



International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction

INEQUALITY TO EMPOWERMENT FOR DISASTER RESILIENCE

13 OCTOBER 2023
NIDM CAMPUS, DELHI



Chief Guest

Shri Amarjeet Sinha, IAS (Rtd)
Member PESB, Former Advisor to
Hon'ble PM



Patron

Shri Rajendra Ratnoo, IAS
Executive Director
NIDM, MHA, GoI

Guests of Honour



Ms. Ruma Devi
President, Gramin Vikas evam
Chetna Sansthan



Ms. Ira Singhal, IAS
Special Secretary, Government of
Arunachal Pradesh



Ms. Maithili Thakur
Singer & Brand Ambassador
of NIDM



Ms. Ranjita Sinha
Director, Association of
Transgender/Hijra in Bengal



Shri Tom White
Chief of Emergency (DRR),
UNICEF

Organized by

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DISASTER MANAGEMENT
MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
Sector-29, Rohini, Delhi -110042



Report

13 October, 2023

About NIDM

The National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) was constituted under an Act of Parliament with a vision to play the role of a premier institute for capacity development in India and the region. The efforts in this direction that began with the formation of the National Centre for Disaster Management (NCDM) in 1995 gained impetus with its designation as the National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) for training and capacity development. Under the Disaster Management Act 2005, NIDM got the statutory status and has been assigned nodal responsibilities for human resource development, capacity building, training, research, documentation and policy advocacy in the field of disaster management.

Both as a National Centre and then as the National Institute, NIDM has performed a crucial role in bringing disaster risk reduction to the forefront of the national agenda. The Institute believes that disaster risk reduction is possible only through promotion of a "Culture of Prevention" involving all stakeholders.

NIDM is proud to have a multi-disciplinary core team of professionals working in various aspects of disaster management. The Institute has a well-stocked library exclusively on the theme of disaster management and mitigation. The Institute provides training in face to-face, on-line and self-learning mode as well as satellite-based training. In-house and off-campus face-to-face training to the officials of the state governments is provided free of charge including modest boarding and lodging facilities.

NIDM provides Capacity Building support to various National and State level agencies in the field of Disaster Management & Disaster Risk Reduction. The Institute's vision is to create a Disaster Resilient India by building the capacity at all levels and across all sectors for disaster prevention and preparedness.

Context of the Programme

The International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction was started in 1989, after a call by the United Nations General Assembly for a day to promote a global culture of risk-awareness and disaster reduction. The day is commemorated every year on 13 October on certain specific themes, to promote and disseminate the information about how people and communities around the world are reducing their exposure to disasters and raising awareness about the importance of reining in the risks that they face.

This year's (2023) theme for International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction is 'Fighting Inequality for Resilience Future', which focuses on how inequalities, like limited access to services, make the vulnerable people even more susceptible to disasters. In addition, when disasters happen, they make existing inequalities worse and leave those, who are already at risk more vulnerable.

Since most countries at high risk of disasters are also among those with the highest share of the population living under the national poverty line, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) encourages people to act to break the cycle of disaster and growing inequality.

To mobilize action, the UN agency is raising awareness of the brutal inequality of disasters. It calls for fighting inequality for a resilient future, which is the theme of the 2023 observance.

The Day's theme aligns with the Sendai Framework, the international agreement to prevent and reduce losses in lives, livelihoods, economies and basic infrastructure.

In this context, NIDM observed the "International day for Disaster Risk Reduction" on 13th October at its Rohini campus. The event was attended by a diverse audience, including government officials, academics, disaster management professionals, and students. The inaugural session was graced by Shri Amarjeet Sinha IAS (Retd.), Former Advisor to Hon'ble PM, Ms. Ruma Devi President, Gramin Vikas Evam Chetna Sansthan, Jodhpur, Shri Rajendra Ratnoo IAS Executive Director NIDM, Ms. Ira Singhal IAS Spl. Secretary, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, Shri Tom White Chief of Emergency, UNICEF and Ms. Maithili Thakur Brand Ambassador NIDM. About 113 delegates attended the event and participated in the discussions. The program underscored the importance of DRR Day, the role of NIDM, and the imperative of addressing inequalities to empower communities for disaster resilience. It emphasized the need for collective action and preparedness in the face of disasters.

Schedule of the Programme:

0900 – 0930 hrs.	Registration	NIDM
0930 – 1030 hrs	Dignitaries on the Dias	Shri Amarjeet Sinha Ms. Ruma Devi Shri Rajendra Ratnoo Ms. Ira Singhal Shri Tom White Ms. Maithili Thakur
	National Anthem	
	Lighting of lamp	
	Felicitation of Dignitaries and Release of Training Module on Social & Behavioural Change Communication (SBCC)	
	Welcome address	Shri Rajendra Ratnoo, Executive Director NIDM
	Address	Mr. Tom White, Chief of Emergency, UNICEF
	Address: Mainstreaming Children Led Disaster Risk Reduction	Ms. Maithili Thakur, Brand Ambassador NIDM
	Inaugural Address	Shri Amarjeet Sinha, IAS (Retd.), Former Advisor to Hon'ble PM
	Vote of Thanks	Prof. Surya Parkash, NIDM
	Group Photo	
1030 – 1100 hrs.	Tea Break	
1100 – 1130 hrs.	Special Session on Disaster Risk Mitigation: Lessons for Resilience	Shri Satoru Nishikawa, Advisor JICA Session Moderator : Prof. Chandan Ghosh
1130 – 1300 hrs.	Panel Discussion: Inequality to Empowerment for Disaster Resilience Chair: Shri Rajendra Ratnoo, Executive Director , NIDM Co-chair: Dr. Santosh Kumar, Sr. Advisor NIDM Panelists : Ms. Ruma Devi , Gramin Vikas Evam Chetna Sansthan – Women Empowerment for Building Economic Resilience. Dr. Vinita Sahay , Director, IIM Bodh Gaya-Role of Management Institutions in Empowering women. Ms. Ira Singhal , Spl. Secretary, Government of Arunachal Pradesh – Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction Shri Tomas Stenstrom , Director, International Labour Organization – Unorganized labour in Disaster Risk Reduction Rapporteurs: IIHMR students & NIDM young Professionals.	

1300 – 1330 hrs.	Q & A session	
1330 – 1400 hrs.	Summing up	Prof. Anil K. Gupta, NIDM
	Vote of Thanks	Dr. Nidhi Yadav. IIHMR

The program began with the National Anthem and the symbolic lighting of the lamp, signifying the enlightenment of knowledge. Dr. Ajinder Walia, Associate Professor & Head GIDRR and DR&R Divisions, NIDM welcomed all the esteemed dignitaries on the dais. The event attracted a diverse audience, including government officials, academics, disaster management professionals, and students.





The program began with a warm Welcome Address by **Sh. Rajendra Ratnoo, IAS, ED, NIDM**, who highlighted the significance of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) day. He focused on the theme "Inequality to Empowerment for Disaster Resilience" and discussed the purpose of celebrating this day. He said that the event has provided a platform for meaningful discussions, knowledge sharing, and collaborative strategies to reduce the impact of disasters and enhance preparedness. He also highlighted the importance of Disaster Risk Reduction day. Some of the key points highlighted by him included:

- International Day for Disaster Risk reduction was an opportunity to discuss strategies for mitigating risks and building resilient societies.
- DRR Day serves as a reminder of our shared responsibility to actively work towards disaster resilience.
- Communities, governments, and organizations must collaborate to mitigate risks, respond effectively, and support recovery efforts.
- DRR Day calls for collective action, prioritizing risk reduction, and ensuring that no one is left behind in the face of disasters.



Shri Ratnoo also highlighted the history and evolution of the National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) since its inception in 2006. NIDM has progressively expanded its role and responsibilities in disaster risk governance.

India was one of the first countries to establish a National Centre for Disaster Management in 1995, which was initially under the Ministry of Agriculture. In 2003, it was shifted to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), and in 2006, it came under the Disaster Management Act of 2005.

He also discussed the challenges faced by marginalized communities, especially those affected by gender inequality, disabilities, and age-related factors, in the aftermath of natural disasters.



Shri Tom White, Chief of Emergency (DRR), UNICEF addressed the gathering and shared that to achieve disaster resilience, it is essential to address these inequalities, empower communities through education, resources, and decision-making, and foster inclusivity in disaster preparedness and response efforts, he emphasizing on the importance of building resilience and safeguarding vulnerable communities. He commended the achievements in disaster risk reduction and highlighted the significance of this day for raising awareness about disaster risks and promoting resilience against various hazards, both natural and human-made. He discussed the commitment of the Government of India to G20, DRR focusing on India's

vulnerability to a wide range of disasters. Community-based approaches and engagement were highlighted as essential elements in disaster risk management, empowering local communities to become more resilient.

He also acknowledged the efforts of the National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) in developing a Social Behaviour Change toolkit for earthquake, cyclone, flood, and public health emergencies. He stressed the importance of preparedness, protection, and awareness during these events and expressed gratitude to all those involved in the project.

Furthermore, he emphasized the need for DRR to address the vulnerabilities of various groups, including girls, women, transgender individuals, and those with disabilities. He highlighted the importance of flexibility in policy formulation and application to cater to the diverse needs of these communities. DRR was seen as a collective responsibility to protect and support all vulnerable community members, especially those who are hardest to reach.

In short, he emphasized the importance of DRR in promoting resilience and reducing disparities in disaster response and recovery, with a focus on engaging communities and addressing the unique vulnerabilities of various groups.

While sharing her views on Mainstreaming Children Led Disaster Risk Reduction Ms. Maithili Thakur, Brand Ambassador, NIDM said that children can play a valuable role in building resilient communities. By involving them in DRR efforts, it fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among children, while also contributing to a safer and more prepared society. She told that she had to come to Delhi from Bihar because there was a lot of flooding every year. She stressed that her family could not live there in those circumstances. She also told that she saw the biggest disaster of her life in the form of Covid-19 where she saw large numbers of deaths in the country due to Covid-19.



Shri Amarjeet Sinha, a renowned expert in disaster risk management and the former advisor to the Prime Minister of India, delivered a comprehensive speech at the National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM). Mr. Sinha's speech aimed to shed light on critical aspects of disaster risk management and provide insights into the latest developments in this field. He highlighted some points which are listed below:-

1. Evolving Approach to Disaster Risk Management: Mr. Sinha began by reflecting on the

changing approach to disaster risk management, emphasizing the need to adapt to new challenges in modern times.

2. 'Housing for All' Initiative: He discussed India's initiative to ensure minimum necessities for households, focusing on the concept of "housing for all." This initiative seeks to protect families from natural disasters and enhance their quality of life.

3. Community-Based Disaster Mitigation: Mr. Sinha highlighted the success of community initiatives in regions prone to disasters. Notably, the "Mission Shakti" led by women in Orissa and self-help groups like 'Jivika Didi's' in Bihar have played vital roles in disaster resilience.

4. Resilient Development: He stressed the importance of sustainable and resilient development as a core strategy to address disaster risk management. He cited the example of Kutch, Gujarat, as a model for post-disaster reconstruction.

5. Addressing Poverty and Multidimensional Poverty Index: Mr. Sinha emphasized India's efforts to combat poverty, citing the UNDP report, which states that 411.5 million people have been lifted out of multidimensional poverty between 2005-6 and 2019-21.

6. Inclusive Society for Disaster Resilience: Improved employment, income, and universal primary education for girls were identified as key elements of building an inclusive society. He

compared India's efforts in women's education to successful models in Japan and South Korea in the 20th century.

7. Women-Led Development: Mr. Sinha underlined the importance of women-led development and the role of women self-help movements in disaster resilience and sustainable economic progress.

Sh. Amarjeet Sinha concluded his speech by emphasizing the importance of an equitable society, good education, and women-led approaches to disaster resilience and development. He encouraged college students to work in the field of disaster resilience and contribute to the development of the country.

Prof. Surya Parkash, NIDM proposed the Vote of Thanks to the inviting dignities, and all participants who was invaluable contribute to this event.

Technical sessions

Special Session on Disaster Risk Mitigation: Lessons for Resilience



Prof. Satoru Nishikawa Disaster Mitigation Research Centre, Nagoya University, Japan and Advisor JICA delivered a session on **“How can we sustain Disaster Reduction Efforts at National and Local Level?”** He said that Japan is prone to natural disasters like earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, typhoons, flooding, landslides, and more. Japan is dealing with these natural disasters for a very long time. Prof. Satoru stated that our country is home to 18.5% of the world's significant earthquakes. Japan experiences a relatively high proportion of large earthquakes compared to the rest of the world. The First return record of earthquake in Japan within “NIHONSHOKI” the first official history book of Japan, edited in 8th century. The oldest wooden “high rise” building in Japan has encountered many earthquakes over the years. He said that during the 1600 century, Warlord Takeda Shingen came up with new ways to control flooding in civil engineering. Darting to 7-8th centre the most respected Buddhist Priest was the best civil engineer. YOKI the highest priest along with his fellow Monks built dams for flood control and irrigation. With better flood control and irrigation technology, more rice can be grown.

It is correct that earthquakes occurred during the 20th and 21st centuries have been diverse in terms of their locations, magnitudes, and impacts. For example, according to the data available Indonesia had faced a series of earthquakes that also effect the Indian Ocean in year 2004. Tsunamis resulted in the loss of thousands of lives and caused widespread destruction.

Prof. Satoru Nishikawa stressed that earthquakes and hurricanes are natural phenomena that cannot be prevented or stopped by current scientific and technological means. However, we can certainly take steps to minimize their impact on society and make our communities more resilient. He said that according to the Yokohama Strategy from 1994, there are four stages of disaster Reduction prevention, mitigation and preparedness in pre disaster situation. Response, Recovery & Reconstruction are the part of post disaster situation. He explained about *How we could take action before*. There are two major steps to know more about the disaster are below:

1. Preventive actions based on **past experiences**
 - Understanding the history of disaster,
 - Disaster records & statistics must be achieved,
 - Lessons learn must be archived and disseminated.
2. Preventive Action based on **Appreciation of Risk**
 - Understanding the scientific mechanism of hazards,
 - Risk assessment with consideration of societal conditions,
 - Risk assessment must be disseminated, understood and be acted on.

He said that 2004 was the "Year of Disaster in Japan." As country faced more than 10 typhoons, earthquakes and many more disasters. Fire safety and disaster preparedness are important priorities in Japan for today's time. The ultimate goal is to create a safe and healthy environment for all Japanese citizens and to reduce the impact of disasters on lives and property. Government conducts many training programmes, workshops, for the awareness of the people Prof S Nishikawa show many case studies and the lesson learned in the end. In the last **"Natural Disaster will hit us by the Time people have forgotten about it"**.

Panel Discussion: Inequality to Empowerment for Disaster Resilience

Chair: Shri Rajendra Ratnoo, Executive Director, NIDM

Co-Chair: Professor Santosh Kumar, Senior Advisor ,NIDM



Shri Tomas Stenstrom, Sr. Specialist, International Labour Organization – Unorganized labour in Disaster Risk. He mentioned about the crisis problem of DRR and social exclusivity and how mitigation measures play a crucial role in reducing the impacts of disasters. They are not only cost-effective but also contribute to a more sustainable and resilient future for communities and nations. How COVID affected the different sectors of the world.



Ms. Ruma Devi, President of Gramin Vikas Evam Chetna Sansthan, has been a driving force behind the "Women Empowerment for Building Economic Resilience" initiative. Her work in this area is truly inspiring and has made a significant impact on the lives of countless women in rural communities.

Under Ms. Ruma Devi's leadership, the organization has been instrumental in providing women with the tools, knowledge, and opportunities needed to

become economically self-reliant. Through skill development programs, vocational training, and the promotion of entrepreneurial ventures, she has enabled women to break free from traditional gender roles and become active contributors to their families and communities.

Her work extends beyond mere economic empowerment. Ms. Ruma Devi recognizes that empowering women is a pathway to social progress and community development. By giving women the means to generate income, she is fostering self-esteem, independence, and a sense of agency among them.

Ms. Ruma Devi's dedication to the cause of women's empowerment is evident in her unwavering commitment to bridging the gender gap in rural areas. Her leadership has resulted in tangible improvements in the lives of women, not only economically but also in terms of their overall well-being and societal standing.

In a world where gender inequality remains a pressing issue, Ms. Ruma Devi's work is a beacon of hope. Her efforts exemplify the transformative power of empowering women to create more resilient and inclusive communities. We applaud her for her remarkable work and the positive impact she has made in the lives of women and their families.

Dr. Vinita Sahay, as the Director of IIM Bodh Gaya, is likely to be at the forefront of shaping the role of management institutions in empowering women. Here are key points regarding the role of management institutions in this context:

Education and Skill Development: Management institutions can empower women through education and skill development programs. They offer courses and training that equip women with the skills and knowledge required for leadership and entrepreneurship.

Promoting Diversity and Inclusion: Management institutions should actively promote diversity and inclusion in their programs, classrooms, and leadership roles. This provides women with opportunities to participate and excel in traditionally male-dominated fields.

Mentorship and Networking: These institutions can facilitate mentorship programs where successful women in business mentor aspiring female leaders. Networking opportunities can also connect women with valuable contacts and resources.

Research and Advocacy: Management institutions can engage in research on gender-related issues in the workplace and advocate for policies that support women's advancement, such as pay equity and family-friendly policies.

Entrepreneurship Support: Encouraging and supporting women in entrepreneurship is crucial. Management institutions can provide resources, funding, and guidance to help women start and grow their businesses.



Leadership Training: Offering leadership development programs that address specific challenges women may face in leadership roles can be instrumental in empowering women to take on key positions in organizations.

Raising Awareness: Management institutions can raise awareness about gender-related challenges and the importance of gender equality in business. This includes educating both men and women about the benefits of diversity in the workplace.

Creating Safe and Inclusive Environments: Ensuring that the campus environment is safe and inclusive is vital. This includes addressing issues like sexual harassment and providing support services for women.

Partnerships and Collaborations: Collaborating with organizations, NGOs, and government agencies working on women's empowerment can enhance the impact of management institutions in this area.

Alumni Engagement: Engaging alumni, particularly successful women leaders, in supporting and mentoring current students and graduates can be a valuable resource for empowerment.

Monitoring Progress: Management institutions can measure and report on the progress of their efforts in empowering women, both within their campuses and in the broader professional world.

Inspiring Role Models: Celebrating and promoting successful women alumni and faculty as role models can inspire current and future generations of women.

Dr. Vinita Sahay's leadership at IIM Bodh Gaya provides a unique opportunity to drive these initiatives and set an example for other educational institutions to empower women in the field of management and beyond.



Ms. Ira Singhal, the 2014 UPSC (Union Public Service Commission) Civil Services exam topper, now serves as the Special Education Secretary in Arunachal Pradesh. Ms. Ira Singhal's journey began with her struggle to overcome disabilities. Her candidature for the Indian Revenue Services was initially cancelled due to her disability. However, she persevered, eventually becoming the topper and completing her B. Tech in Computer Science from Netaji Subash Institute of Technology (NSIT) and an MBA in Marketing from Delhi University, Faculty of Management Studies (FMS).

People with disabilities are not receiving enough support to cope with disasters. This is despite a significant increase in the number of climate-related disasters worldwide in the last decade. Persons with disabilities represent 16% of the world's population and, in some cases, are killed by disasters at a rate that is two to four times higher than the general population. The 84% of respondents in 2023

reported not having a personal preparedness plan in case of a disaster, such as knowing evacuation routes, available shelters, and having emergency supplies. This figure was 71% in 2013. Another finding from the 2023 study was that 39% of people would not have any trouble leaving if they were given enough early warning, but only 26% would not have any trouble if they were not given any warning. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction is people-focussed and action-oriented in its approach to disaster risk reduction and applies to the risk of small-scale and large-scale disasters caused by man-made, or natural hazards, as well as related environmental, technological and biological hazards and risks.

Ms. Ira Singhal pointed out that disability is often a result of inadequate nutrition and a lack of proper medical care, particularly in economically disadvantaged communities. Ms. Singhal passionately discussed the rewarding nature of a career in civil services. She highlighted the immense impact that civil servants can have on society. By simply going to the office and signing numerous certificates, they can transform lives. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she prioritized the needs of disabled individuals by establishing a dedicated helpline to ensure their well-being during the crisis. Ms. Singhal expressed gratitude for being involved with the National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) and its initiative for Disaster Risk Reduction. Her journey from adversity to success is an inspiring tale of determination, resilience, and advocacy for the rights of disabled individuals, showcasing remarkable perseverance and leadership. And her work in disaster risk reduction exemplify her commitment to improving the lives of the marginalized. Ms. Singhal story continues to motivate others to overcome adversity and make a positive difference in the world.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

The key takeaways from the event were as follows:

1. **Integrate Gender-Responsive Policies:** Implement policies that consider and address the unique needs and concerns of different genders, promoting gender equality and inclusivity.
2. **Accessible Infrastructure:** Develop and maintain infrastructure that is designed to accommodate all individuals, including those with disabilities, ensuring inclusivity and equal access.
3. **Youth Engagement Programs:** Create initiatives and opportunities to actively involve and empower young people in various aspects of society, fostering their participation and development.
4. **Economic Empowerment:** Promote measures that enable individuals and communities to achieve financial independence and improve their economic well-being.
5. **Localized Disaster Plans:** Establish disaster preparedness and response strategies tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of different regions, enhancing community resilience during crises.

6. 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayas' is the moto which must be followed.to fight inequality which gives rise to more vulnerabilities.

List of Participants

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