Report

Step Up for DRR India Campaign

21 October 2016, Seminar Hall, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi

A one day seminar on "Step Up for DRR India Campaign" was held on 21 October 2016 at Seminar Hall, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi (North Campus), New Delhi. The seminar began at 2.13 p.m. with a formal welcome address by Prof. P. C. Joshi, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi and Dr. Ranjana Mukhopadhya, University of Delhi. Prof. P.C. Joshi also welcomed all delegates, participants from different organizations, faculties and scholars from department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, in the seminar. He also introduced his colleague Professor Ranjana Mukhopadhyay who is actively involved in the step up for disaster risk reduction campaign. He also mentioned Professor M. Agnimitra and Professor Bindhywasini Pandey from University of Delhi for their activities in the field of disaster management. He also introduced the participants from different organizations viz. Sphere India, Seeds India, Save the Child, PCI, NCDHR, etc. who are passionately engaged in disaster management and their important contributions in "Step Up for DRR Campaign".

Prof. Ranjana Mukhopadhyay highlighted about the long gap between the conference which

was held in 2014 and the present conference held on 21 October 2016. She was critical about the situation of ignoring the academia and the researchers by the policy makers. She mentioned that the world humanitarian summit was organized but academia was ignored, therefore, developing NGO-Academic collaborations, multi-sector collaboration, (e.g. Social Work, Anthropology, Geography etc.) are in urgency. She also mentioned about the need of legal profession, historiography etc. for making disaster management successful.

Mr.Vikrant Mahajan, CEO, Sphere India, appreciated for organizing the program in a short notice and also thanked to the Professor P. C. Joshi and Professor Ranjana Mukhopadhyay for the initiative taken up for organizing the program. He also highlighted the activities of Sphere India and discussed the general concept of what is DRR by citing some of the important recent incident that took place in Hospitals in Orissa. He also raised certain important issues about the whole perspective of Disaster Risk Reduction (DDR) campaign, the role of involvement of youth and academia, formation of a forum of academics and policy makers to prepare for a forward action plan for forthcoming conferences, etc. He also discussed about Disaster Risk Reduction (DDR) in length about the changes in shift from disaster management, evolution of global thinking, 2005 Disaster management Act, prevention disasters from happening, with multiples saving in terms of economy and lives of the affected people.

He also discussed the global framework in 2015 concerning:

a) Investment in governance, preparedness, etc.

b) Role of practitioners - a gap between the practitioners and academic research, also unreached situation about the students/youth in the issue. Therefore, an initiative to look forward to collaborative opportunities with academics is in need. In addition, a standard curriculum about disaster management in education i.e. in universities and schools are also equally important as around 22 institutions do have formal courses in disaster management. It also mentioned about education of disaster risk reduction and it applications in other allied subjects like geography, medical science, etc. that can be developed at an appropriate level of professional courses.

Prof. P.C. Joshi also gave his valuable suggestions regarding the gaps between academia and government and also gap between academia and NGOs. Therefore, evidence based knowledge is needed for the present situation which can imply rigorous research with suitable methodologies and evidences that ultimately help in framing policy.

Dr. Kaniz Fatima, PCI, talked various issues regarding "Health and DDR" mentioning about the works of International NGOs, the episode of Koshi river flood in Bihar and its post facto response, and their reviews for disaster management that comes from the post disaster (flood) conditions. She raised very alarming situation of post disaster management during the post Koshi river flood in Bihar like improving health care

delivery system in Bihar, under staff situation of public health care and delivery system, problem of children and pregnant women and their problem during flood, AMC (Asian Ministerial Conference), etc. She also discussed in length about elimination of Polio in India, importance of health counselor on mental health, health data compilation that revealed alarming situation about the demand of health service and its challenges there in. It was also embroiled in debates like technology vs. development etc. Therefore, academic communities need to come out with plugs to bridge the loophole. Academia and practitioners need to come together for a progressive research. Initiation of conscious effort of knowledge training for

frontline functionaries, specialized medical education and disasters link, etc. were also in discussed.

Ms. Rucha from "Save the Children", discussed on "Child Protection and DDR". She represented children's of 'urban disaster risk reduction'. The children also took part in the presentation during the program about their knowledge on disaster management. Mr. Rahul Sabberwal from Anchal Charitable Trust, Adarsh Nagar, Bhadola talked about the problems of toilet facility, open wires, narrow streets, water logged streets, beggary, alcoholism, child exploitation, etc. He also discussed about the risk of children, children safety group, taskforce, disaster management groups, women group, Anganvadi and other plans, community level participation that involves house to house interaction and information sharing with important chart depicting lots of pictures on disasters management and victims of it. Prof. P.C. Joshi appreciated them and also explained about the importance PRA method in it.

Dr. Sandeepan representing 'Doctors for You' endorsed the significance of emergency needed for catering and developing disaster relief projects, building hospitals, etc. He also exposed the importance about the preparedness by the community, the relationship between WASH cluster like early warning of the expected disaster, timely communication between different department and their coordination between various departments. It was also mentioned that many features depend on WASH cluster like diseases and women health, developing capacity building among the communities that ultimately help in minimizing the

impact of disaster. Therefore, it was suggested about the timely interventions in post disaster areas as a very important step by initiating utilization of schools as a platform or as nodal bodies. Annual periodic reviews and assessments regarding vulnerability of people in disaster prone areas and level of preparedness against disasters are also equally important. Eventually, assessing the 'designs' and its implementation, maintenance and monitoring of the program, location of the victims, etc. needs to be taken into consideration for effective planning. Professor P.C. Joshi also raised the significance of them by giving personal experience from the field.

Dr. Bindhywasini Pandey, Department of Geography, Delhi University talked about the

changes over the years in research and development, National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM). He also mentioned about pre-disaster response and the scope to reduce the probability of pre-disaster loss, the level of involvement of communities at different levels like household, village, and people and government responsibility in post disaster management by a spatial temporal analysis in a vastly diversified geographical areas like hills, coastal areas, etc.

Prof M. Agnimitra, Delhi University raised important questions on why academia, NGO and practitioners are not involved in developing the collaboration. Both works in vacuum, there are superiority sets in between academician and NGO's. There is also the question of placement in it, visibility of academicians, requirement of close association between academicians and NGOs, research and action plan to tap the potentials of youth in society.

In addition, Dr. Ranjana Mukhopadhyay suggested for establishing a "Center on Disaster Management", intra and inter-university collegiums to advocate a course on disaster management. Dr. M. Kennedy Singh, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi also

suggested about the importance of initiating mock exercise on disaster management at community level on soft skills that involve in disaster management, implications for improving the minimal safety knowledge among the community and its utility in the wee hours of post disaster areas, and encouragement in implementing cost effective methods and technologies among the people in general for reducing the fatality.

Mr. Leslie from National Campaign on Dalit Human Right highlighted his focus on disaster management and social inclusion by exemplifying on what's happening to tribal and dalit communities, role of caste in outreaching the victims by citing about the difference between "Disaster Managers Act" and "Disaster Management Act". He mentioned that "Disaster Management Act" comes with "no discrimination criterion" but gap still exist in practicality. Therefore, government needs to consider the involvement of the local body in the governance by inculcating people's voices to avoid many uncertain problems like losing children education, child labor, and sexual exploitation among the disaster affected areas. Further, Prof. Joshi also condemned such kind of discrimination among the helpless people.

The program was concluded by giving brief summary of the program along with a vote of thanks given by Dr. Avitoli G. Zhimo. She also thanked all participants on behalf of the department and the program committee and she also gave special thanks to the children for their impressive presentation.

Rapporteurs: Dr. M.Kennedy Singh & Dr. Mitashree Srivastava
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