

Disaster Mitigation Institute (DMI), Gujarat, India is a community based action research, action planning and action advocacy organisation. It works towards bridging the gap between policy, practice and research related to disaster mitigation, in an effort to link the community to the national and international level humanitarian activities.

DMI's activities for disaster mitigation include: (a) Awareness Generation, (b) Capacity Building, (c) Policy Advocacy, (d) Direct Implementation, (e) Research and publications and (f) Networking.

DMI was established in response to the repeated 1987–89 droughts in India. It has evolved from a project in 1989 to an autonomous organisation in 1995. During its evolutionary journey DMI has developed four security programmes and eleven activity centres.

Four sector securities include: (a) Food (b) Water (c) Livelihood and (d) Habitat.

Eleven Activity Centres include:
(i) Action Review and Research Services,
(ii) Bhuj Reconstruction Programme,
(iii) Building Peace and Protection,
(iv) DMI-AMA Joint Centre for Disaster Risk Management, (v) Emergency Food Security Network, (vi) Emergency Health Unit,
(vii) Learning Process, (viii) Livelihood Relief Fund, (ix) Organisational Resources,
(x) Sphere Resource Centre and (xi) Water Security Programme.

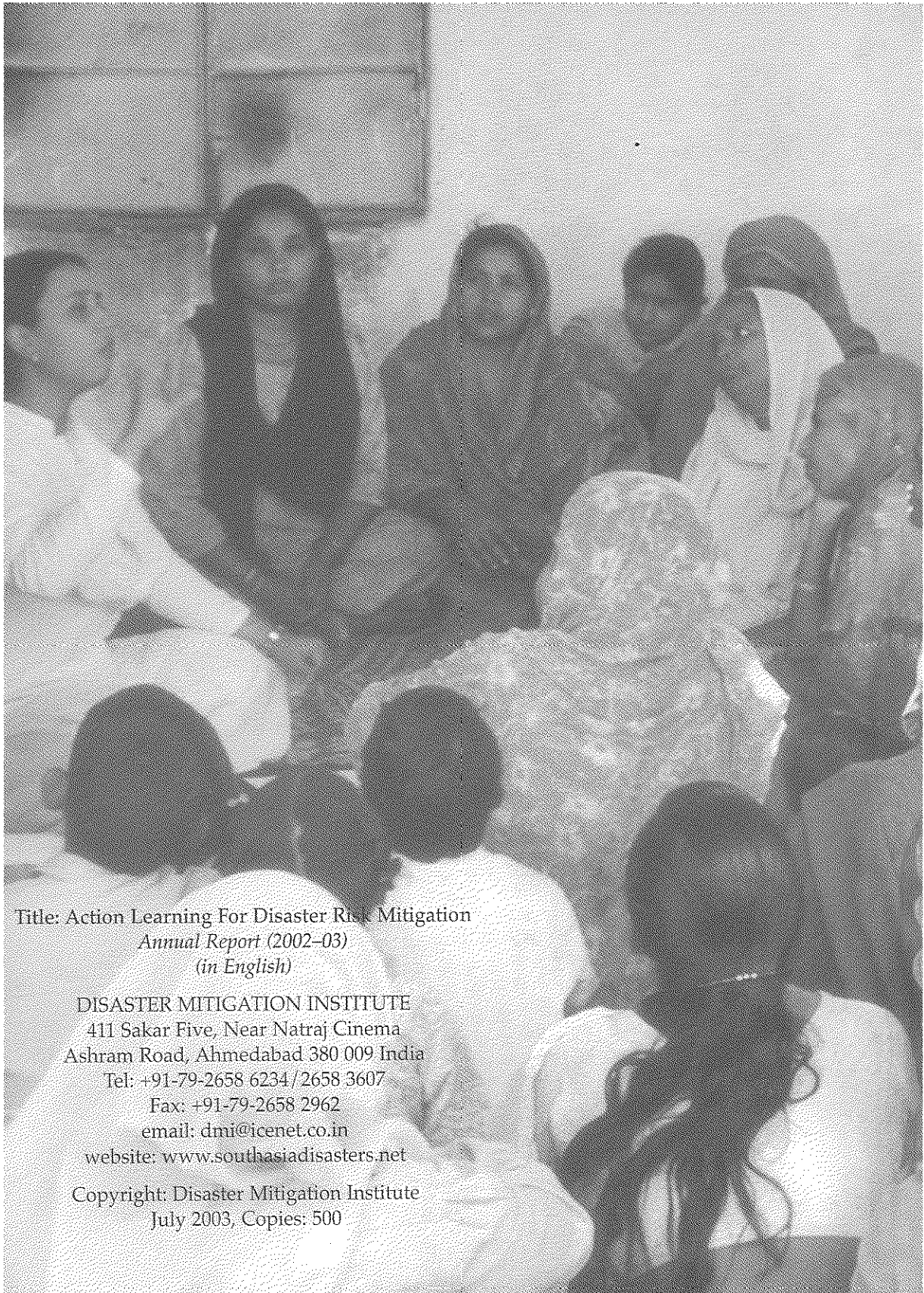
ACTION LEARNING FOR DISASTER RISK MITIGATION

Annual Report 2002–03

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FOREWORD

DMI is good at abstract analysis, and this report is an example of that skill. But those people who see its work in the villages and slums will know that the real DMI is a sensitive partner of poor people, trying to make their perspectives understood by the powerful institutions that are in charge of relief and development.

DMI strongly influenced the Disasters Emergency Committee, a group of Britain's largest charities, when they responded to the earthquake in Gujarat. DMI's role in the evaluation, in which I was Team Leader, became crucial in focusing attention on the perspectives of poor people, on partnerships with local organisations and the issue of livelihoods.

DMI is a small, quiet voice that is gaining respect internationally. It has earned this reputation from painstaking work and total honesty. You will find nothing in this report that is not true, and you will not find DMI boasting of achievements that it does not deserve. Indeed, DMI is too modest.

DMI is a learning organisation, and profoundly self-critical. Significant achievements are described only as 'learning points' and magnificent successes become a source of self-doubt.

I advise the reader not to be misled by DMI's scientific minimalism. This is a great organisation. Its current debates take it to the centre of international debates about Human Security. Its experience of analysing disasters is second to none.

Do not be misled into thinking that DMI is simply concerned with ideas and abstractions. Its Livelihood Security Fund is a model of practical help. What may look like abstractions are really the essence of experience.

In this achievement all credit should be given to Mihir and his team. From them comes both the modesty and the total commitment to truth that you will find, if you look carefully, in the pages that follow.

Tony Vaux
Humanitarian Initiative, UK
July, 2003