

# 4

## ACTION PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

The past year was a year of rapid growth of teams and activities; a diverse spread of initiatives; concrete risk reduction and mainstreaming mitigation from the community to the national level. DMI learnt that it is possible to achieve growth, diversity and impact if there are coordinated teamwork, dependable partners; and clear objectives. The financial resources available to DMI do not match its rate of growth and planned needs. DMI needs to plan for faster and larger resource mobilisation activities. DMI also learnt that planned goals could be surpassed with a clear strategy and hard work.

Over the years DMI learned that team spirit has to be reinforced from time-to-time and each new activity calls for team forming.

During the year DMI finalised and operationalised its new structure: framework of Activity Centres and Four Securities (water, habitat, food and livelihood). The reorganisation will help in coordinating activities, absorbing rapid changes, and maintaining a good performance.

DMI learnt that structures of other INGOs can be learnt from but not borrowed. Indian humanitarian sector organisations have to develop their own organisational form to address local context and DMI strived to do so.

### 4.1 LESSONS FROM 2002-03

Lessons from 2002-03 have left the DMI team to ponder on a range of questions. Some of these have echoed louder than the others, but all have been discussed during casual and formal team and organisational gatherings.

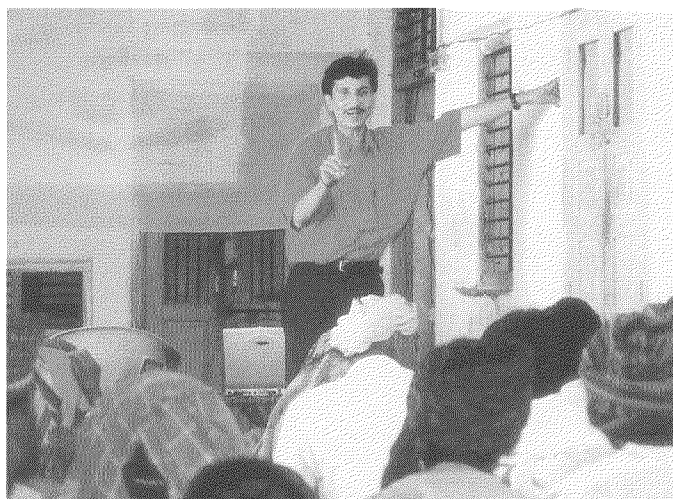
a. Where does DMI want to be three years from now?

Demands on DMI's activities and team are increasing from other cities, organisations, and states in India. While DMI has responded to these demands, it now feels the need to plan and actively cater to the national level humanitarian scenario. Its focus however, should be on local communities. During the next year various activity centres will consolidate

their national level work. Three years from now DMI sees it national level work contributing to national capacity in community outreach and informing national policy of community perspective.

b. Is the current skill and capacity base of the DMI team sufficient to achieve its goals?

The DMI team's multiple and complimentary skill base has been unique in catering to rapid response and planned work at different levels



Growth, diversity and impact of disaster mitigation activities require coordinated team work.

from the community to the international level. In the coming years DMI will strengthen this skill base by building policy analysis, documentation, advocacy, and research skills. Skills in managing multi-cultural initiatives and identifying suitable partners will be enhanced. The team will be expanded and its skills sharpened in research and consultation work.

**c. What type of work culture do we want to develop within DMI?**

This question has been discussed frequently through DMI's evolutionary journey. DMI proposes to develop a work culture that values initiatives, where commitment is the norm and where reflection and constructive review are prized. Avoidance to rules and a culture of control will be worked for. A work culture that promotes new ideas and different activities that are bound by community-based disaster mitigation will be striven for. People must come to work with DMI to contribute to the profession and communities.

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## **4.2 DIRECTIONS FOR ACTION**

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### **4.2.1 Theme for Year 2003–04**

Strategic planning will be the theme of next year's activities. Without better, realistic and well-resourced planning DMI will not be able to achieve better results and maintain desired performance standards. To improve planning DMI will initiate a two-pronged approach: one, improve the quality of inputs in planning and two, improve understanding of the context in which plans are made and executed. Planning products and processes will be strengthened at the level of the activity centres and sector security programmes.

### **4.2.2 Strengthening the Learning Triangle**

DMI values balance in its learning activities. Therefore it will keep an eye on the learning triangle: one learning from outside DMI's context, two, learning from DMI's own context and day to-day reality, and three, record and share what it has learned with others. In these three learning activities the community must remain in the centre in the coming years. DMI should be able to develop and use its learning tools and methods, in promoting action learning.

- **Learning In:** Learning from individuals and organisations and events must be increased. Visitors, interns and events will be valuable sources for learning. Publications and information resources need to be better explored to benefit from the experience of others.
- **Learning Out:** Language barriers have to be decreased. A system has to be developed so that experiences in local languages (Gujarati and Hindi) are expanded and translated into English and vice versa.
- **Lateral Learning:** DMI needs to plan ways of promoting more lateral learning through consultations with local partners and CSOs in the coming year and develop a system for this form of learning.

The above three will involve investment of time, efforts and resources.

#### 4.2.3 LESSONS FOR HUMANITARIAN PARTNERS



DMI will link micro (grassroots) work to macro (international) disaster risk mitigation.

A detailed study that highlights lessons for action learning—opportunities and challenges for a community-based organisation—based on DMI's experiences will be executed in 2003–04. Three key lessons from last year's activities are however identified below for the humanitarian sector to promote action learning

1. Value of learning for effective disaster response must be formally acknowledged and supported.

2. Real Learning—that is a combination of knowledge and action—does not take place without investment of time and resources.

3. Local communities are the best source of learning and must be the prime beneficiaries of learning

#### 4.3 PLANS FOR ACTION

During the various reflections, trigger exercises and the Annual Action Learning Day, the DMI team ascertained areas of work for itself in 2003–04.

##### Organisational Level:

(i) Partnerships: Considering that disaster management demands a holistic approach to mitigation, DMI will work towards strengthening its partner relations. This would be done through a series of partnership assessment exercises. DMI will work on differentiating 'core partners,' 'activity partners' and 'initiative partners.' It will develop a plan to consolidate valuable partnerships, develop new partnerships and conclude partnerships that do not serve mutual objectives. Partners are valuable for DMI to increase its impact and outreach.

(ii) Team building: Activities will be undertaken to strengthen the core capacity of the institute. For this purpose DMI plans to review teams and team members not only for their past performance but their potential in realising the future of DMI. New skills, additional management capacity, and higher levels of professionalism will be strived for.

(iii) Expand Disaster Risk Mitigation Work: To compliment and link its grassroots level (micro) work, to its international level (macro) work, DMI will focus at the national level. This will be an approach to linking national policy with local practice.

##### Activity Centre Level:

The DMI team undertook a ranking of activity centres to decide, which activity centre needed focussed attention in the coming year. The decision was based on relative strengths of the activity centre within DMI, the need for consolidating its core competencies, the field demand that it can satisfy and the potential role that it can play in disaster

mitigation. Based on the findings, special attention will be given to the growth and development of the following activity centres:

- a. Water Security Programme: Greater professionalism in its performance and outputs
- b. Livelihood Relief Fund: Capitalise and further expand activities in social protection and risk transfer funding.
- c. Emergency Food Security Network: Consolidate its expanded work into policy inputs.
- d. Emergency Health Unit: Expand its work to cover HIV/AIDS related issues in emergencies.
- e. Sphere Resource Centre: Despite roadblocks continue the lead and pace of work on Sphere, with active participation in the national level Sphere Piloting process.
- f. Building Peace and Protection: Strengthen activities to move from relief to recovery mode in the riot affected areas of Ahmedabad. Children and Youth will be the focus, with education as a means to facilitate recovery. Convergence of work in different sectors will be worked towards.

All these activities will be built with the core objective of building community capacity for effective disaster risk preparedness and mitigation in India.



Strategic Planning will be the theme of the next year's activities

Though India has the widest range and most valuable depth of experience in mitigating disaster risks, the lessons are seldom available from one community or one organisation to another, from one relief effort to the next or one disaster to another. The Experience Learning Series, published in Hindi, Gujarati and English, values grassroot experience and tries to capture it for practice, policy and research purposes.

1. The June 1998 Cyclone and the Government of Gujarat:  
*A Report Card by Corporate Gujarat (In Gujarati)*  
Disaster Mitigation Institute
2. Awareness Generation for Disaster Preparedness (In Gujarati)  
Disaster Mitigation Institute with IGNOU and Duryog Nivaran
3. Minimum Standards in Disaster Response:  
*The Sphere Project (In Gujarati)*  
Disaster Mitigation Institute with Oxfam (India) Trust and Indian Red Cross Society, Gujarat
4. Relief from Malaria Epidemic:  
*Vulnerable Community Perspectives (In Gujarati)*  
Disaster Mitigation Institute
5. Four Stages After Disaster:  
*Essential Relief Supply at the time of Disaster (In Gujarati)*  
Disaster Mitigation Institute with Western India Forum for Panchayati Raj
6. Agenda for Drought Relief 2001:  
*Community Based Action Review of Drought Relief 2000 in Gujarat (In English)*  
Disaster Mitigation Institute
7. Agenda for Drought Relief 2001:  
*Community Based Action Review of Drought Relief 2002 in Gujarat (In Gujarati)*  
Disaster Mitigation Institute
8. Agenda for Drought Relief 2001:  
*Community Based Action Review of Drought Relief 2002 in Gujarat (In Hindi)*  
Disaster Mitigation Institute
9. Community Based Disaster Mitigation:  
*Based on the Experiences of Involving Local Communities in Disaster Mitigation (In Gujarati)*  
Disaster Mitigation Institute with United Nations Development Programme
10. Importance of Women's Role in Disaster Mitigation:  
*Based on the Experiences of Involving Women in Disaster Mitigation (In Gujarati)*  
Disaster Mitigation Institute with United Nations Development Programme
11. Drought? Try Capturing The Rain (In Gujarati)  
Disaster Mitigation Institute with Centre for Science and Environment
12. Rebuilding Houses and Hope:  
*Most commonly asked questions on rehabilitation packages of Government of Gujarat (In Gujarati)*  
Disaster Mitigation Institute with United Nations Development Programme
13. Tools for Hazard and Capacity Assessment:  
*Experienced-Based Easy Explanations on How to Prepare Against Disasters by Using Hazard and Capacity Assessment Tools (In Gujarati)*  
Disaster Mitigation Institute with United Nations Development Programme

14. **Livelihood Security and Vulnerability Reduction:**  
*South Asian Experiences of Duryog Nivaran (In Gujarati)*  
 Disaster Mitigation Institute with I.T.D.G. South Asia
15. **Victims Voices:**  
*An effort to know comprehensive opinions of affected communities on the relief activities after the 2001 earthquake (In Gujarati)*  
 Disaster Mitigation Institute
16. **Small Towns, Big Disasters:**  
*An effort to know the coping capacity of Nagarpalikas by preparing a report card by the residents of earthquake affected Nagarpalikas of Gujarat (In Gujarati)*  
 Disaster Mitigation Institute with Urban Planning Partnerships
17. **School Preparedness against Disasters:**  
*Combining the teachers educational and earthquake related experiences to develop understanding of disaster mitigation (In Gujarati)*  
 Disaster Mitigation Institute with Japan International Centre for the Rights of the Child (JICRC)
18. **Disaster and Vulnerability:**  
*SEWA's Response to the Earthquake in Gujarat (In English)*  
 Disaster Mitigation Institute with Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA)
19. **Institutionalising Mitigation:**  
*Disaster Mitigation Institute's Annual Report April 2001CE March 2002 (In English)*  
 Disaster Mitigation Institute
20. **Urban Development and Disaster Mitigation:**  
*DMI's Bhuj Reconstruction Project (In English)*  
 Disaster Mitigation Institute
21. **Two years after the earthquake:**  
*Comprehensive assessment of the rescue, relief and rehabilitation activities after the 2001 earthquake and lessons for long term preparedness*  
 Disaster Mitigation Institute
22. **Impact of the Earthquake on the Children:**  
*The current situation of earthquake affected children, in their own words (In Gujarati)*  
 Disaster Mitigation Institute with Japan International Centre for the Rights of the Child (JICRC)
23. **Planning Guidelines for Schools:**  
*Planning guidelines for safer schools and education against disaster, on the basis of the January, 2001 earthquake (In Gujarati)*  
 Disaster Mitigation Institute with Japan International Centre for the Rights of the Child (JICRC)
24. **After the Earthquake:**  
*Comprehensive assessment of the rescue, relief and rehabilitation activities (In Hindi)*  
 Disaster Mitigation Institute

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DMI's Annual Report (2002-03) is a collective inquiry and planning document on action learning for disaster mitigation. It highlights how a local organisation understands and practices the concept of action learning.

The aim of this report is to facilitate the use of lessons from practice for informed planning and action- by both DMI and other stakeholder - to realise community based disaster mitigation.

Mr. Tony Vaux (Humanitarian Initiatives, UK), Mr. John Twigg (Benfield Hazard Research Centre, UK) and Mr. Michael Kropac (co-author of the previous annual report of DMI), painstakingly reviewed this report and suggested improvements.

Ms. Shivani Khanna planned the process and compiled the report with Mr. Himanshu Kikani and Mr. Mehul Pandya. Mr. Manish Patel and Ms. Krupali Surti formatted this report.