



Urban Agenda Platform

The global platform for sharing progress, action and knowledge on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda to achieve sustainable urban development.

A Disaster Resilient Future: Mobilizing Communities and Institutions for Effective Risk Reduction

Region	Asia and the Pacific
Award Scheme	Guangzhou Award
Start Year	2012
Sustainable Development Goals	Goal 11 - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Summary

Sylhet is one of the most vulnerable areas of Bangladesh. It is a gradually developing urban area where the need to address urban risks needs to be emphasized. The goal of this urban DRR initiative taken up by Islamic Relief Bangladesh under the 6th DIPECHO Action Plan is to reduce the risk of disaster in the life of the urban population by increasing their awareness level and strengthening their capacity on effective emergency response.

Background and Objective

Sylhet is one of the most vulnerable areas of Bangladesh. It is a gradually developing urban area where the need to address urban risks needs to be emphasized. Due to its geographical location, the Sylhet City Corporation is situated in a seismic zone and is the most earthquake-prone area in the country. As there has not been any major earthquake over the last 110 years, the people in Sylhet are not aware of the threat posed by their location. It is a challenge to raise awareness across this urban community regarding the urban hazard of earthquakes. The community does not have the necessary skills and means to respond to an emergency in case of an earthquake or fire outbreak due to the lack of necessary training and awareness. The goal of this urban DRR initiative taken up by Islamic Relief Bangladesh under the 6th DIPECHO Action Plan is to reduce the risk of disaster in the life of the urban population by increasing their awareness level and strengthening their capacity on effective emergency response.

Actions and Implementation

The resources used for implementing the initiative include: The strength of the project has been the mobilization of community resources. Community based groups formed under the project (WDMC, CVG, SDMC) are raising their own contingency funds to implement self-led activities for community risk reduction and other social welfare activities. Apart from raising awareness and capacity building interventions, IRB is also helping community based groups by providing them with first aid kits, search and rescue kits, fire extinguisher, IEC materials and others.

Initiative Contribution

Sylhet City Corporation: One of the key stakeholders as the main authority of the working area, consisting of the Mayor, the Chief Engineer and others. Deputy Commissioner's Office: Another key stakeholders and one of the main authorities of the working area. WDMC: Key stakeholder group at the Ward level including local elite and important community members. Key stakeholders in terms of coordination CVG: Community volunteers and younger representatives from the local community leading the awareness campaign and potential first responders. SDMC: A school based committee implementing awareness and preparatory activities regarding school safety under the project. Cluster Groups: The household level people in different target wards of the city who are actually taking on these messages and taking the learning into practice to ensure a culture of safety all across the community. Fire Service & Civil Defense: A major local stakeholder, leading the emergency response capacity building of the first responders within the community in coordination with Islamic Relief Bangladesh. Shahjalal University for Science & Technology: Premier educational institution in the city helping to raise awareness among the students, and also a stakeholder for raising awareness regarding earthquake resilient construction. Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College: Premier medical institution of the city coordinating with IRB to ensure hospital based disaster risk reduction activities. Bangladesh Red Crescent Society: Community stakeholder for leading training programs on first aid and volunteer programs. Sylhet Cable System: Local cable channel airing a video documentary for mass awareness rising. Islamic Relief Bangladesh: The main implementing organization of the project. VARD: Local NGO and the implementing partner of similar projects adopted by Oxfam-GB.

Innovative Initiative



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The project has been implemented an evolutionary approach where the lessons learned in the previous phases of the project have been taken into account and newer approaches have been adopted to increase the resilience level of the community to achieve the desired impact level. The approach of institutionalizing DRR across the community has been accepted at the policy and governance level. Now Sylhet City Corporation has given recognition to WDMCs and CVGs, providing them full support. The innovation is a worldwide practice because the first priority of the Hyogo Framework for Action highlights the significance of the institutionalization of DRR. Islamic Relief Bangladesh has been emphasizing this theme since the 3rd DIPECHO Action Plan and has strengthened the concept in each phase of the project. Now there are several other parties also benefiting from it. For example, Oxfam-GB, who are also implementing their project in Sylhet through local partner VARD, are now following the same pattern and adopting the concept of DRR institutionalization.

Resources devoted to delivery

Source of practice <http://www.guangzhouaward.org/a/690.html?lang=en>