DRR IN ACTION CASE STUDY

Participatory Campaign Planning for Inclusive DRR Knowledge and Messaging in Nepal

Theme of the Case Study
Gender & Inclusiveness

Country
Nepal

Case location
7 municipalities in Nepal:
Kathmandu,
Bhaktapur,
Mhadhapur-Thimi,
Godavari,
Bhudhnilkantha,
Dhangadhi,
Pokhara–Leknath

Photo: PCP workshop participants in Kailali discuss messages that could be effective in addressing identified issues. | NRCS

Background

The Strengthening Urban Resilience and Engagement (SURE) programme is implemented by the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) in partnership with the British Red Cross (BRC), in seven municipalities, targeting four groups vulnerable to disasters in each of the municipalities to increase their awareness of their risks to different disasters and mitigation measures they can take.

Learning from the previous Earthquake Preparedness for Safer Communities (EPS) programme reflected that disseminating general messages to entire populations was ineffective in creating behaviour change. The SURE programme therefore developed the Participatory Campaign Planning (PCP) process to understand which messages and means of communication would be most effective with the different target groups of the programme.

What did the action seek to change?

To move away from a blanket approach in communicating messages, to adopt an approach where messages and the means of communicating them are tailored to different target groups, with the aim of making them more effective in creating behaviour change.

What were the key actions taken to achieve this change?

The PCP methodology was developed by the BRC and NRCS headquarters SURE team and rolled out by the programme team in each municipality. A separate one-day workshop was held with each of the programmes' target groups, 28 in total.

The workshops were participatory-and activity-based and sought to establish:

- Hazards that target groups felt they were at the biggest risk of
- Test existing key messages to understand if target groups think each message is effective in changing behaviour, and if not, why not

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- Map the barriers to behaviour change
- Understand participants' social networks and understand the best opportunities to share information
- Understand the most effective means of communication
- Understand how different target groups prefer to give feedback

Following the workshop, detailed analysis was done by the programme team and specific key messages for the target groups were developed for the target groups based on the findings.

A dissemination workshop was held with external actors and the findings have fed into the revision of government messages.

What were the essential steps taken along the process to bring about this change?

Step 1	Development of the methodology
Step 2	Facilitation of the workshops with SURE programme target groups
Step 3	Analysis of the findings
Step 4	Revision and development of hazard messages for different target groups, based on the findings

What SFDRR principles[1] were applicable to this change process?

Principle 1   **Engagement from all of society.** The SURE programme specifically engages the most vulnerable people in urban areas and works with them to build their resilience to disasters. SURE's urban engagement strategy focuses on behavioural change models and working with these vulnerable populations to understand better their risks, and, build their knowledge and skills as agents of change within their own networks. This network approach relies on target vulnerable groups to co-design their own disaster risk reduction and resilience communication materials, as well as mitigation activities and advocacy campaigns. The PCP process is the catalyst for co-design of the communication materials and messages; it is critical to include citizen voice in order to make the message relevant and more impactful to those vulnerable populations.

*A NRCS social mobilizer reading messages to an elderly group (as they cannot read) so they can then vote for the ones they like and those that they do not.
Kaski, 15 June 2017. | NRCS*

Principle 2   **Empowerment of local authorities and communities through resources, incentives and decision-making responsibilities as appropriate.** The PCP process engages target vulnerable groups in discussions and decision-making on the type of messages that are aimed at them and their communities.

Principle 3   **Decision-making to be inclusive and risk-informed while using a multi-hazard approach.** The PCP process examines messages from multiple hazards that have previously been identified as being risks to those populations – both man-made and natural hazards. The PCP process is able to be conducted with illiterate groups, people with disability groups and is aimed at those groups who are often excluded or marginalised from decision-making processes within Nepali society such as single women (widows) and the landless.

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1   e.g. Primary responsibility of the State, Shared responsibility, Protection, All-of-society-engagement, coordination mechanism, empowering local-decision makers, Multi-hazard approach and inclusive risk-informed decision-making, Sustainable development, Local and specific risks.

What were the Achievements and the Impacts?

While it is too soon for impact level change to materialize, the immediate results reflected that target groups became engaged in the programme through the PCP process and felt valued through the consultation. Feedback from target groups indicated they previously did not have the opportunity to engage.

Hazard messages were changed based on the findings, both within and outside of the programme; tailoring them to different target groups with the aim of increasing the effectiveness of messages for the purpose of promoting behaviour change.

A street vendor in Kathmandu:

"We never expected this kind of respect, we've never had this chance with any other organization."

What were the key Lessons Learnt?

The overall learning was the confirmation that in order to lead to behaviour change, hazard messages need to be adapted based on the target group and the geographic environment.

From the PCP workshops we learnt that the following elements need to be considered when developing hazard messages:

- Resources: the income of the target group, the availability of human resources, equipment and materials
- The existing knowledge of the target group
- The availability of physical infrastructure
- The availability of natural resources
- The existence of laws and their enforcement
- The social status of target group
- The literacy status of target group
- The physical and mental well-being of target group

Many PCP participants highlighted that they are poor and lack resources that are required to be resilient against disasters including property and equipment. As such, messages that promote the use of resources, for example, prepositioning rescue materials and constructing a house following the building code, will not lead to behaviour change.

The participants also suggested a need to account for available physical infrastructures while formulating messages. In the case of messages related to road accidents, People with Disabilities objected that it will be hard to follow messages that request them to walk on footpaths because footpaths are not disabled-friendly. Similarly, people who are living on river banks said the messages suggesting that people move to temporary shelters during flooding are ineffective because they do not have access to shelters.

Another factor to be considered while designing messages is environmental setting. In Godawari municipality, unemployed youths suggested adapting messages that promote the use of rafts during flooding as there are big stones in the river in their area that would obstruct rafts, making rescue operations difficult.

The participants also raised concerns over messages that require the proper enforcement of laws. There was a message requesting pedestrians to use footpaths, but the participants informed that it is difficult to walk on footpaths because of street shops. According to them, such messages require an effective law enforcement which is beyond their capacity.

> Social status was also found to be an important factor. Dalit target groups said that they cannot follow the message that asks them to go to safe shelters during disasters because they are socially excluded and not allowed to access them with other so-called higher castes.
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> It is also important to consider people with disabilities. For example, flood warnings disseminated through sirens and radio are ineffective for people with hearing loss.

What were the Good Practices arising from this action?

Good Practice 1	Effectively engaging vulnerable groups in the development of hazard messages, through participatory methodologies
Good Practice 2	Tailoring hazard messages to the different needs of different vulnerable groups
Good Practice 3	Applying learning from the process to revise the programme strategy

Policy Relevance to DRR in Action

Importance of moving from information dissemination model of DRR, to behavioural change models for longer term impact and ownership of risk reduction behaviours.

Key Messages from this Case Study

- SURE focuses on multiple hazards (natural and man-made), heavily developing and using participatory approaches to engage different target groups in urban areas; tailoring approaches to be appropriate to different target groups, rather than using a blanket approach.
- SURE uses six types of urban community[3] to help identify and engage with vulnerable populations and subsequently testing a new model of working in urban communities that identifies and works with target vulnerable groups, looking at how they organize themselves and capitalizing on the networks which they use, instead relying on artificial geographic groupings.

The target group approach is innovative in an urban disaster resilience programme. This is a new way of working that provides a depth in terms of focusing on behaviour change and breadth of coverage.

References for this Case Study

1. PCP Process for workshops

2. Draft Report on Participatory Campaign Planning

3. Hamdi, 2004, '*Small Change: About the Art of Practice and the limits of Planning in Cities*' (published by Earthscan) and Kupp, 2016, cited in ALNAP, 2016, '*Stepping back: understand cities and their systems*' (Campbell)