

Community diagnosis as a method for assessing risk in urban communities; a case study of Nepal

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In the major cities of Nepal urban growth is not regulated according to land use plan and every year more and more people are exposed to upcoming natural disaster like earthquake. Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal is among such most vulnerable cities and necessary proactive measure is needed to save the lives of millions of people exposed to catastrophic risk. Some initiatives are taken by non government organizations for raising disaster awareness among residents. But such efforts are not efficient in the sense that people hardly adopt any seismic reduction measure in circumstances where other daily risk concerned with livelihood is more prominent. In this context, this study emphasizes on the necessity of community management practices at local level where overall management of risk is prioritized. Such comprehensive approach is envisioned to benefit community people by upgrading their living environment and their quality of life.

This study will be based on case study of neighborhoods in Kathmandu Valley. Neighborhoods are selected in such a way that they represent the characteristics of similar other neighborhoods in the valley. The neighborhoods have their own unique characteristics in terms of built fabric, public amenities and social characteristic of the inhabitants. Community diagnosis is chosen as a method to assess risk prevalent in the area which will be followed by planning countermeasures to overcome these risks. This study is primarily concerned with check stage where the local people are involved to assess risk. Town watching and mapping is proposed as a method to locate risky areas with input from local residents. Along with this questionnaire survey will be conducted with household respondents to assess their capacity to cope with disaster risk.

Key words: community management, coping capacity