

OUTCOME REPORT

Annual Planning and Learning Workshop

03rd -04th December 2024 | IIT Roorkee (ICARS), Greater Noida



SUMMARY

The Annual Learning and Planning Workshop, held from December 3rd to 5th, 2024, was organized by Sphere India in collaboration with ICARS GNEC IIT-Roorkee, HCL Foundation, ChildFund India, Amazon, and ADRA India, reflecting on the year's multifaceted disasters and shaping strategies for resilience-building. With the theme "Sparking Global Change Through Local Solutions in Humanitarian Action," the event emphasized inclusive disaster management, leveraging grassroots innovation, and integrating learnings from 2024 disasters into future planning. Key sessions explored topics such as evolving disaster risks, adherence to minimum standards, humanitarian logistics, resilient recovery, ecosystem restoration, and inclusive response frameworks. Overarching themes included the importance of collaboration among stakeholders, community-centric approaches, and the use of technology and data-driven decision-making to enhance disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. The workshop highlighted the need for systemic and scalable solutions rooted in local contexts to advance resilience in the face of increasing climate and disaster risks.

COMPREHENSIVE ACTION POINTS

1. Risk and Resilience Enhancement

- Disaster risk assessments need to evolve from a hazard-centric approach (focusing on what can go wrong) to a resilience-oriented approach (emphasizing what communities can rely on to withstand and recover from disasters).
- Climate change adaptation strategies must be integrated into local, district, and national development plans to address emerging risks, such as flash floods, droughts and more intense cyclones, and to build long-term resilience.
- Localized and community-driven early warning systems should be developed to improve trust, reduce panic, and ensure timely and effective disaster response, especially for hyper-localized hazards.
- Nature-based solutions, such as restoring mangroves, wetlands, and forests, should be prioritized as cost-effective measures for mitigating disaster risks while providing co-benefits for ecosystems and livelihoods.

2. Inclusive Disaster Management

- Disaster response frameworks must address the unique needs of marginalized groups, including persons with disabilities, women, children, and the elderly, to ensure no one is left behind during response and recovery efforts.
- Disability inclusion strategies should be embedded in disaster risk reduction (DRR) policies, ensuring accessible shelters, infrastructure, communication systems, and feedback mechanisms.
- Data collection should include disaggregated metrics (e.g., by gender, disability, and socioeconomic status) to allow targeted interventions and equitable resource allocation for vulnerable populations.
- Accessible communication, such as materials in Braille, large print, and sign language, must be developed to ensure critical information reaches diverse community members.

3. Capacity Building and Collaboration

- Training programs should be organized for responders, government officials, and NGO staff to strengthen inclusive DRR practices and foster better coordination across stakeholders.
- Traditional knowledge, such as indigenous construction techniques and sustainable agricultural practices, should be combined with modern technologies to develop holistic and culturally relevant disaster management solutions.
- Partnerships between government agencies, NGOs, academia, and private-sector players should be actively fostered to pool expertise, resources, and technology to tackle systemic challenges.
- Collaborative platforms should be established to facilitate regular communication and information sharing among stakeholders, reducing duplication of efforts and ensuring timely, efficient responses.

4. Resilient Recovery and Development

- Resilient recovery strategies should embed sustainability, focusing on rebuilding disaster-affected areas with infrastructure that can withstand future hazards and integrating long-term climate change projections into designs.
- Mental health services, including psychosocial support teams and child-friendly spaces, must be made an integral part of disaster recovery frameworks to address the psychological impacts on affected populations.
- Risk financing mechanisms, such as microinsurance schemes and social entrepreneurship programs, should be explored to provide financial security and promote sustainable livelihoods for disaster-hit communities.
- Monitoring, evaluation, and accountability mechanisms should be strengthened to ensure that recovery projects align with the needs of the affected populations, with regular feedback loops to improve effectiveness.

5. Logistics and Operational Efficiency

- District-level warehouses with pre-stocked disaster response kits must be established to enable quick and efficient distribution of relief materials during emergencies.
- Real-time inventory tracking systems should be introduced to enhance transparency, improve resource allocation, and reduce wastage during disaster responses.
- Cash and voucher assistance programs should be promoted as they empower affected populations to procure what they need while supporting local economies and reducing logistical bottlenecks.
- Infrastructure challenges, such as roadblocks and damaged supply chains during disasters, should be addressed by involving local communities and vendors in logistics planning to enhance last-mile delivery and minimize delays.

Action Points for Stakeholder-wise advocacy

Government	NGOs	CBO
Integrate climate adaptation strategies into urban and rural development plans to address emerging disaster risks.	Conduct community-level awareness campaigns on disaster preparedness and risk reduction, focusing on vulnerable groups.	Facilitate grassroots awareness campaigns to educate local populations on disaster risks and preparedness measures.
Strengthen State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs) and District Disaster Management Authorities (DDMAs) through regular training and capacity building for better preparedness.	Collaborate with government bodies and private sector organizations to mobilize resources and expertise for disaster response and recovery.	Organize community task forces to strengthen local disaster response capabilities, ensuring active participation from marginalized groups.
Develop inclusive disaster risk reduction (DRR) policies that prioritize the needs of marginalized groups, including persons with disabilities, women, and children.	Incorporate traditional knowledge into disaster management plans to ensure culturally relevant and sustainable practices.	Leverage traditional practices and local knowledge to develop effective, community-driven disaster management solutions.
Foster inter-departmental coordination to address systemic gaps in disaster management, particularly in agriculture, health, and infrastructure sectors.	Promote inclusive participation by involving persons with disabilities, women, and community leaders in decision-making and planning processes	Act as intermediaries to link affected populations with government services and NGO support during disaster recovery

CSR	Media	Academia
Allocate CSR funds to disaster risk reduction and response projects, prioritizing community-based initiatives for maximum impact.	Ensure accurate and ethical disaster reporting to amplify the voices of affected populations and highlight response gaps.	Develop tools for adaptive risk assessment, including vulnerability mapping and climate impact studies.
Support skill-building and livelihood restoration programs in disaster-affected areas, especially for marginalized communities.	Disseminate inclusive and accessible information tailored to the needs of diverse communities during disasters.	Partner with practitioners to pilot innovative disaster management solutions and publish findings to inform policy.
Provide logistical support, such as transportation and warehousing, to aid in relief distribution during emergencies.	Partner with government bodies and NGOs to conduct public awareness campaigns on disaster preparedness.	Provide technical training modules for government officials, NGOs, and community leaders on disaster risk reduction and resilience-building.
Collaborate with SDMAs, NGOs, and local stakeholders to co-design programs that address immediate needs and long-term resilience	Build capacity for media professionals through training on disaster-specific journalism and communication protocols	Conduct studies on the socio-cultural dimensions of disasters to create context-sensitive response strategies.