

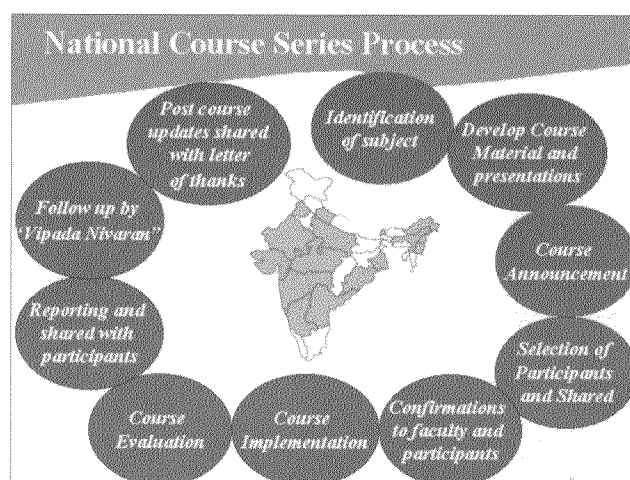
LEARNING FROM TEACHING II: NATIONAL COURSE SERIES

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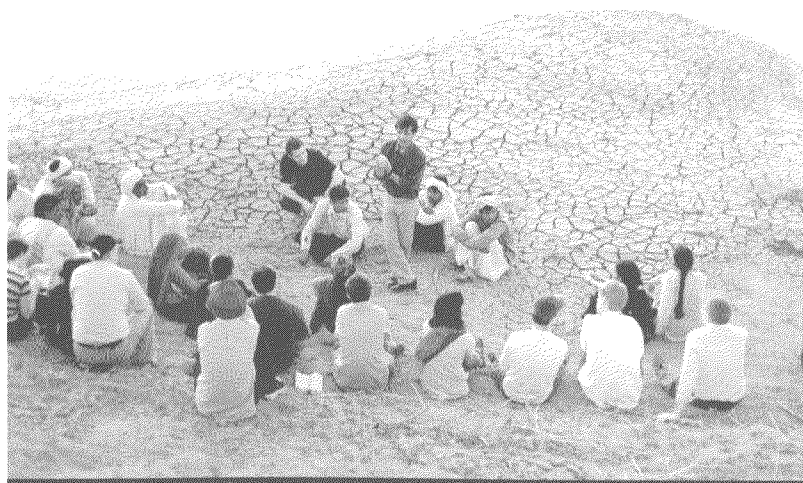
DMI's National Course Series contributes towards building national capacity for community based disaster risk management. These bottom up capacity building courses are instrumental in communicating the latest local, national and international knowledge and experience to key actors in the field of disaster preparedness.

Disaster management professionals with extensive field and academic experience are invited to conduct these courses. The courses have been held in different parts of India: Goa, Guwahati, Kolkata, Delhi, Jaipur, Ahmedabad and other parts of Gujarat. Each course is tailor made to meet specific needs of course participants.

The twin component of classroom orientation and field visits helps integrate theoretical understanding and grassroots realities of disaster management. The course content is periodically reviewed by practitioners and experts. Post course services are provided on a priority basis. For example, following training courses DMI sends relevant publications (such as issues of *Vipada Nivaran*, Experience Learning Series, Pocketbook publications) to relevant persons who had attended the training cycles. When training occurs in cities other than Ahmedabad, DMI



Discussing drought proofing and water harvesting in the earthquake affected villages.



responds to attendees' requests for DMI information material that is not available at the training site. DMI has also used its website in this regard. For example, following the National Course Series on the Sphere Project (see Chapter 5), DMI posted information and case studies about subsequent experiences of agencies involving the Sphere standards so other attendees could be informed.

So far over 250 representatives of national and state governments, international universities, donors and civil society organisations, involved in disaster mitigation and preparedness, have participated in 13 National Courses. These include USAID, UNICEF, DFID, IFRC, Oxfam GB, CARITAS, World Vision; Action Aid, NCDM, PGVS, and SEWA among others. See Annex 8 for a complete list of National Course Series.

The courses are run on the following modules:

- National Courses on Community Based Disaster Risk Management (Five courses)
- National Courses on Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Three courses)
- National Course on Community Based Disaster Preparedness (One course)
- National Course on Urban Vulnerability Assessment For Mainstreaming Mitigation (One course)
- National Course on Livelihood Relief after Earthquake (One course)

Lateral Learning Courses with students of Cranfield University (UK) and Oxford Brookes University (UK) have facilitated international exchange for disaster mitigation. Sector specific courses on water security, school safety, conflict and peace building have been designed. A Course on chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosives (CBRNE) preparedness is developed and ready for review.

Systems for internal and external review, evaluation and follow up ensure that the training modules for each National Course are updated and relevant.

OBJECTIVES OF NATIONAL COURSE SERIES

The aim of the National Course Series is to build national capacities in disaster mitigation and preparedness through the sharing of local knowledge and expertise by way of interactive and participatory training. Most national capacity is built top-down, with international expertise and global experience. DMI's approach is equally useful: building national capacity from the bottom up. The subject and contents of DMI's national courses are based on local stakeholder demand. And the content of the courses is based on DMI's actual experience with disaster mitigation and preparedness at the local level.

Specific objectives of the National Course Series include the following:

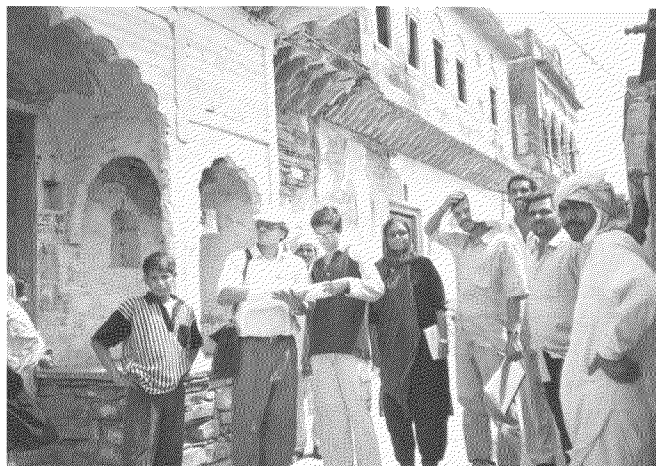
- To examine different disaster risk management models and approaches
- To analyze the validity of community-based approaches in disaster risk management
- To identify various risk reduction measures that can be undertaken by the community
- To learn lessons by providing an opportunity for sharing local and valuable experiences
- To develop new indicators and standards for disaster risk mitigation in the humanitarian sector

EFFECTIVENESS OF NATIONAL COURSE SERIES

DMI is one of the two or three organisations that have conducted 13 courses on various themes so far at the national level. The NCS has received very good feedback from the participants. A WFP participant in the national course on Livelihood Options after Disaster said: "Listening to the struggles for livelihood recovery after February 2002 riots from the victims during the national course was worth a thousand books "

Demand is increasing for the courses, especially for more sessions on issues regarding livelihood, water harvesting, and community-based disaster management. The fact that the courses link all sectors (water, food, shelter, health) is one of the things that has been well received by the participants. Some alumni have even been attending additional courses. After attending one course participants have asked for a special course for their organizations, thus helping to institutionalise disaster mitigation in their organisations. Many participants are applying and implementing mitigation measures that they have learnt during national courses in their daily work. Six organisations across India implemented the Sphere standards in their work after attending a course on Sphere Standards. Some course materials have been translated into local languages.

Students of Oxford Brookes University and Cranfield University of UK who have attended national courses have gained extensive fieldwork experience and benefited in their careers in the humanitarian sector. Also, after attending national courses some Indian participants have gained admission to these British universities.



National Courses of DMI try to build national capacity bottom-up. Content is based on DMI's own or similar local Indian experience.