where both men and women are earning members of their families. However, the pandemic limited their coping mechanisms and curtailed their income and access to food. Domestic violence further perpetuated the subordination of women which indicated the existing imbalance between the sexes. Daily wage earners in the transport and construction sectors were also in a precarious situation due to the loss of jobs. Generating immediate and inclusive action addressed the challenges and provided restorative solutions for vulnerable communities.

Preparedness and Response in Action

Local humanitarian organizations had deployed a cash assistance program to ensure meaningful participation of women. The government has designed the Ehsaas Emergency Cash program to provide financial assistance for vulnerable families in Pakistan. The motive was to gear towards transformative change for families living in Khazana camp, especially women. In order to improve the health and financial security of women, refugee women are made the primary beneficiaries of the cash assistance program.

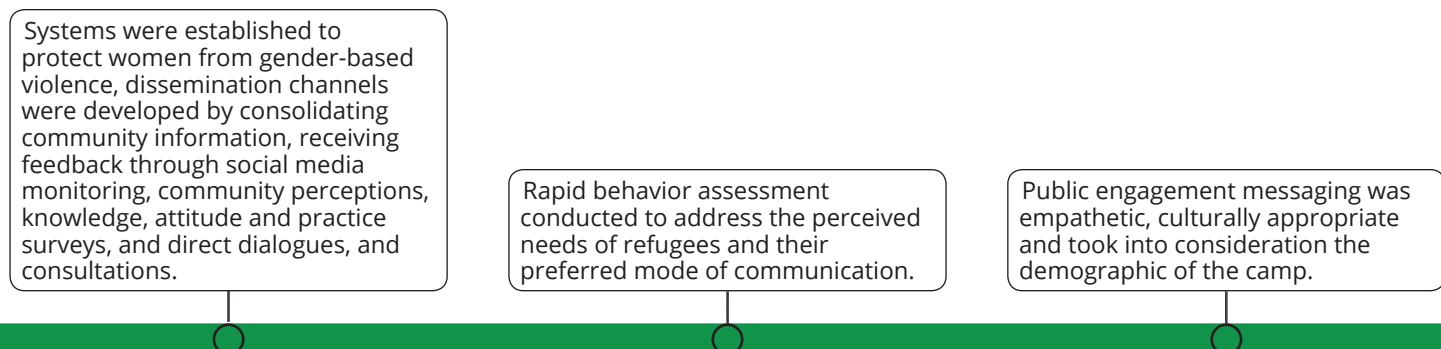
Key Takeaways



The Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON) and the government of Pakistan focused on community engagement ensuring that families received and understood the symptoms of the virus and learned ways to protect themselves from getting infected. This had

a favorable impact in empowering the refugees and building resilience. In line with national public health containment recommendations, the amplification of COVID-19 messages and community practices had promoted better preparedness.

Effective Gender Inclusive Camp Management Strategies



Making a Difference

Large scale engagement is only possible when necessary information is accessible to vulnerable groups. The cash assistance program promotes choice and dignity for refugee women and can safeguard that those women do not resort to negative coping mechanisms. Humanitarian organizations involved in community mobilization has also established feedback systems to address priority problems and facilitate participatory planning to solve the issues faced by the refugee families.

Gender Sensitive Camp Management Strategies Adopted During COVID-19

- Useful and simple COVID-19 messages were conveyed
- Partnership fostered with SAFRON and government of Pakistan
- Uninterrupted access to timely and usable information
- Public health measure dissemination supported by local leaders



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