



Photo Credit: NDRC

Nepal

# Empowering Communities for Times of Crisis

## The Humanitarian Standards and Rights- Based Approach in Nepal

### Contents

- 2 Disasters & Impact
- 4 The APPROach
- 6 Engage, Expand & Empower a Multistakeholder System
- 8 Nepal Preparedness Partnership
- 10 NPP Milestones in Humanitarian Standards and RBA
- 13 Stakeholder interviews
- 14 Referances
- 19 Sources



## Disasters & Impact

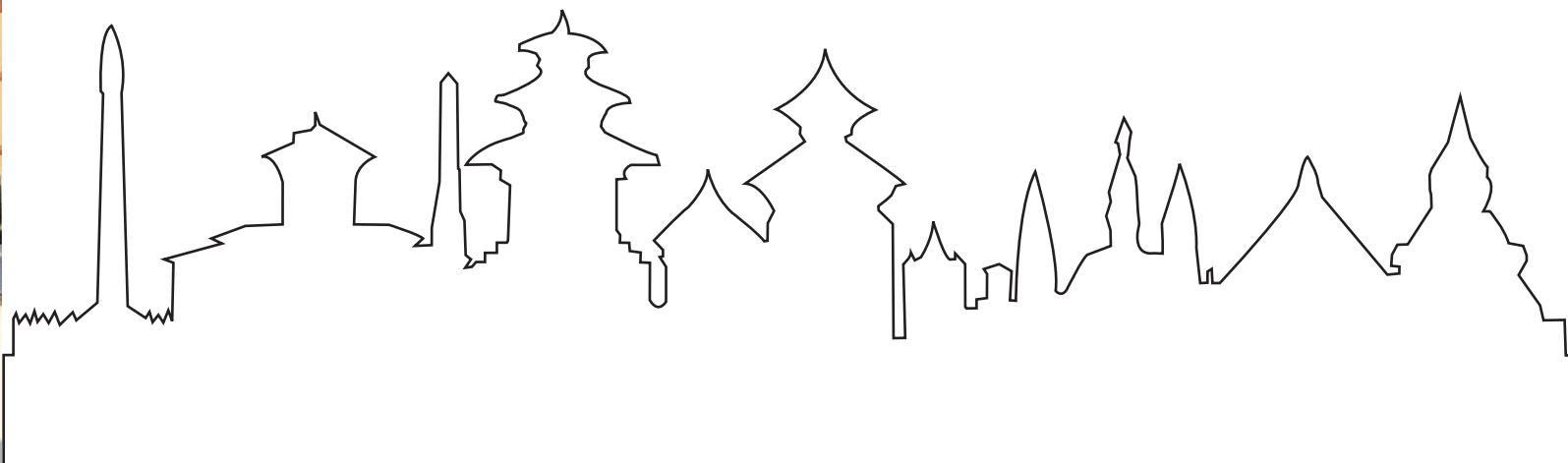
Disasters in Nepal have significantly impacted the country's, vulnerable population, particularly in terms of humanitarian needs. These events have caused a significant setback in Nepal's development process, exacerbating poverty and food insecurity in the country. For instance, the 2015 earthquake resulted in widespread displacement and destruction of homes, leaving many people homeless and in need of shelter and basic necessities such as food and water. This also damaged and destroyed critical infrastructure, including health facilities and schools, further exacerbating the humanitarian crisis. The ongoing

COVID-19 pandemic has further complicated aid organizations' efforts to provide assistance and for affected communities to access basic services.

During the 2015 earthquake, uncertainty arose during the response as most local humanitarian workers and government agencies were less aware of the minimum standard of humanitarian aid. As a result, humanitarian aid was provided using a generic and charitable approach, disregarding its expensiveness and ineffectiveness in most cases. The earthquake incident reinforced the importance of humanitarian standards in Nepal and exposed

the necessary areas to be improved in the country's disaster management policies and structures, revealing the urgent need for stronger and more inclusive solutions that prioritize the needs of vulnerable and marginalized communities.

One of the main reasons for this is inadequate planning and coordination among government agencies. The government has several different agencies that are responsible for different aspects of disaster management, such as the National Emergency Operations Centre and the Department of Hydrology and Meteorology. However, these



In Nepal, multiple hazards like floods, landslides, fires, earthquakes, and lightning occur every year. Between 1971-2017 235,259 disaster events, 44,027 deaths, and 81,928 injuries, were recorded.

The 2015 Gorkha Earthquake 8790 deaths, 22300 injuries and 2.8 million people displaced.

COVID-19 Pandemic 10000151 affected with 12020 deaths.

Source : DRR Portal

agencies often do not work in tandem, which leads to delays in response and recovery efforts. Another reason is the under-preparedness of the government to respond to such a massive disaster due to inadequate infrastructure, poor building standards, and weak emergency response mechanisms.

Legislating disaster management policies and structures in Nepal is a slow and time-consuming process that often creates humanitarian issues during disaster events. The government needs to improve planning and coordination among agencies and provide more resources and funding for disaster management efforts, to effectively respond and recover from disasters.

The 2015 earthquake highlighted the need for adaptive and responsive disaster management solutions to address the root causes of vulnerability and inequality. Many

local humanitarian organizations (LHOs) had insufficient and necessary knowledge and skills, minimal communication, and collaboration between at-risk communities to effectively manage disasters that posed a risk to their own safety and that of others. In general, the local institutions were not adequately equipped for emergency response, with inadequate promotion and implementation of humanitarian standards.

In a nutshell, to build more inclusive and effective disaster management solutions, it is important to prioritize the needs of vulnerable and marginalized communities and ensure that relief efforts are guided by humanitarian principles. Additionally, it is crucial to address the root causes of vulnerability and inequality through long-term development efforts that complement humanitarian action.

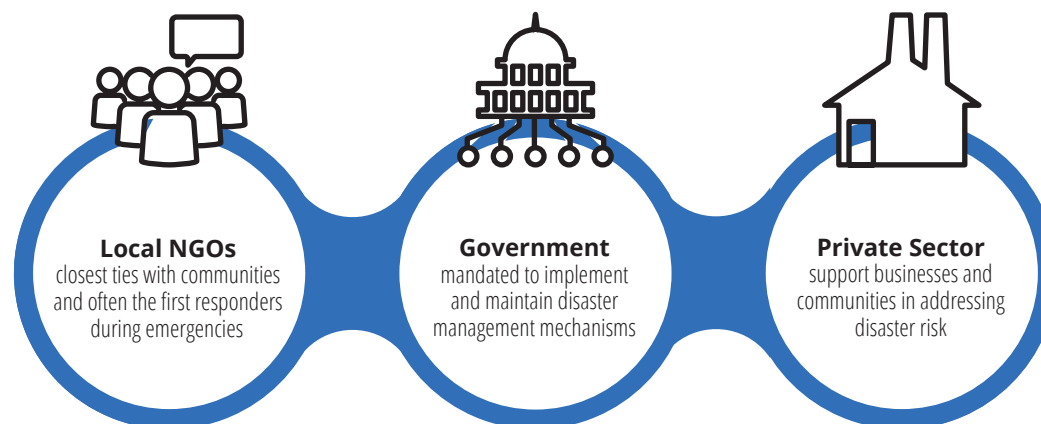
# The APProach

The Asian Preparedness Partnership (APP), established by the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), is a unique multi-stakeholder regional partnership that includes countries from South and Southeast Asia to better prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. Supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (the foundation) and the United States Agency for International Development Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID BHA), the partnership strives to improve stakeholder

coordination and dialogue between governments, local humanitarian organization networks, and the private sector for enhancing capacities through partnerships, knowledge resources, training, and networking opportunities.

APP's goal is to promote safer and well-prepared communities through locally-led disaster risk management (DRM) actions, so that disaster impacts on at-risk communities of Asia will be reduced.

APP on localization: "A process whereby local, sub-national and national humanitarian actors, namely governments, civil society and non-government organizations, the private sector, media, academia, etc., take a lead role, in a collaborative manner to plan and implement priority actions in disaster preparedness, humanitarian response, and recovery through mobilizing internal resources and external humanitarian funding."





Asian Preparedness Partnership



Photo Credit: NDRC

# Engage, Expand & Empower a Multistakeholder System

Humanitarian assistance is governed and guided by interconnected institutional and operational entities through which assistance is provided to save lives, alleviate suffering, and protect human value during and in any emergency situations, as well as prepare and strengthen capacities to mitigate impacts in the event of any reoccurrence of similar situations. Humanitarian standards are critical in ensuring that people impacted by disasters or conflicts receive the protection, assistance, and necessities required to live with dignity.

These standards are global declarations that outline the steps necessary for crisis-affected individuals to exercise their rights. The consensus-based standards represent cumulative best practices of Sphere Standard and the Core Humanitarian Standard at a global level reflects the obligation and determination of agencies to improve both the effectiveness of their assistance and their accountability to their stakeholders, contributing to a practical framework for accountability.

Considering the present context with the increased occurrence of multiple disaster and conflict situations, it has been felt necessary to enhance the knowledge and skills of the governmental and non-governmental organizations and the private sectors, working in the field of humanitarian assistance. A brief capacity needs assessment and gap analysis were commissioned through NPP to gauge the existing capacity and gaps among local actors namely Local Humanitarian Organizations (LHOs), private sectors, and the local/provincial government authorities. Based on the assessment findings, a training manual was developed in Nepali, incorporating training content to address the existing gaps.

NPP initiated one National Level BTOT (Basic Training of Trainers), three Provincial Level Training, and three Local Level training to disseminate the developed Humanitarian Standard Training Manual, with the sole motive to enhance the knowledge of humanitarian actors at various levels including local government, local humanitarian organizations, and the private sector and improve the quality and effectiveness of any disaster response. The training has contributed to strengthening affected communities' and individuals' understanding of what organizations need to do to be accountable, resulting in more targeted, timely, and appropriate assistance and supporting Local Government to implement the humanitarian standards at the local level.

Local humanitarian organizations and actors are typically the first responders in disasters, and the NPP recognizes the importance of strengthening local institutions in Nepal to increase dialogue and cooperation between at-risk communities. The NPP has also been promoting humanitarian standards through partnerships with civil society organizations such as DPNet and supported NDR Net', who have been actively promoting humanitarian standards as a massive campaign or separate activity.

Furthermore, to improve the humanitarian interface, multiple stakeholders including the government and development partners are now moving forward to change the humanitarian interface in Nepal from its previously blanket response-oriented practices to compliance and application of humanitarian standards in disaster management. Adherence

and promotion of humanitarian standards and the rights-based approach has to be the major area to enable a better understanding of the ground situation with respect to the implementation of humanitarian standards. This is seen as a major landmark in Nepal's institutionalization and localization of humanitarian standards.

Overall, the NPP initiatives, including the establishment of the NDR-Net and its capacity building on core humanitarian standards has boosted the promotion of humanitarian standards, have contributed to strengthening local institutions in Nepal, increasing dialogue and cooperation between at-risk communities, and preparing communities and institutions for emergency response.

Overall, the NPP initiatives, including the establishment of the NDR Net and its capacity building on core humanitarian standards have improved the promotion of humanitarian principles and standards, because of the fact that NDR Net is a network of local humanitarian organizations representing all seven provinces and seventy-seven districts of Nepal. Their outreach and accessibility are extended to all 753 municipalities with appropriate linkages with the local organization and government. This has enabled the transfer of adequate knowledge on humanitarian principles and standards to contribute to strengthening local institutions, increasing dialogue and cooperation between at-risk communities, preparing communities and institutions for emergency response, and increasing local accountability.



आधारमृत मानवीय मापदण्ड विषयक तालिम  
Core Humanitarian Standards Training  
६-८ मंसिर २०७८ (22-24 November 2021)  
पोखरा, कास्की, गण्डकी प्रदेश

Asian Preparedness Partnership

# Nepal Preparedness Partnership (NPP)

The Nepal Preparedness Partnership (NPP) is an initiative led by the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) in collaboration with various partners, including the Government of Nepal, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, and private sector entities. The partnership aims to enhance Nepal's disaster preparedness and resilience through a multi-stakeholder approach. The NPP focuses on four key areas: strengthening community resilience, enhancing institutional preparedness, promoting private sector engagement, and facilitating knowledge management and learning. The partnership works to achieve these objectives through various activities such as capacity building, risk assessment, knowledge sharing, and advocacy. The partnership operates at national, provincial, and local levels and works closely

with stakeholders from various sectors, including disaster management agencies, local governments, civil society organizations, academia, and private sector actors. The NPP initiatives intend to strengthen Nepal's disaster preparedness and resilience.

In summary, the NPP is a collaborative initiative that brings together diverse stakeholders to enhance Nepal's disaster preparedness and resilience. The partnership's multi-sectoral approach and focus on community resilience, institutional preparedness, private sector engagement, and knowledge management make it a valuable platform for promoting disaster risk reduction in Nepal.

## Nepal Preparedness Partnership National Steering Committee

Joint Secretary, Disaster and Conflict  
Management Division, MoHA- Chairperson  
Private Sector (FNCCI)- Member  
Academia (Tribhuvan University)- Member  
Local Government (Mayor)- Member  
NDR Net- Member  
NPP implementing Agency (NDRC Nepal)-  
Member ADPC Nepal-Member Secretary

Core Humanitarian  
Standards Training  
Manual

4 Humanitarian  
Standards Orientation  
166 (132M/34F)

6 Humanitarian  
Standards Training  
195 (145M/50F)







Asian Preparedness Partnership



Photo Credit: NDRC

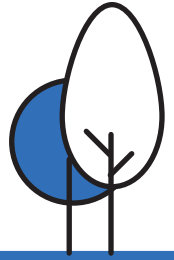
# NPP Milestones 2017-2023

## 2017

May 2017  
Project Socialization Workshop

June-July 2017  
Baseline Assessment in 30 Districts

December 2017  
Assessment Report Shared



December 2017  
NPP-NSC Formed

## 2021

December 2020  
6th APP Regional Steering Committee Nepal (Virtual).



September 2020  
NPP Phase II Sub Grant Agreement.

June-December 2020  
Risk Communication Material developed / NEOC and PHEOC coordination

June 2020  
Three proposals developed for COVID

December 2020-March 2021  
Strengthening Local Health preparedness and response through the Private Sector Engagement

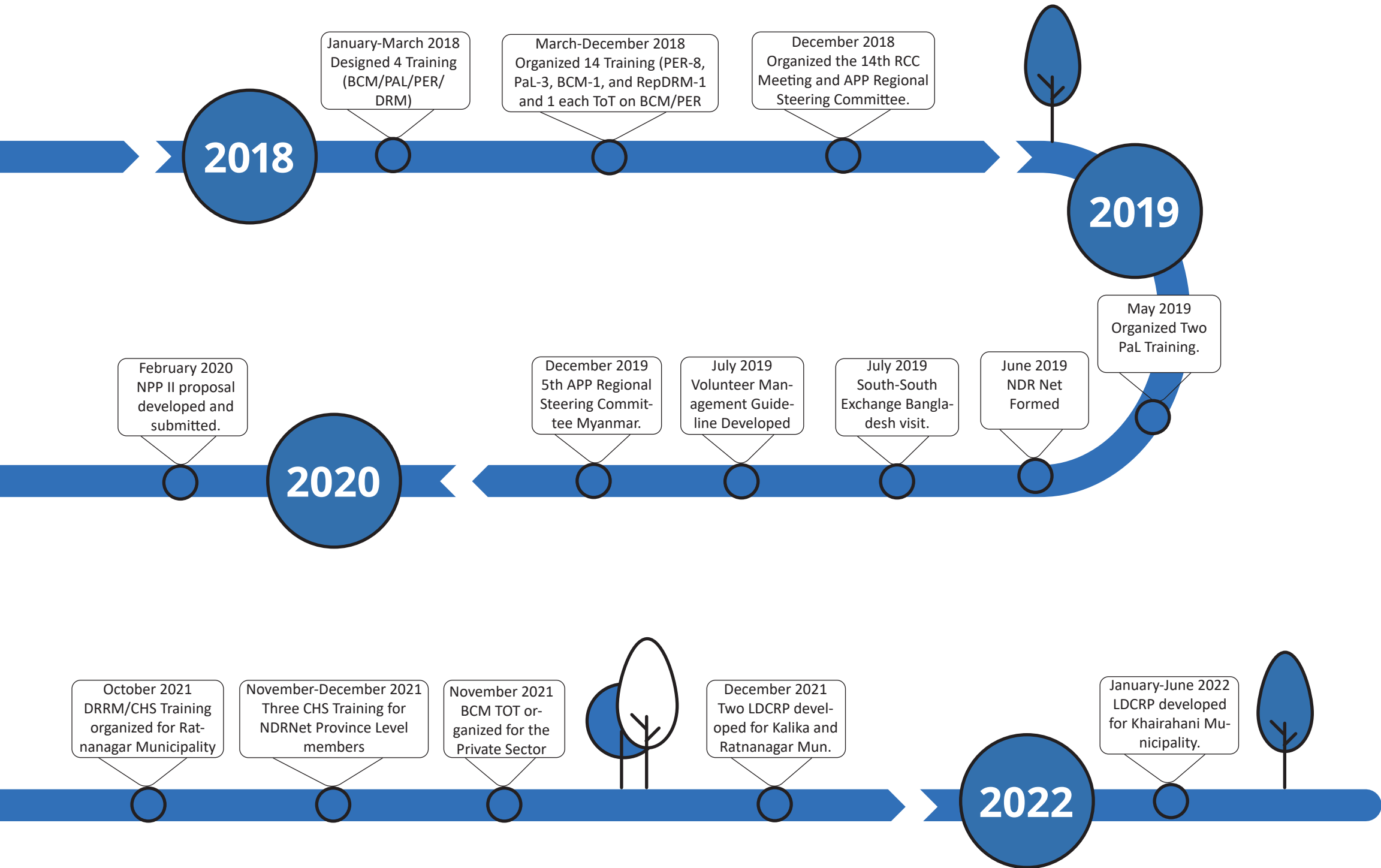
January-March 2021  
Organized Eight province-level orientations on Pandemic management.

March 2021  
Health Sector date included in BIPAD Protal.

April-June 2021  
CHS Training Manual Developed  
Three Online Orientation

June 2021  
PaL Approach Paper Developed and Shared on ILS Day 2021

September 2021  
Basic TOT on Core Humanitarian Standard organized



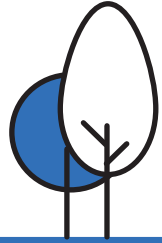
March 2022  
BCM TOT organized in  
collaboration with TA-  
YAR-Nepal/ USAID

June 2022  
EWS Messaging  
Orientation for  
Media

June 2022  
PaL and Electric Fire Safety  
Standards (EFSS) and Training  
Curricula validated,

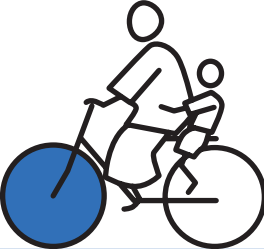
July 2022  
TOT on PaL and Electric  
Fire Safety Standards  
(EFSS) organized

July-August 2022  
BCM Orientation to Prov-  
ince FNCCI in collab-  
oration with FNCCI



August 2021  
National Level Dissemination  
of Core Humanitarian Stan-  
dard Training

May/June 2021  
Virtual Orientation on  
Core Humanitarian  
Standard



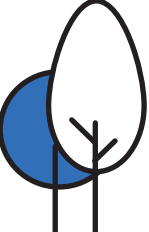
April 2021  
Core Humanitarian  
Standard Training  
Manual Developed



2021

November/December 2021  
Three Core Humanitarian  
Standards Training for NDRNet  
members

2022



July 2022  
Core Humanitarian  
Standards Training for  
CSG Pokhara



August 2022  
DRRM/CHS Training  
organized for Kalika  
Municipality

October 2022  
CSR Guideline for Pri-  
vate Sector Investment  
in DRM developed.

December 2022  
BCM Manual  
Translated into Nepali  
Language

December 2022  
National Conference on "In-  
novation and Enterprise for  
Disaster Resilience in Nepal"



2023

January-February 2023  
LSAR Equipment  
handed over to 6  
municipalities.

June 2022-January 2023  
Two LDCRPs developed for  
Rapti and Madi Municipality.

# NPP Milestones in Humanitarian Standards and RBA

July/August 2022  
Core Humanitarian  
Standards Training for  
Kalika Municipality



## Reflections



*“We had a great experience with the training program and gained valuable knowledge on how to make our Local Government more disaster resilient. We have deeply felt its importance and are planning to replicate this training through all 16 wards in our municipality. These clusters will comprise a Quick Response Team (QRT) to be mobilized during disasters. The goal of creating these clusters is to utilize the trained individuals to monitor, the protection, food, shelter, WASH, and health-related issues during disaster events. We are confident that the trained individuals will share their knowledge within their respective clusters and work on disaster management, including the use of minimum standards in the aftermath of a disaster.”*

**Bishwash Shrestha,**

*DRR Focal Person  
Ratnanagar Municipality*

*Disaster Management Section Head, with 5 years of working experience in disaster management including risk reduction and response. He is currently responsible for coordinating with multiple stakeholders including government agencies, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, local volunteers, and social administrators to develop disaster preparedness and response plans, raising disaster awareness, and post-disaster response. He maintains healthy relations with development actors. for disaster risk reduction and management.*

*“I was provided with the opportunity to attend the humanitarian standards, Inclusive DRM, and RBA training organized by NPP, which I found very useful for the local context, as it provided in-depth knowledge on various aspects of humanitarian standards, inclusive disaster risk management, and rights-based approach. From my understanding, these types of knowledge are very necessary for the betterment of the quality and effectiveness of our response works including relief material stockpiling and distribution. The training conducted by NPP is useful enough and has brought confidence within us for necessary preparation during disaster response. These learnings have steadily played a significant role in improving the quality and effectiveness of the humanitarian response with the increased application and compliance of humanitarian standards against the present context of the traditional mindset of stakeholders, inadequate knowledge of humanitarian standards,*

gender and social inclusion aspects, insufficient resources including skilled and trained human resources and finance during disaster response work. These skills and knowledge are being promoted and communicated to all clusters and sections of the Municipality to improve their understanding and compliance with the humanitarian standards while developing their respective response plan. Followed by the training, the LDCRP and DPRP were prepared with the support of the NPP.

With the systematic application of humanitarian standards, we are steadily experiencing changes in our working attitudes such as immediate and timely response, protection and fulfillment of basic rights especially that of the most vulnerable and affected people, and compliance with the Sphere standards and Core Humanitarian Standard. Both global documents focus on the protection principle and minimum standards of humanitarian assistance and distribution process during a disaster and more importantly, it improves the accountability and responsibility of the organization working in the sector towards their service and assistance. This can be further improved by educating the community to raise their accountability and make humanitarian organizations more accountable to them.

Communication and coordination between the key stakeholders are other crucial components for effective disaster response. A strong and smooth communication and coordination mechanism between government agencies, non-government and community-based organizations, and other concerned stakeholders leads to the efficient result in disaster response initiatives. During the disaster response period, there should be frequent consultation meetings and communication between the frontline agencies and organizations

that would help for progress and process updates on the response and support to map the resources for gap analysis for the effective and efficient delivery system. At times of disaster situations, affected communities have high expectations despite the limitations that exist with the delivery system. To overcome these challenges, massive capacity enhancement activities focusing on humanitarian standards with more practical sessions along with various levels of interactions and consultations amongst the stakeholders is deemed necessary. The NPP has been working as a platform for bringing together the government and corporate sectors, CSOs, academic institutions, local actors, and other groups to support the local leadership in disaster risk reduction and management. The uniqueness of the NPP is its role in bringing all sectors together and raising everyone's voice and accumulating skills for fostering resilience.

Partnering with NPP has given us significant knowledge on various aspects of disaster management through multiple orientations and training. Gaining knowledge through the training, we have led the way with the technical support from NPP to formulate our Disaster risk reduction and management policies and plans in thriving towards resilience building. The Municipal staff members have gained better knowledge about mainstreaming DRRM in their sector. In addition to this, the partnership has provided the opportunity to develop and improve common understanding amongst elected representatives, staff, and communities on DRRM. Having said this, we still have to invest more efforts to rapidly change the pre-conceived traditional and response-centric mindset on disaster response, establishing rights and inclusive disaster management and reducing the risk of disaster in Ratnanagar Municipality.”



*“Despite the many national guidelines, policies, and directives in place for disaster management, it is important for all stakeholders to develop a shared understanding of humanitarian standards and adhere to the humanitarian principles and standards during emergency preparedness, response, and recovery operations to ensure quality response and accountability.”*

**Mr. Prakash Paudel,**

*DRR Focal Person, Kalika Municipality*

*Disaster Management Section Head, with 5 years of working experience in disaster management including risk reduction and response. He is currently responsible for coordinating with multiple stakeholders including government agencies, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, local volunteers, and social administrators to develop disaster preparedness and response plans, raising disaster awareness, and post-disaster response. He maintains healthy relations with development actors. for disaster risk reduction and management.*

“In the present context of disaster response, we have been experiencing challenges to implement and abide the humanitarian principles because of the existing limited knowledge of humanitarian principles and standards, undermining issues of gender and social inclusion, and the dominant traditional charitable mindset of people and the organization engaged in the disaster response activities. Amid this context, Kalika Municipality was invited to participate in a series of training and orientation programs focusing on humanitarian standards and principles, disaster risk reduction and management, gender and social inclusion, and inclusive disaster risk reduction and management that were organized by NPP to strengthen the process of localization disaster risk reduction and management. The fore mentioned training was very beneficial for us as it value added in widening our perspective of the overall aspects and dimensions of disaster management. The training highlighted the essentials for affected communities to receive appropriate, relevant, and timely assistance, access to information, participation in decision-making processes, and access to safe and responsive grievance mechanisms to fulfill and protect their immediate needs and human entitlement. While on the other hand, the training on the rights-



based approach and inclusive disaster risk reduction and management provided us with an in-depth understanding and knowledge of why gender and social inclusion should be addressed. On the whole, the acquired knowledge is progressively enabling us to be more accountable and better prepared to manage disaster response.

Apart from the principle and standards, effective and efficient coordination and communication among the various stakeholders before, during, and after disasters are also central to improving service delivery, sharing information, and reducing resource duplication. With the mutual and regular coordination/consultations between the stakeholders comprising the government, local organizations, communities, and non-government agencies, situation and progress updates along with gap analysis can be accessed to further improve the response and management process. In this context, the partnership with NPP has provided us with a great opportunity to deeply understand and apply the various process and procedures involved in it. These understandings have been integrated into the LDCRP and DPRP to ensure a functional cluster approach with their respective response plans, to timely and appropriate responses, and guide other supporting organizations to be more responsible. The documents have been prepared by the municipality after the training and are technically supported by NPP.

Every disaster always triggers the community to reckon with the necessary precaution to evade future disasters, but as time passes by, they tend to forget the incidents and become irresponsive again, while only a very few have taken up measures to avoid such incidents. Moreover, the limited resources and weak coordination and collaboration between the disaster stakeholders have always been unable to meet the high expectation of the affect-

ed. This is a consequence of the existing inadequate knowledge, preconceived mindset, and insufficient planning of disasters and their management. It now is our responsibility to resolve these key challenges and move forward. These challenges need to be overcome by disseminating the knowledge, understanding, and learnings from the training and educating, aware and making certain that the at-risk communities understand disaster management as their responsibility also, adopt timely precautionary measures engage themselves in the process of disaster management and planning to safeguard and reduce possible disasters impact. It is necessary that the community access this knowledge through mass awareness campaigns and capacity enhancement activities, regular dialogue, discourse, and consultation with the community to improve their perspectives and preparedness activities to reduce the disaster risk.”



Asian Preparedness Partners

# Sources

Bhattarai, N. (2016). Blanket approaches to humanitarian response: Reflections from the 2015 Nepal earthquake. Middle East Institute. <https://www.mei.edu/publications/blanket-approaches-humanitarian-response-reflections-2015-nepal-earthquake>

Nepal Disaster Risk Reduction Portal. (n.d.). Disaster database. [http://www.drrportal.gov.np/en/disaster\\_database](http://www.drrportal.gov.np/en/disaster_database)

Sphere Handbook. (2018). Humanitarian charter and minimum standards in humanitarian response. <https://spherestandards.org/handbook-2018/contents/>

Thapa, S., & Murayama, Y. (2017). An analysis of the causes and consequences of the 2015 Nepal earthquake disaster. *Journal of Disaster Research*, 12(1), 118-125.

This case study is based on research funded by (or in part by) the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The findings and conclusions contained within are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the positions or policies of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.









**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



BILL & MELINDA  
GATES *foundation*



Asian Disaster Preparedness Center  
SM Tower, 24th Floor, 979/66-70 Phahonyothin Road,  
Phayathai, Phayathai, Bangkok 10400 Thailand  
Tel: +66 2 298 0681-92  
Fax: +66 2 298 0012  
Email: [adpc@adpc.net](mailto:adpc@adpc.net)

-  [app@adpc.net](mailto:app@adpc.net)
-  <https://app.adpc.net>
-  [@AsiaPrepared](https://twitter.com/AsiaPrepared)
-  [Asian Preparedness Partnership](https://www.facebook.com/AsianPreparednessPartnership)