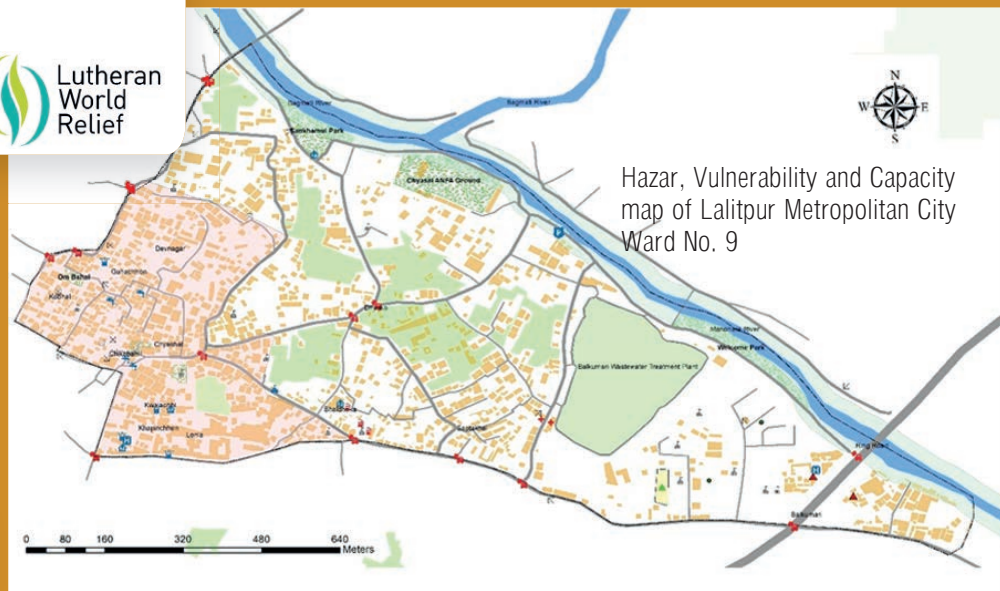


Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment & Disaster Risk Management



Concept and process

Every year Nepal faces multiple recurrent hazards such as earthquakes, landslides, and floods. These have resulted in a large amount of loss and damages. The 2015 Gorkha earthquake took the lives of around 9,000 people, injured more than 22,000, and caused mass destruction of infrastructures. The tectonic setting of the Himalayan region was the reason for such massive earthquakes in Nepal's history (Mcnamara et al., 2016). More than 100 people die every year from floods and landslides (NDR, 2019). Fire, lightning, and GLOFs are other hazards affecting the country every year. The 2015 earthquake had severely affected Kathmandu Valley's urban areas, which also faces risks of other hazards such as pollution, floods, and accidents. Limited access to essential services such as water supply, drainage, road, and hospitals, further exacerbates the risks.

Thus, this situation demands a robust DRR/M system whose primary task should be to build resilient communities to reduce risks, loss, and damages. A



Interaction with elected representative and ward officials during vulnerability and capacity assessment.

Community can be resilient only when it can deal with adverse situations. To that end, adequate human, social, physical, natural, capital, and economic supports is vital, along with the availability of sufficient knowledge and skills among them.

As a part of capacity enhancement activity, ISET-Nepal organized interaction programs with women's groups in each ward. Similarly, elected representatives from Kathmandu and Lalitpur Metropolitan city were trained on mainstreaming DRR in the local plan. Further, the diverse community group such as the civil society group, slum, youths, and journalists were oriented and trained on DRR/M.

Achievement/output

With the knowledge and the capacity built of the elected representatives, officials, women's' group, youths, civil society members, and journalists, they realized the importance of DRR preparedness and have now acted accordingly. The ward office has included the DRR plan in its annual activity. A toolkit for journalists to report disaster news properly was prepared and published. A separate fire preparedness handbook was also published for all concerned.

Learning

Realizing the importance of DRR/M, voluntary participation of community members was anticipated. However, the allowance was the motivating factor for their active participation. Involving the ward representatives and officials in a day-long program was difficult because of their busy schedules. Their priority would be to carrying out their ward related duties. Despite such constraints, the project successfully brought the elected representatives to discuss ways forward on DRR/M issues. The learning from capacity enhancement activities was quite encouraging. Some learning follows:

- Urban stakeholders such as women, youths, civil society members have understood the importance of disaster preparedness and its implication on disaster preparedness at the individual level. One-time orientation can only trigger the issue, but continuous iteration and follow-ups are required to make it a community effort. Follow-up programs are necessary to achieve progress in the community.
- Slum-dwellers were worried about the stresses they face daily, such as lack of

water, fuel, energy, fear of eviction, and drainage compared to flood events and earthquakes.

- Involving Tole Sudhar Samiti in DRR planning was significant because they were relatively more active and enthusiastic about learning approaches and planning to manage disasters. They are willing to work collectively to bring change in their communities.
- Journalists expressed that there was a need for a journalist-friendly DRR reporting handbook. Based on their suggestion, ISET-Nepal published a disaster handbook for the journalists.

Interaction with community groups to understand their vulnerabilities and capacities.



- In DRR/M, youths from social clubs such as Rotaract and Lions could help raise awareness in the community and carry out activities like disaster-related data collection. The wards and other stakeholders need to invite the youth to local level meetings, orientations, and interactions to educate them in DRR/M issues.
- School children involved in the preparation of school-based DRR programs could influence behavioral changes in their families. Therefore such activities should be initiated at schools.